

**TOWN OF WESTERLO
2 PUBLIC HEARINGS REGARDING THE
2022 TOWN OF WESTERLO PRELIMINARY BUDGET,
2022 TOWN OF WESTERLO VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. PRELIMINARY BUDGET
&
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD
MEETING OF
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2021**

The Town of Westerlo Town Board held two (2) Public Hearings regarding the 2022 Town of Westerlo Preliminary Budget and the 2022 Town of Westerlo Volunteer Fire Co. Preliminary Budget. The Public Hearings were followed by a Special Town Board meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2021 at the Richard H. Rapp Municipal Building located at 933 County Route 401, Westerlo, NY 12193. Deputy Supervisor Kryzak opened the meeting at 7:02pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Attending were: Deputy Supervisor/Councilman Matthew Kryzak
Councilwoman Amie L. Burnside
Councilman Joseph J. Boone
Councilman Richard Filkins

Also attending were: Highway Superintendent Jody Ostrander, Library Trustee Maureen Sikule, Town Clerk Karla Weaver and approximately four interested residents.

PUBLIC HEARING

2022 TOWN OF WESTERLO PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Councilman Filkins made a motion to open the Public Hearing on the 2022 Town of Westerlo Preliminary Budget at 7:03pm. Councilwoman Burnside seconded; all in favor motion carried.

Councilman Kryzak proposed that the following changes be made to the Preliminary Budget:

- 8010.11 Zoning Board members and 8020.11 Planning Board members' salaries increase to \$8,000.00 which would equate to \$2,000.00 for each Board member per year.
- 8010.12 Zoning Board Chairperson and 8020.12 Planning Board Chairperson salaries increase to \$4,000.00 per year.
- There was a mistake under 1001 Estimated Revenues in the Highway Budget. The total for 2022 should be \$535,398.00 not \$820,432.00.
- 5010.11 Highway Supervisor salary to increase to \$65,000.00.

Discussion included:

- Planning and Zoning Board members getting paid per meeting. Councilman Kryzak did not believe that went through although the Town Clerk believed it had.
- Councilman Boone pointed out that Mr. Kryzak was proposing to increase Zoning and Planning Board Chairman's salaries, which are appointed positions, above elected Town Board member salaries. Mr. Kryzak was hoping it would be an incentive for qualified individuals to apply for those positions.

- A resident expressed concern for giving raises over and above elected officials. After a brief discussion, the Town Board was favorable to making the salaries for the Chairman of the Zoning and Planning Boards \$3,625 each to match the salaries of the Town Board.
- Mr. Kryzak indicated there was money in the fund balance to be used for any increases.
- The Confidential Administrator will become a salaried position to include grant writing and accounting which creates a savings for the Town.
- Potential grants were discussed.
- Highway Superintendent Jody Ostrander expressed that the ladies in the offices help him immensely which is the reason he doesn't need his own secretary. Mr. Kryzak believed that the administrative employees that work in the Town Hall were undervalued in previous years.

Councilman Filkins made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the 2022 Town of Westerlo Preliminary Budget at 7:48pm. Councilwoman Burnside seconded; all in favor motion carried.

2022 TOWN OF WESTERLO VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Councilman Boone made a motion to open the Public Hearing on the 2022 Town of Westerlo Volunteer Fire Co. Preliminary Budget at 7:48pm. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

Discussion included:

- Deputy Kryzak advised the Fire Co. Budget did not increase for 2022.
- Highway Superintendent Ostrander mentioned that since he has a flexible schedule, he was able to assist the Westerlo Vol. Fire Co. yesterday by driving their truck from 7:30am-3:30pm. He did five (5) calls covering other towns while those towns were helping battle the fire in Coeymans.

Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the 2022 Town of Westerlo Volunteer Fire Co. Preliminary Budget at 7:51pm. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING

Councilman Filkins made a motion to open the Special Town Board meeting at 7:52pm. Councilwoman Burnside seconded; all in favor motion carried.

2022 TOWN OF WESTERLO PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Councilman Kryzak advised he will have the corrections made to the 2022 Town of Westerlo Preliminary Budget tomorrow and available prior to the meeting on November 3rd. The November 3rd meeting will be a Special Town Board meeting for the purpose of adopting the budget unless there are more changes to be discussed. The Budgets needs to be adopted no later than November 20th.

