

TOWN OF CHATHAM  
488 Route 295, Chatham, NY 12037

SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING  
Public Hearing on the 2014 Preliminary Budget  
November 14, 2013  
6:00 PM

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Jesse DeGroodt, Councilman Henry Swartz, Councilman Bob Balcom, Comptroller Debbie Cesternino, Town Clerk Beth Anne Rippel, Tammy Shaw

**ABSENT:** Councilman Maria Lull

Also present: Earl Kelsey, Jim Temple, Jeff Lick, Aven Kerr, David Levow

Supervisor Jesse DeGroodt called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and led the pledge to the flag.

On a motion by Supervisor DeGroodt, seconded by Councilperson Balcom, and carried the Town Board entered executive session at 6:00 PM to discuss the health insurance policy of the Town of Chatham as it pertains to a particular past-employee in accordance to Public Officers Law. The Board reviewed the Employee Handbook and recommendations of Special Counsel with respect the request made by an employee regarding the level of reimbursement and cost sharing of health benefits premiums. On a resolution, #127-13, made by Councilman Balcom, seconded by Councilman Rohde, and carried the Board adopted resolution #127-13, setting such levels. A copy of the formal resolution shall be placed in the employee's Employment File and shall not be made public or disclosed in any way.

**VOTE**

AYE: DeGroodt, Rhode, Balcom, Swartz      NAY: None      Resolution adopted

Motion was made by Supervisor DeGroodt to leave executive session at 6:05 PM, Councilman Rohde seconded the motion. Motion carried

Motion was made by Supervisor Jesse DeGroodt to leave executive session at 6:05 PM. Councilman Swartz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The public hearing on the 2014 preliminary budget was reopened at 6:05 PM.

Budget Discussion

- Supervisor DeGroodt stated that the Town Board will formally establish a citizen's finance committee. We have 6 weeks to define the committee and its charge. The resolution will be offered at the January 2014 organizational agenda.
- Supervisor DeGroodt made a motion to establish the Citizen's Finance Committee to include, but not limited to, Aven Kerr, David Levow and Jeff Lick. Councilman Rohde seconded the motion.
- Jeff Lick distributed, to the audience and the Board, charts and a budget summary. They put the Town's budget into a spreadsheet. The public seems to be most interested in seeing revenues and expenses broken down. The expense side was divided into 2 categories, general and highway however, the Board may want to see this broken down differently. David Levow and Jeff determined that salaries and benefits make up about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the Town's expenses.
- Councilman Balcom would like to see an explanation on how the town tax is calculated.
- Tammy Shaw stated that budgeting is done to prepare for unexpected situations and to avoid overspending in the highway department.
- Jim Temple feels we're on the right track and wants to see a list of priorities. The question would be who decides what's most important.
- According to the NYS Comptroller the Town is in good standing financially.
- Aven Kerr believes it's the job of the town residents to assist the Board with determining just what's included and useful to them in a budget summary.
- Jim Temple feels the budget looks good for 2014 but wants better planning to track trends over a period of time. Our share as a town seems to be getting bigger every year with less and less money coming from outside sources.

- The finance committee will work on actuals, how the tax rate is calculated, charts by department and a glossary of terms.
- Supervisor DeGroodt and the Board thanked the committee for their hard work.
- Councilman Balcom feels that there has been a problem with communication with the public. Our website needs improvement and would like to pay a professional company develop the site. He would like to add \$5,000.00 added to the budget for this purpose.
- Supervisor DeGroodt wants the communications committee (Balcom and Lull) reestablished.

There was no other comment and the public hearing was closed at 7:00 PM.

Supervisor DeGroodt will add website development to the agenda for the next meeting.

**RES. #128-13** to adopt the 2014 budget. Supervisor DeGroodt offered Res. #128-13 and moved to adopt the 2014 Budget. Councilman Rohde seconded the motion. Copy attached.

VOTE

AYE: DeGroodt, Swartz, Balcom, Rohde    NAY: None    Resolution adopted

Motion was made by Councilman Balcom and seconded by Supervisor DeGroodt to adjourn at 7:15 PM. Motion carried

Respectfully submitted by,

Beth Anne Rippel  
Town Clerk