

November 18, 2010

**The Town Board of the Town of Warwick Re-opened the Public Hearing for the 2011 Preliminary Budget regarding amendments. Said public hearing was held on Thursday, November 18, 2010 at the Town Hall, 132 Kings Highway, Town of Warwick. Supervisor Sweeton opened the public hearing at 7:35 p.m.**

**ATTENDANCE: Supervisor Michael Sweeton  
Councilman Floyd DeAngelo  
Councilman Leonard DeBuck  
Councilman James Gerstner  
Councilman Mickey Shuback**

**Stephen Brown, Auditor  
Town Attorney, John Hicks**

**Supervisor Sweeton – Tonight, two weeks from last time we met, the budget has gotten a little better, but certainly it's not anything to be thrilled with, but I will give you the numbers. As it stands since we've last met, we've reduced expenditures by another half a million dollars. Spending levels for 2011 are below the 2010 expenditure levels and well below the 2009 expenditure levels. The rate as it stands tonight would be town wide which was what village residents would pay is \$6.27 per thousand of assessed value. For the average assessed house which is a \$415,000 house when you apply the equalization rate that's a \$50,000 assessed value. The tax amount of that typical house bill would be \$313.50 and last year it was \$262.00, so that's a \$51.00 difference; not insignificant. For town residents the rate goes to \$17.36 per thousand of assessed value, which for that average house is \$868.00 total bill and last year that number was \$759.50, so that's a \$108.00 difference; again not insignificant. We have gone through the budget line by line and we've cut everything to the bone. We have five individuals who have chosen to take early retirement and we thank them very much; we're very grateful for that. The budget as presented does still include some personnel reductions and those discussions need to go on with the departments and with the unions which we will be happy to do. I am pleased to say that we do have an agreement in principal with the Village of Warwick so that we do not have to reduce the number of police officers on the street and we will conclude the details of that agreement in the near future, but we do have their concurrence on that and they are willing to work with us to phase in the changing of that cost. Essentially what we've agreed to is splitting of the additional post. Currently there are five posts and two have historically been in the village and we will now split that extra post between the town and the village. Town residents will pick up the share of that and village residents will see a reduction in that cost, so I thank the village elected officials for coming to an agreement with us and hopefully we can hammer out the details of it. It still reflects a shifting of approximately \$400,000 of police service to the town residents and hopefully we can justify that service to them through additional receiving of the extra patrol in terms of what it will provide for town residents as well. That's where it stands and at this time. I'll open the hearing for public comment and just ask that you state you name and it would be helpful to know if you're a village or town resident and we'll hear what you have to say.**

**Ed Mullins – Town of Warwick PBA - I want to start off tonight by apologizing publicly to a bunch of people. The first one will be Wanda Vargas who called me Thursday who asked me a question and needed my advice and I haven't been able to return a phone call. The second person would be a lady on Cascade Road who has been involved in a scam where somebody stole money from her and she has been trying to reach out to me and I have not been able to call her back or assign it to another officer because the shifts have been short. There's a gentleman on Marion Court who called me asking for advice because he has a problem, again because I'm torn between administrative work inside and having to control shifts outside I have not been able to return his phone call. Lieutenant Maslanka I'd like to apologize to who piled up a bunch of equipment on my chair with instructions on what to do with it and the stuff still remains there and probably about a dozen people who I haven't been able to find yet because I haven't been able to go through my case work because I'm stuck between the road and answering calls for service and my administrative duties inside, so to those people I'd like to apologize. I understand that you're between a rock and a hard place and it's hard to get blood from a stone. The Warwick Police Department has been understaffed and it has been under staffed since 2006 and it says so in that New York State report that you all received. If you continue to cut support staff such as the dispatching that will increase the work load on the police officers that are supposed to be on the street further reducing the amount of people that are available to patrol. We have an epidemic problem with young people and prescription medications and it's not getting any better. The economy is bad and the gold prices are up. People who have gold in their homes are being targeted for burglaries and we've had a lot of that here in Warwick and the other communities around in order to combat that we need to have a patrol presence on the street and in order to combat that we need to have the detectives investigate burglaries and solving them and bringing those people to justice so they can get either incarceration or the treatment that they need. Having detectives work patrol shifts and not their caseload creates a problem for the police department, it creates a problem for the victims and I would hope that you start to take a good look at how that's going to happen. It's nice to be trendy with hybrid buses and electric car charging stations, but I ask you how many people in the Town of Warwick own an electric car and the expense on that could have been better used to improve the technology in the police department to serve the public better. More people call the police department than use electric cars. That's all that I have to say for now thank you.**