MINUTES

Councilman Kryzak advised a correction needs to be made to page two (2) of the October 13th meeting minutes. The buyout for not taking the Town's health insurance is \$3,000.00 not

\$3,500.00. Councilman Boone made a motion to approve the minutes of September 7th, September 21st, October 5th and October 13th with the correction being made to the minutes of October 13th regarding the buyout amount. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2021)

Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to accept the Town Clerk's monthly report for September 2021 as submitted. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

NYCLASS/INVESTMENT REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2021)

Councilman Kryzak mentioned that NYCLASS is not performing however money is being kept in there as a place holder. The Bank of Greene Co. earned the Town \$234.30 in interest on all of the Town accounts. Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to accept the Investment report for September 2021. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2021)

Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to accept the Supervisor's report for September 2021. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilwoman Burnside indicated the closing ceremony for Hometown Heroes is at 2pm on November 13th at the Baptist Church.

Mrs. Sikule advised the Library is doing a bake sale on Election day. She also mentioned the Library does a spice of the month.

The Planning Board, Museum, Assessor and Building and Zoning reports were submitted to the Town Board however were not read aloud (see attached). Councilman Boone made a motion to accept the reports for the Planning Board, Museum, Assessor and Building and Zoning as submitted. Councilman Filkins seconded; all in favor motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Councilman Kryzak advised the one set of stairs at the Town Hall are rehabbed with a roof above. The rear stairs will be fixed in the spring.

AMENDING LOCAL LAW #1 OF 1989

Mr. Kryzak mentioned that the Town Attorney is still sorting through the Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations. Accessory structures will also be reviewed as people can't currently build anything on vacant property until a house is built.

NEW BUSINESS

TOWN OF WESTERLO VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY CHROMEBOOKS

Councilman Kryzak explained that the Westerlo Fire Co. is in need of purchasing Chromebooks. He would like them to be able to take advantage of the Town's discounts and would like to

purchase them on behalf of the Fire Co. and then will get reimbursed. Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Town of Westerlo Volunteer Fire Co. is in need of purchasing Chromebooks, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town of Westerlo will purchase the Chromebooks on behalf of the Town of Westerlo Volunteer Fire Co. at the Town's discounted price, and further

RESOLVED: The Town of Westerlo Volunteer Fire Co. will reimburse the Town the cost of the Chromebooks.

Councilman Filkins seconded; a vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 107 - 2021 was thereby duly adopted.

PROPOSED COMBINED AMBULANCE AND FIRE CO.

Councilman Kryzak mentioned that the Town is discussing the possibility of having an Emergency Services Building consisting of a combined Ambulance Squad and Fire Co. to be located at the Westerlo Ambulance Squad building. The Westerlo Ambulance Squad has roughly \$100,000 available to make improvements to the three (3) acres of land they own. He hopes to employ (2) full time EMT's. The Town Highway Department can wear pagers in case they are needed to drive a vehicle during their normal work hours. Discussion ensued regarding helping surrounding Town's and a goal of Greene County helping Westerlo.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK CHANGES

The employee handbook has been sent to the Town's insurance company because they offer a free review and they suggested it be rewritten. There is a law firm that would do it at a cost around \$5,000.00.

Mr. Ostrander requested that the handbook be amended to include the day after Thanksgiving as a paid holiday as it has been known to be for many years. He indicated that if the weather is bad, his department will work a normal day with overtime being paid beyond the hours of 7:30-4pm. Discussion ensued. Councilman Kryzak made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Town Board discussed making the Friday after Thanksgiving a paid holiday for full-time employees, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board for the Town of Westerlo offers at the discretion of the Supervisor, Highway Superintendent and Town Clerk to authorize the Friday after Thanksgiving 2021 as a paid day off for all eligible full-time employees with the intent to add this to the employee handbook as a paid holiday moving forward.

Councilwoman Burnside seconded; a vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilman Kryzak, Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Boone

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 108 - 2021 was thereby duly adopted.

Councilman Kryzak advised that the IRS and Affordable Care Act defines a full-time employee as one who works at least 30 hours a week or 130 hours a month on average. The Employee Handbook does not state this clearly therefore he would like to see it resolved. As it stands now, if an employee works a minimum of 30 hours a week, they are eligible for benefits. This will need to be discussed in the future as there is an employee this affects.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Highway Superintendent Ostrander would like to advertise to seek bids for a pickup.

Councilman Kryzak made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Town of Westerlo Highway Department is in need of a new pickup, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board authorizes the Highway Superintendent to advertise and shop for bids for a new pickup.

Councilwoman Burnside seconded; a vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilman Kryzak, Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Boone, Councilman Filkins

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 109 - 2021 was thereby duly adopted.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

With there being no further business, Councilman Kryzak made a motion to adjourn the Special Town Board meeting. Councilman Boone seconded; all in favor motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karla J. Weaver

*PLANNING BOARD REPORT
TO THE
TOWN BOARD
OCTOBER 19, 2021*

The Planning Board met on October 12th. Beers (SUP21-4) residential ground mounted solar public hearing was closed. Application is still before the ZBA for a variance. The Planning Board applied the new solar law and determined that the application would be allowed with no ruling by the Planning Board.

