

SPECIAL MEETING, WARRENSBURG TOWN BOARD, OCTOBER 25, 2011

A special meeting of the Warrensburg Town Board was held on Tuesday, October 25, 2011 at the Albert Emerson Town Hall at 4:30 p.m. with the following members present:

PRESENT:	Supervisor	Kevin Geraghty
	Councilman	John Alexander
	Councilman	Bryan Rounds
	Councilman	Austin Markey
	Councilman	Dean Ackley

OTHERS PRESENT: Donna A. Combs, Town Clerk; Ed Pennock, Highway Superintendent; Tom Belden, Water Department and numerous town residents.

RESOLUTION #156-11

RESCIND RESOLUTION #137-11

On motion of Councilman Markey, seconded by Councilman Alexander, the following resolution was ADOPTED – VOTE – AYES 5 NAYS 0

IT IS RESOLVED, to rescind resolution #137-11, adopted October 3rd, 2011 authorizing a grant application for the Band Stand for \$275,250.00.

RESOLUTION #157-11

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING GRANT APPLICATION FOR FLOYD BENNETT MEMORIAL BANDSTAND AND RESTORATION PROJECT

On motion of Councilman Markey, seconded by Councilman Alexander, the attached resolution was ADOPTED- VOTE – AYES 5 NAYS 0

RESOLUTION #158-11

RESOLUTION COMMITTING TO THE SUPPORT FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW HEALTH CENTER

On motion of Supervisor Geraghty, seconded by Councilman Alexander, the attached resolution was ADOPTED – VOTE – AYES 5 NAYS 0

DISCUSSION – 2012 BUDGET

Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board a date is needed for the public hearing for the 2012 Preliminary Budget. It was decided to hold the public hearing on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION –AUTHORIZE DAVE CAVANAUGH TO WORK ADDITIONAL HOURS

Supervisor Geraghty opened discussion asking the Town Board if they wanted to have Dave Cavanaugh work Cabbage Night and the Halloween Parade. Supervisor Geraghty said it worked really well during garage sale weekend with him working. It was decided to have the Supervisor have Dave Cavanaugh work Cabbage Night and the Halloween Parade.

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DISCUSSION – HEATING FUEL

Supervisor Geraghty opened discussion telling the Town Board the County awarded Main Care the fuel oil bid for Warren County and Superior Plus Energy will have the kerosene and the 50/50 mix. Supervisor Geraghty said the prices came off the State contract and asked the town board for a resolution to accept the bid awards for the Town of Warrensburg for fuel oil and kerosene.

RESOLUTION #159-11

AUTHORIZE CONTRACTS FOR HEATING FUEL UNDER WARREN COUNTY BID

On motion of Councilman Ackley, seconded by Councilman Markey, the following resolution was ADOPTED – VOTE – AYES 5 NAYS 0

IT IS RESOLVED, to authorize a contract with Superior Plus Energy for the year 2012 for Kerosene and mixed fuel under the Warren County Award.

DISCUSSION – HEALTH INSURANCE EMPLOYEE COPAY

Supervisor Geraghty opened discussion saying that he had reviewed different possible contributions from the employees, as was requested by the Town Board at a previous meeting, so the 2012 Budget would be at a zero increase. Supervisor Geraghty said he received a phone call from the newspaper and he gave them an idea by looking at the contribution if the Councilmen contributed twenty percent of their health insurance and the town employees contributed ten percent of the Health Insurance their would be a zero percent increase. Supervisor Geraghty said this is a Town Board decision; they can do what ever they want, if they want to contribute or if they do not want to. Supervisor Geraghty said he did a pole of other boards around Warrensburg and he knows most of the Boards do not provide coverage for their Town Boards, they do provide coverage for their employees; it ranges from a twenty five percent contribution from the employees to flat fees in Chestertown, Lake George and Stony Creek. Supervisor Geraghty said right now the Town enjoys no contribution for the employees who have worked prior to 2007 and any body hired after 2007 contributes ten percent of the difference between what the employee would pay and if they have a two person or family. Supervisor Geraghty said he was leaving it to the Town Board and it was open for discussion.

Councilman Alexander asked for clarification on the current budget asking if what is proposed with the 1.9 percent increase has any thing in it about contributions from any employees, as it is right now.

Supervisor Geraghty said the current budget is the current health insurance rates as the Town stands today.

Councilman Alexander asked if the proposed recommendation that the Councilmen contribute twenty percent for Health Insurance and the employees contribute ten percent that was recommended and if passed would bring the Budget down. Supervisor Geraghty

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said it would be at an almost zero increase, within a few pennies. Supervisor Geraghty said it is a Board decision, and, he would open the meeting up for comments.

Councilman Alexander said that he was in favor of the Councilmen paying twenty percent towards their Health Insurance, he would be happy and honored to do that. Councilman Alexander said he did not know what the Board consensus is for employees to contribute with ten percent, the Budget Officer has reflected modest salary increases in his budget, which no one has had in two years, it is important that the Board address that issue. Councilman Alexander said through attrition, the Board has to do that because the Budget Officer has to do these things and he has been able to do that and take care of the employees with increases, with a two percent tax cap. Councilman Alexander said he would be in favor and would recommend twenty for the Councilmen and ten for the employees.

