

RUTLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

May 29, 2018

The Rutland Township Board held a special meeting in the Town Hall for the purpose of discussion and approval of the Assessor's Office Expenses as part of the Town Fund Budget FYE March 31, 2019. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Supervisor Sanders lead the Pledge of Allegiance after which the two attorneys participating in the meeting (Ken Shepro for Assessor Fritz and legal counsel for Rutland Township, Keri-Lyn Kraftefer) introduced themselves. Roll call showed the following members present: Supervisor Sanders, Clerk Rendl, Trustees Carlsen, Eaton, Hoffman, and Keegan, Assessor Gary Fritz; Absent, Commissioner Schultz.

AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda made by Trustee Eaton, seconded by Trustee Hoffman. Trustee Carlsen requested an amendment to the agenda and was advised by the township attorney that there can be no amendments to the agenda of a special meeting. Vote: Roll call vote.

Eaton	yes	Hoffman	yes
Carlsen	yes	Keegan	yes
Sanders	yes		

Motion carried. 2018-05-01 SP.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Betty Kabance, 18N316 Powers Road, Huntley, addressed the Board in opposition to the proposed increase to the Assessor's Budget.

Discussion and approval of the Assessor's Office Expenses as part of the Rutland Township Town Fund Budget FYE 2018-2019

The discussion was opened by Supervisor Sanders with explanation that this meeting was for the purpose of line item discussion and determination of the Assessor's approved total budget amount of \$160,000. She asked Assessor Fritz to start with the line item of *Salaries*. Assessor Fritz began his budget discussion by stating that his position on his proposed amount of \$160,000 was very fair, but still underfunding the office. He stated that "he wanted to clear the air – it wasn't that Jan Siers did anything wrong, the office has been underfunded for years and it is hard to do the job when you don't have the people or the budget to do the job. Actually, when an office like the Assessor's office is underfunded it causes other people's taxes to be higher because there is so much work that needs to be done; especially in the Assessor's office because we have so many new parcels coming on and all of the existing work still needs to be done. In the past I did a whole article about Jan and I never said anything bad about her, I talked about underfunding – the office hasn't been funded properly. In fact, in the past the trustees were malicious and a little bit obnoxious - go back and read the minutes in 2015 and I'm sure you all would have the same feeling about that, it's true. I wasn't trying to bash anyone, I was just trying to do my job. If you don't have enough manpower to do the work it does affect the taxpayers. My office went to 40 hours January 1st and we will continue to do 40 hours, that's the correct way to do it, and that's what I'm going to do until the funding ceases. I just wanted to let Jan know that I wasn't ever bashing her at all, this is about the job – the money wasn't in the budget." Supervisor Sanders stated that she (Jan) still had almost \$85,000 left in her budget when Assessor Fritz took over on January 1st.

Supervisor Sanders then reminded Assessor Fritz they still had to go over his budget line by line. Question: what did he want for salaries? Answer: \$125,000. She stated that Payroll taxes must also be considered at .064% of gross salary. Trustee Eaton clarified with Assessor Fritz that he (Assessor Fritz) had previously requested

\$110,000 in salaries and now he wanted to “bump it up \$15,000 more”? Answer: Yes. Question: You will be adjusting in other areas to accommodate? Answer: yes. Supervisor Sanders then gave the figure of \$8,000 for payroll taxes based on the \$125,00 gross salary amount. Discussion of gross salary amount as it relates to the amount necessary for payroll taxes. Discussion on the IRA contribution amount based on the requested salary amount; up to 3% matching employee contribution. Medical benefits are \$8,400 per full-time employee per year. Those computations add up to \$153,550, for Personnel, leaving only \$6,450 for all of the other services.

Mr. Shepro introduced the idea of vacating the trailer and moving the Assessor’s office into the township office. Discussion regarding maintenance; improvements paid for by the township, not the assessor. Discussion on utilities and electric costs.

Trustee Carlsen made the statement that the Board could not tell the Assessor what to put in for his line item expenses and discussion took place as to the fact that no one was telling him what he had to do, that “we are all trying to make it work. A budget cannot be approved without line item determination.”

Trustee Keegan asked if Assessor Fritz had considered trying something different with the manpower and/or the hours the office was open? Answer: No. “The workers are here 10 hours a day, 4 days a week and it works – I see the workers every day and it works out very well.”

Trustee Keegan introduced the idea that growth probably would not be as great as in the past, so the work load may not be there to do, “the heavy lifting has already been done”. Discussion. Bernard Thomas, Pingree Grove, (from the audience) interjected by making the statement “that over the last 5-10 years the growth of the communities has to justify the increase the Assessor is requesting in his budget. Has the Board seen categorically anything that would justify that kind of increase? How can a budget be approved if there is no proof of changes year to year categorically taking place?” Discussion.

Trustee Hoffman clarified with Assessor Fritz that there are 2 ½ full-time employees in the office. Answer: Yes. Question: So then, with you, (Assessor Fritz) in the office, there will be 3 ½ full-time employees in the office? Answer: Yes. Question: You are in the office 40 hours per week? Answer: No, I (Assessor Fritz) am part-time, about 25. Question: You are physically here that amount of time? Answer: Yes. Question: You see them every day? Answer: Yes. Question: You stop by every day and see them? Answer: Yes. Question: Is it necessary to have 2½ people there, or 2 people there 40 hours a week? Answer: Yes. Discussion regarding the amount of people coming into the office – are the calls and people coming into the office being logged? Answer: Yes. Discussion. Is that information accessible to the Trustees? Answer: Yes.