**Supervisor Sweeton – Thanks for your comments. Let me just say that we have an outstanding police department that does an outstanding job with the resources it has in hand and there are very few calls that don't get followed up by the officers probably outside of their own shift time and we certainly appreciate that. Not to belabor the hybrid bus, but that didn't cost the town or the village taxpayers one dime. It was a federal grant that simply passed through the village and went to the Warwick School District. Are there any other comments?**

**John Christison – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – I have a business in the village and I live in the town, so I'm on both sides of the fence as far as taxes go and police coverage. I'm glad to see that you kind of worked it all out between the village and the**

town. I'm on Main Street 25 years. It's busy downtown, so it's hard when you see it in the papers, though I don't know the logistics, but the village cutting back a service and everything else. I didn't make the village meeting the other night but it's hard as a business owner and I used to be a resident in the village now I'm in the town, but 25 years later it seems like there is more activity in the village and the town. I'm glad to see you're working it out hopefully for the betterment for all of us.

Supervisor Sweeton – That's why we fought hard to try to work it out. Clearly Sergeant Mullins and I agree that the department hasn't grown tremendously in the past 15 years, so to talk about reductions seemed not a very viable solution, so we're very happy we were able to come to an agreement.

Rich Weslowski – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – What enabled the village to change the terms of the agreement was there a contract that expires?

Supervisor Sweeton – There was a contract in place that if either party wanted to cancel the contract they could give 30 days notice, which the village did not in the idea that they were going to cancel having police. They chose that step so they could renegotiate the terms of the agreement. Historically as I said before, the village had paid for two police officers in the village at all times from the day the forces merged. Over the past four or five years there has been a difference of opinion as to who should bear the cost of the second patrol. We having the position that it was extra service that if they wanted it they had to pay for it. Their position was a little different and those differences sort of remain today, but we've come to a place where we feel this is a workable solution. We're going to split the cost of that post. It will spend theoretically half its time in reality what happens when there are calls for service, whether in the village or the town, the police department responds and responds very well, so we think that will work out half and half and hopefully town residents will benefit by the fact that the extra patrol can spend more time doing traffic stops, safety checks or whatever on roads outside of the village. We do get a lot of calls and complaints that we're not doing enough of that and the reason we're not doing enough is we only have the five patrols and it's a big town, so they may be handling other things. They may not have the time to actually sit on the side of the road for an hour and run radar. Now maybe we'll have that ability a little bit with this arrangement, so that's what we're hoping for.

Rich Weslowski – With the \$400,000 we're talking a lot of big numbers here and I apologize I don't have the total town budget.

Supervisor Sweeton – It's about 15 million in expenditures a little bit more.

Rich Weslowski – Ok and you did a great job breaking down how the household will go up for town residents. What kind of impact is \$400,000 on that one home? Are we talking pennies?

Supervisor Sweeton – Can you do the math in your head there Steve? I'm sorry I don't have that.

**Rich Weslowski – I’m trying to find out the effect of what the village is changing by what they want to do how that effects town residents.**

**Steve Brown – Auditor, Town of Warwick – If you take the \$400,000 by itself it’s about \$200.**

**Rich Weslowski – Ok thank you.**

**Ken Polumbo – Resident, Town of Warwick, NY 10990 – As far as the police department I think they do an excellent job. I lived down in New Jersey at one time in Bergen County and personally one of the reasons I moved up to Warwick was because it’s a nice area to live and start a family. I lived in the village and the township I also appreciate the fact of the feeling of secure. I still get phone calls from Jersey about miscellaneous robberies and slashed tires and I don’t have that problem here. I work in the village and the town for Optimum and since I’ve been working with the company for the last 16 years I’ve seen this township grow, yet the police department hasn’t caught up. I can tell you that I give these men great credit for being on Pulaski Highway at 2:00 a.m. in the morning and stopping without having a backup. I know from my own personnel experience down in Bergen County before you stop and get out of the car somebody is behind you backing you up. I have to give it to them they do extraordinary work and another thing too they’re not top heavy. One thing I want to point out is the feeling of security and also with the dispatchers. You have local dispatchers; you don’t have somebody who doesn’t know the town. These people who are dispatchers also know the town very well. They know the streets so they can guide them. 911 is a nice center to funnel all the calls into, but the people who work there may not know intimately the township or the roads, so that is something to consider and think about. As far as I’m concerned if I have to pay \$150 more in my taxes for police protection I’ll do it, it doesn’t bother me. I think we are getting worth every cent of it right back.**

**Supervisor Sweeton – Thank you.**

**CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING: Motion Councilman DeAngelo, seconded Councilman Gerstner that the public hearing be closed. Motion Carried (5 ayes, 0 nays) 7:50 p.m. 11-18-10**

---

**Marjorie Quackenbush, Town Clerk**