

Town of Lewis-Public Hearing

November 9, 2023

Lewis Town Hall

Present: Counselors Lanita Canavan, Terry Pulsifer, John Blades and Steve Denton, Supervisor James Monty, Town Secretary Susie Ewald.

Public Present: Gerald Spooner, Glen Crowningshield, Patty Bashaw, Ethan Farmer, Carolyn Schier.

Called to Order: The Public Hearing was called to order by Supervisor Monty at 7:00PM .

Pledge of Allegiance

The purpose of the Public Hearing meeting is to approve the preliminary budget to go to the Board for final approval on Tuesday November 14, 2023 at 7:00 PM. The Budget as submitted will have to go above the tax cap due to the loss of revenue from 2019, 2020 and 2021 due to COVID. The loss was \$200,000.00 in those years. The budget also included a 4% raise for full-time employees, also, the Town wants to institute a longevity plan for long term full-time employees, especially the Highway Employees, with the step program at 15, 20 and 25 years to try to get them up to the rates of pay of the other Towns in Essex County. Budget is only going up an overall of 11 cents per thousand.

Supervisor Monty asked for asked the Board for any questions or comments.

Councilperson Lanita Canavan asked if the County Budget is staying under the cap. Supervisor Monty stated it will be a 33 cent per thousand increase in the county tax if it is accepted. Councilperson Canavan is also concerned about the increase for the ambulance as she has asked for complete financial records a few times so she has something to compare to. Patty Bashaw asked for the record if the Town is receiving the reports as we should be getting them.

Councilman Pulsifer asked if the Code Enforcement Officer salary comes out of the safety inspection line. Supervisor Monty stated it does.

Councilman Pulsifer also asked if we hired a part-time Code Enforcement Officer the most we could offer them would be the \$8000.00. Supervisor Monty stated that he and Susie were thinking of them signing a contract, not making them an employee, for limited hours.

Supervisor Monty asked for asked the Public for any questions or comments.

Carolyn Schier thanked the Town Board for giving them the \$10,000.00 increase for 2024 She also stated the ambulance will be at a deficient of between 25% - 35% for 2024. Not sure what they will do when August comes and they run out of funds. They are requesting \$155,000.00 from the Town of Lewis. Supervisor Monty stated that it is too late in the year

and the discussion needs to be started at the beginning of the year in order to possibly reach the request they want. Councilman Pulsifer stated their request is pretty significant of an increase all at once.

Supervisor Monty asked to sit down with the ambulance squad to try and see what ideas the Town can offer to help cut costs for them. They will schedule a meeting to discuss options.

A motion to adjourn at 7:35 PM was made by Lanita Canavan and seconded by John Blades, 0 opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Williams
Town Clerk