Attorney Kraftefer then asked Assessor Fritz about the chart that he had prepared, could he provide the percentage of the assessor’s budget as part of each overall township budget? Answer: No, that chart was strictly salaries and benefits.

Supervisor Sanders stated that the overall levy was for \$161,250 for the Assessor’s office and it would be fortunate if the township did get that entire amount. The township does not necessarily receive all that they levy for. The township only has \$203,000 in Reserves. The Township Budget is \$165,994 and that includes all the elected officials’ salaries, maintenance for the township office and grounds and other expenses – also there are no benefits provided for the elected officials. It is a very lean budget; the township cannot provide the kind of money to increase the Assessor’s budget - the Reserves must be maintained.

Attorney Kraftefer then stated that Assessor Fritz’s chart showed there was no money allocated for insurance benefits – but there is money allocated for insurance benefits for full-time employees (35 hours/week). Discussion regarding IRA funding for the Assessor’s employees. Attorney Kraftefer asked Assessor Fritz if he

wanted to reduce the \$153,550 for Personnel? Assessor Fritz suggested \$120,000 for salaries. Supervisor Sanders outlined total Personnel costs based on \$114,000, \$112,000, \$110,000 salary expense. Discussion then took place regarding cutting the contractual services based on actual costs. Discussion of actual costs for the previous year.

Assessor Fritz suggested eliminating the medical benefits expense for his employees. Supervisor Sanders suggested that both the IRA and medical benefits could be kept if the employees worked less than 40 hours/week. Discussion. Assessor Fritz stated that in 2015 the budget was \$162,500 for the quadrennial. Supervisor Sanders if the budget was increased to \$162,500 the expenses as discussed were still too high. Additional discussion.

Trustee Hoffman asked about the new/updated computers/software that were purchased – hadn't the Assessor stated they had to be purchased to eliminate some of the work? Answer: That isn't entirely correct, but they help. Question: How many computers were purchased/replaced? Answer: Four. Question: 2 ½ employees, 4 computers? Why? No answer. Discussion.

Supervisor Sanders reminded everyone that the Contractual Services still needed to be reviewed line-by-line and changes made so the total amounted to no more than \$25,360.

Discussion took place regarding line item expense changes in Contractual Services. Final Contractual Services line item expense determinations made as follows:

- 62202 Maintenance & Cleaning changes to \$500** from \$3,200.
- 62206 Postage changes to \$60** from \$200.
- 62207 Publications changes to \$500** from \$200.
- 62208 Telephone, Fax stays at \$3,500.**
- 62210 Dues & Subscriptions changes to \$30** from \$200.
- 62211 Travel & Mileage changes to \$100** from \$500.
- 62212 Training & Meetings changes to \$1,500** from \$2,000.
- 62213 Utility – Electric Heat & AC changes to \$2,800** from \$4,000.
- 62217 Transportation Reimbursement changes to \$2,000** from \$2,500.
- 62218 Manuals/Publications changes to \$700** from \$800.
- 62219 Other Expenses change to \$464** from \$1,000.
- 62220 Consultation/Appraisals fixed at 0.**
- 62222 Software & Licenses changes to \$8,000** from \$10,000.
- 62223 Computer Technical Support stays at \$2,000.**
- 62230 Legal Fees changes to \$2,500** from \$5,000.
- 62200 Contractual Services Total: \$24,654**

Discussion took place regarding line item expense changes to Personnel. Final Personnel line item expense determinations made as follows:

- 62101 Salaries change to \$114,000** from \$190,000
- 62102 Payroll Tax changes to \$7,046** from \$13,800
- 62103 Unemployment Tax is included in the Payroll Tax total of \$7,046**
- 62104 S.I.M.P.L.E. IRA Benefit Plan changes to \$0** from \$1,580
- 62105 Medical Benefit Plan changes to \$16,800** from \$16,000.

62100 Personnel Total: \$137,846

Motion to amend the Assessor’s Office Expense Budget **in the total amount of \$162,500 with the line item changes as discussed**, made by Trustee Eaton; second by Supervisor Sanders. Vote: Roll call vote.

Eaton	yes	Sanders	yes
Keegan	yes	Hoffman	yes
Carlsen	no		

Motion carried. 2018-05-02 SP.

Approval of RU-2018-04 Rutland Township Town Funds Budget & Appropriations Ordinance

Motion to approve **RU-2018-04 Rutland Township Town Funds Budget & Appropriations Ordinance, in the total amount of \$328,494; with the Assessor’s portion amended and approved as discussed (in the total amount of \$162,500)** made by Trustee Eaton; seconded by Trustee Hoffman. Vote: Roll call vote.

Eaton	yes	Hoffman	yes
Carlsen	no	Keegan	yes
Sanders	yes		

Motion carried. 2018-05-03 SP

Approval of RU-2018-05 Rutland Township Road District Fund Budget & Appropriation Ordinance

Motion to approve **RU-2018-05 Rutland Township Road District Funds Budget & Appropriations Ordinance, in the total amount of \$774,100** made by Supervisor Sanders; second by Trustee Eaton. Vote: Roll call vote.

Sanders	yes	Eaton	yes
Keegan	no	Hoffman	yes
Carlsen	no		

Motion carried 2018-05-04 SP

Adjournment of Township Board Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Eaton and seconded by Trustee Hoffman. Vote: Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried. **2018-05-05 SP.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

DOCUMENT SIGNING

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Kathleen J. Rendl

Kathleen J. Rendl, Township Clerk

ACCEPTED:

Margaret Sanders, Supervisor

Thomas Ray Eaton, Trustee

Nicholas Hoffman, Trustee

Charleen Carlsen, Trustee

Victor Keegan, Trustee