

**City of Port Jervis**  
**Finance/Insurance Committee-Budget Workshop**  
**Minutes for Meeting November 21, 2017**

Present: Committee Members Kristin Trovei and Lisa Randazzo. Also in attendance were: Stanley Siegel, Maria Mann, Regis Foster, George Belcher, Sarah Hendry, Gina Fitzpatrick, Mayor Decker and Bobbie Jo Muller Deputy City Clerk-Treasurer.

Absent: David Bavoso

Budget Workshop meeting opened at 6:00 p.m. Chairperson Kristin Trovei opened the meeting stating we have limited time because there is another meeting scheduled in the room so we will be wrapping up around 7:00 pm. The Department Heads have been invited to discuss their proposed budgets and give any explanations and if they are happy with what the Mayor has proposed as opposed to what they requested.

**Public Comment –**

Wayne Kidney – Opposed to Mayor’s raise of 100%, very wrong. Not opposed to 2% raise for Mayor or Dept. Heads, that is what’s been normal in the past.

Linda Van Horn – Upset with Mayor asking for large raise, agrees with 2%. Need to make some cuts.

Jerry Van Orden – Where is all the tax money going? Not opposed to anyone getting a raise, but is opposed to not working for the raise.

Terry Sickles – He looked over the budget and believes everyone should get a raise. The increase is hurting the small businesses and local people. There has got to be another way to save some money, because people can’t afford another tax raise. Do your best.

**Department Heads -**

Valerie Maginsky, Director, P.J. Community Development Agency – Reviewed Hand Out asking for \$70,000

John Farr, Director DPW – No major changes – Stanley Siegel asked about the 3% lighting replacement and asked that if we didn’t do the 3% this year, could we do 6% next year. He also asked about upgrading some fixtures to LED lights which are brighter, so they wouldn’t need to add more lights in poorly lite areas.

Teresa Spradling, Assessor – Said thank you for the Certification recognition that was made and her appointment. Cannot make any cuts and con not do much more with only 2 people.

Police Chief William Worden – Record management system needs to be upgraded. Currently is \$11,746 and is going to increase \$5,000 to \$8,000 in the spring. He has budgeted \$5,900. Suggested that maybe we put that in the Capital Note. Due to the State mandate for centralized court arraignment, Chief is asking for the 19th police officer. We are now going to have to transport prisoners to other courts for arraignment, which will take officers off the street. Also has increased the hours for matrons to help cover transport of female prisoners to court for arraignment. We may also need to purchase a van for transport that is not in the budget. There is one item on the revenue side that can be increased. We have received an award letter from the county for the Juvenile Del. Youth Officer and can increase code A.3623.000 from \$4,500 to \$8,000. There is a potential upcoming retirement and inquired if they could replace with 2 part time positions.

Mayor Decker – Request for salary increase, came about because he asked others to step up and run for Mayor. He did some comparisons and most are in the \$40,000 range. In order to get a better quality Mayor you need to pay them more money. How we got here. In 1989 the Homestead/Non-Homestead was created and the City took advantage of it and home owner's taxes were cut about in half. Then a few years later the State cut some of the funding and left the City to make up the difference. Local business then pulled out in 1993 and 1994 because the council wouldn't double the residents' taxes and business got hit. When the businesses pulled out, so did the tax base and the owners filed property tax grievances for loss of revenue. This went uncorrected and coupled with 8 years of no tax increases in between. This is what has caused the problem we have today. These increases are frustrating, but we cannot cut our services. We need to get our finances in order. We pay lower local taxes than anyone in the area for great services that others do not get. The current proposed increase of 9.98% would cause an increase of \$13.22 per month on my personal residence. We need more industry and business to offset the tax burden. We need to move forward with the annexation with Town of Deerpark which will create additional tax base and the solar project that will save \$240,000 per year. The Mayor's position has not had a raise since 1999, so based on that premise, 2% per year since then would be \$28,564.92 and he would be sufficient with that.

**Public Comment:**

Wayne Kidney – The Mayor has only served for 4 years, so 2% for 4 years would be acceptable. What is the Sheriff's Dept. doing with all the extra Sheriff's if they are not doing the transports?

Linda Van Horn – Port Jervis is not a business, it is a town. Spending money to make money is not doing anything for us. If you don't like what you are being paid then step down.

Jerry Van Orden – Agrees with spending money to make money, but saving money makes money too.

Kristin Trovei we have run out time. Would like to schedule Thursday November 30<sup>th</sup> 6pm for another Budget Workshop. The public is welcome to attend. We need to focus on the position not the person. We should not compare the City to other municipalities. A comparison to the City of Olean is not good because they provide more services than we do, they provide sewage processing and we do not.