



**Town of Sherman
Board of Selectman
Budget Hearing
March 31, 2015
7:00 pm
Mallory Town Hall**

FINAL

Members Present: First Selectman, C. Cope, Selectman B. Ostrosky and Selectman A. O'Connor

Invited: Treasurer, E. Holub, and Business Manager, L. LaVia

Audience: G. Linkletter, S. Randall, J. Kenealley, M. Loeb, J. Laucious, R. Lenihan, H. Berger, L. Berger, P. Shear, L. Marsicano, M. Goldfine and V. Sheer (Citizen News)

Call to Order:

First Selectman C. Cope Called the Meeting to Order at 7:02p.m.

First Selectman C. Cope opened the meeting up to a Public Hearing.

BoE- the BoS discussed an email from D. Fiftal with a Proposed FY 2015-16 Budget bottom line projection at approximately 2.16% increase. This number is anticipated to be reduced again, due to anticipated Grant funding projections.

M. Goldfine- of Big Trail Extension spoke in reference to the lack of telecommunications coverage for the Emergency Responders as well as cell service in Sherman. Mr. Goldfine added that he felt the \$30,000.00 earmarked for FY 2015-16 for improvement of Emergency Services communications towers was a waste of money. Mr. Goldfine recommends the BoS look into satellite communications, which would greatly reduce the cost for improved communications services. Mr. Goldfine referred to email correspondence sent to First Selectman Cope as well as a conversation with D. Hopkins in reference to satellite alternatives. Mr. Goldfine stated he has no affiliation with satellite communications, and has contacted them independently. He stated the satellite company has offered the Town satellite use which would cost a few hundred dollars as opposed to the requested \$ 30,000.00.

J. Loucious- on behalf of the Sherman Library- asking the BoS clarification why their funding request has been reduced from \$ 150,000.00 to \$ 145,000.00.

P. Shear- on behalf of CLA- clarified their funding request, stating the amount is averaged out between the three highest offers, and that is what determines the final number. The original requested number was based previous to the knowledge of First Light not funding their portion of the request. Mrs. Shear reminded the BoS of her concerns with the CLA's obligation to fund a portion of the grass carp program.

D. Weder- of 8 Oak Drive- asking First Selectman Cope why he stated at the State of Our Lake event earlier in the month the BoS would be supporting the CLA's funding request in its entirety, when in fact now they are not.

L. Berger- of 27 Holiday Point- also questioning First Selectman Cope's statement at the State of Our Lake event that the BoS was in full support of CLA's funding request. Additionally, Mrs. Berger requested a question be added to the referendum ballot asking if the voters were to vote the budget down did they feel the total FY 2015-16 amount was too high or too low.

H. Berger, also of 27 Holiday Point- spoke in reference to recent lack of support of the Candlewood Lake Authority from First Light and New Fairfield. Mr. Berger reminded the BoS that Sherman has stood behind CLA consistently for many years, and is asking for continuation of support to allow CLA to provide marine patrol as well as other programs to improve the health of the lake.

S. Randall- on behalf of the Candlewood Lake advisory Board- asking for clarification of the reasoning behind the reduction of funding. Also Mr. Randall said he supports the Septic Walkover Ordinance.

First Selectman C. Cope- in response to the reasoning behind the Library and CLA funding cuts. Mr. Cope stated when the Town departments and Agencies submit their annual budgets, those initial numbers are inserted into the proposed budget. During the process every line is looked at, every department is asked to reduce their budget this year. It is unfortunate, but every department has been cut by some capacity.

M. Goldfine- clarify his suggestion to look into using satellite communications instead of radio telecommunications. He stated he work at the World Trade Centers and understands first hand, the emotional and sensitive issues for providing continuous communications coverage emergency responders. Mr. Goldfine requested copies of the email correspondence between himself and the First Selectman. Mr. Goldfine agreed to meet with Mr. Hopkins to discuss looking into satellite communications as an alternative to radio communications.

L. Berger- stated the minutes from the budget workshops were confusing, offering no in-site to the cuts.

First Selectman C. Cope- spoke in reference to one single item that is greatly impacting the whole proposed 2015-16 Town Budget. The Resident Trooper line is showing full funding, due to cuts from the State. Mr. Cope stated there is no other option at this time than to cover the line completely. There will be no feedback until June as to if the funding will be offset by the State by any percentage.

J. Keneally spoke on behalf of the BoE- requesting the BoS reconsider the "Town side" funding cut of the Facilities Manager position. He urges the BoS to revisit the original job description of the Facilities Manager, and feels the decision is short-sited when there is a considerable amount of over-site needed with the new Public Works wash station, and boiler repairs scheduled at the school.

First Selectman C. Cope closed the Public Hearing portion of the Meeting.

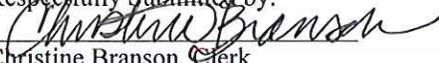
Business:

The BoS discussed additional changes to the proposed FY 2015-16 Budget. Selectman A. O'Connor asked if the BoS has looked enough at the Budget as a whole, feeling there were additional reductions to be made. The BoS discussed reducing the Tax Collectors mileage line back to the original \$500.00 approved in FY 2014. Additional proposed reductions were moving out an additional year, out of the Capital Plan-P&R- repairs to the tennis courts. Selectman A. O'Connor shared concern in reference to not being pro-active enough with general maintenance repairs to Town owned buildings. The BoS agreed to spend the next week looking at the budget as a whole, and on April 8th, discuss findings.

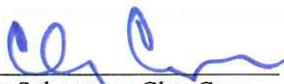
Adjournment:

Selectman B. Ostrosky Adjourned the Meeting at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:


Christine Branson, Clerk
April 7, 2015

APPROVED AS AMENDED AT THE APRIL 23, 2015 REGULAR MEETING


First Selectman, Clay Cope


Selectman, B. Ostrosky


Selectman, A. O'Connor