

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Public Hearing Tentative Budget
September 19, 2017**

Present: Supervisor Arthur Bassin Councilman Hugh Clark
 Councilman David Boice Councilwoman Madeline Israel
 Town Clerk Monica Cleveland
 Highway Superintendent James Miller

Supervisor Arthur Bassin called the Public Hearing for the 2018 tentative budget to order at 6:48 pm and opened it to the floor. He explained that the Tentative Budget was is was the first step in the Town budget process, and will be followed in October with a Preliminary Budget and in November with a final budget.

Susan Hillel asked if the expenses were kept flat in the budget was the town giving up any necessary services, or are there things that need to be done that are not in the budget.. Mr. Bassin answered that the town paces spending carefully and anticipates major capital items. The town tends to watch where it spends money and has flexibility in this. The town has also worked at eliminating certain unneeded positions. On balance the town has enough financial reserves even with flat spending and taxes to provide necessary services and to meet unexpected spending needs.

Councilwoman Israel said that she had asked about giving a raise to the Town Council and if they could vote for their own raise. She had suggested \$3000 for the two new people coming on but then realized that the newest additions to the board would be making more money than currently serving Board members.

Councilman Boice said that the board needs to begin thinking about the town grader and if they wish to take out a bond or pay for it from reserves.

Councilman Clark said that the insurance policies always need a careful look.

The board discussed possible salary increases of 2.5% for salaried employees or 40 or 50 cents an hour for hourly staff.

The 2018 library contribution is budgeted at \$7500, same as in 2017. Councilwoman Israel suggested that the town increase the amount to \$10,000. She noted that the town of New Lebanon gives their library \$135,000.

Mr. Bassin explained the town health insurance plan, which is a combination of using a CDPHP high deductible policy, funding an employee HSA at \$750 a year and self-insuring the deductible above \$1500 up to the policy deductible of about \$7100. Health insurance costs for 2018 are currently budgeted as equal to 2017, but costs from the insurance company have not yet been received.

There being no more comments, a motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to close the public hearing. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica Cleveland, Ancram Town Clerk