SUP21-3 Carkner application for outdoor event reviewed progress, listened to concerns by neighbors. It was determined that the Town Attorney will contact the Town Engineer to determine what cost would be associated with an engineering review. There will need to be more information regarding parking, road cut, demarcation of where the actual event will take place, consideration of neighbor's concerns before the application can be accepted. Mr. McHugh would contact Carkner's attorney.

SUP21-5 Pavlicin ground mounted solar – received updated site plan. Applied the new solar law to this application and determined that the application would be allowed with no ruling by the Planning Board.

Discussed the new laws passed by the Town Board- Wind, Battery storage and Solar. Provided the most current draft for the board's information.

Discussed the abutter letter and that the letters would be sent out by the Planning Board clerk- return receipt requested with a charge of \$10/letter to be billed to the applicant which was approved by the Town Board.

*Respectfully submitted,
Dotty Verch*

ADDENDUM

The Planning Board members have completed their required training through December, 2021.

The Planning Board has officiated over 11 Special use and Subdivision applications along with 5 Public Hearings, some continued during 2021. Site visits were performed for each application as well.

Westerlo Heritage Museum

Report to Town Board

2021 third Quarter report

The Museum board continues to meet monthly. We did not meet in august as the Director was out of town. We continue to look for new board members.

The Museum has been open the first Saturday of the month for the months of July, august and September. 1 visitor in July and 2 visitors in September.

I have worked with Amber on several occasions regarding the 2022 budget.

The museum had a display of historical markers at the library's end of the season event at the Town Park on August 25. The display coincided with the historical marker scavenger hunt that the library staff and town historian have developed.

There was also a museum display at the Fall Festival on September 25. This included the historical markers again plus a wooden ballot box and various voting items from the early 1900's. A bake sale to benefit the museum building fund was held in conjunction with the display.

Several donations have been procured – an antique sleigh; wooden and wooden ballot boxes.

Since my retirement in June I have been spending Wednesday mornings at the museum, cleaning, and organizing. I continue to take pictures of the items in the archive and add the picture of the item into the archival program.

The museum will not be open during the winter.

*Respectfully submitted,
Mary – Jane Araldi
Director*

ASSESSOR'S MONTHLY DEPARTMENTAL REPORT

To: Westerlo Town Board
From: Melanie Bunzey, Assessor
Date: October 7, 2021
Re: Monthly Report – September 2021

I am still working on getting the five solar farms within the Town assessed and the system up-to-date. Progress has been made, but the County Director is planning on coming to review things since a new solar model was issued for use by the State.

Pictures of completed structures per building permits are taken with the exception of a few where things can't be seen from the road but letters have been written to property owners for permission to access the property. Not all have responded, but some did and pictures have been taken. A camera has been purchased and provided to me for Town use.

"Packets" which include pictures taken; building permits; certificates of occupancy/completion where one has been issued; a worksheet to figure assessment adjustments were put together. We will use the construction cost indicated on the building permit (which is also signed by property owner) and multiply the cost by the current equalization rate and make the adjustments. There are approximately 60 "packets" so there will be many adjustments made and notices sent to property owners which may stir up a lot. My hope is whoever may be unhappy with the adjustment to their assessment, my explanation of how the construction cost was used will suffice enough to keep property owners content with how things were done.

A new Sales Transmittal Report was submitted to the State (listing sales since last report) with 12 sales.

Two Enhanced STAR exemptions have been granted directly from the State for "good cause" and processed.

All pending merge requests have been processed. There was a total of 4 merges. One split was processed since last report.

Address changes are made on a regular basis as well as bank escrow information. Routine calls and emails are received and answered on nearly a daily basis.

The system is checked for property owners listed on death notices regularly received via email from A.J. Cunningham Funeral Home and exemptions removed if necessary.

STAR reports received from New York State to date have been processed. Those reports are:

October: NONE

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Bunzey, Assessor

October Report - Building/ Zoning

Jeffry Pine BI/CEO

Applications Processed

Special use – 2

Variance request- 0

Sub– divisions – 0

Building permits issued – 1

New houses – 0

Commercial buildings - 0

Accessory structures – 1

Demo - 0

Other – 2

Cell tower related - 0

Construction inspections- 21

Site visits – 11

Fire calls – 0

Fire safety inspections and follow ups - 4

20 - In-service Training hours. (29 hours to date 24 hours required to maintain certification)