Councilman Ackley said he could not go along with that, the employees have been here for years and the Board went to them a few years ago and told them they could not take raises, Board members took pay cuts. Councilman Ackley said the employees are hard working people and are dedicated to their jobs and then the Board turns around and asks them for contributions to their Health Insurance, which has actually hurt some of them and taken money away from them and he can not go along with that.

Councilman Markey said he wished to reiterate Dean's point; and said the Town has employees here who have been here twenty to thirty years and they work for average to medium wages; twenty to thirty years ago the reason they came to the Town of Warrensburg was for the proximity of their jobs, for the benefits they received, Health Insurance that the Town provided. Councilman Markey said every one of the guys sitting out here could have left this job and gone to independent sewer and water companies, they could have gone and worked for a trucking company; he feels the Town Board is not doing any justice offering them a three percent increase in their pay when you take a guy who makes thirty grand and give him a three percent increase it is nine hundred dollars, you take that same guy that has a husband and wife plan at eighty hundred and eighty five dollars times ten percent times twelve months will still be dipping in their pockets, even though they are getting a raise they are still dipping in their pocket.

Councilman Ackley said everyone has come on board realizing they did not have to contribute, everyone of us.

Councilman Alexander told the Town Board Health Insurance is not given forever, it used to be \$200.00 a month it is now \$885.00, every person in private and public sector is paying some of kind of a contribution. Councilman Alexander said he was in total agreement, which is why Kevin put in the increases in the budget to kind of off set and hopefully if we can have a modest increase next year, it will take care of those things, stay with the plan. Councilman Markey asked what the plan was; Councilman Alexander said to have another modest cost of living next year. Councilman Markey asked if it

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wasn't also in the plan for next year to increase the Health Insurance co-pays up to twenty five percent over the next four years.

Supervisor Geraghty said no, absolutely not. Councilman Rounds said that he thought they had talked that at one time and said that if the Town was going to do ten percent to the full time employees then they had better do twenty to the part time employees, he thought the Supervisor said in four years they were going to go to twenty five percent.

Supervisor Geraghty said he made a chart like he was asked to, he followed the chart of every other community around us and every other community around us runs up to twenty five percent.

Discussion ensued on health insurance and what the Town Boards decision would be.

Supervisor Geraghty said what he had done was to look at the budget to see where he could zero the budget for the tax payers, if the Town's employees gave ten percent and the councilmen gave twenty percent. Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board he personally did not care what they did, he knew there were a lot of people who do not get Health Insurance at all, a lot of people who recognize the good job of the employees; and, that he recognizes the good job of the employees and has increased the pay wages of these employees more than anyone else sitting there in the last six years and they know that, along with the Town Board they voted for nice raises in the last six years. Supervisor Geraghty said when it became hard time the pay increases were held but people hired after 2007 contribute for health insurance and, if you the Board do not want to make the people contribute to their health insurance he is fine with that, he is just one vote and he had proposed that to zero out the budget for the tax payers. Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board if they wished to make a different proposal they could, and told the Town Board that health insurance is not an entitlement, he has been told that, health insurance can be changed anytime by any board, it is just like social security, if somebody wants to change social security they can. Supervisor Geraghty said he understood the employees plight, years ago when he was on the Board in the eighties health insurance was very low and so was the pay, the pay has crept up and the benefits are enormous, everybody working for the Town of Warrensburg has a benefit package that equals about sixty thousand dollars a year and they do not have to leave their community to go to work, that is a lot better than you would do working in other places. Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board if they wanted to ask the employees to contribute, that is what zeros out the budget. Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board that going to twenty five percent would be a town board decision.

Councilman Markey told the Supervisor that was what had been recommended to Bryan, and he only wished to have clarification. Supervisor Geraghty said he had not made a recommendation; he did a chart and based it on what the other communities were given. Councilman Rounds told Supervisor Geraghty that maybe when he did the chart and they were talking about it, maybe he was saying in four years we could be looking at increases

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like that. Councilman Rounds said he felt the Councilmen and the part timers should be making more of a sacrifice than the full time employees.

Councilman Rounds said he was still on board at making the contribution ten percent for the employees, it is a perk and if it has to go to twenty percent for the councilmen than so be it, through attrition and the people that have left the town and they have not rehired in different places we should be bringing the finances closer to where they do not have to take that away from the pre-2007 hires, those people that put in the time at the low wage. Councilman Markey asked if the intention was that people hired after 2007, who are currently paying ten percent would be paying twenty percent, and, asked Supervisor Geraghty what the plan is. Supervisor Geraghty said the plan is to continue on, if the town board does not think the employees should contribute to the health insurance, this board will face the public and answer to the public, people who contribute ten percent now will continue to contribute ten percent, the difference between what a single person equals and what a two person per family and that is strictly the town boards decision and you will have to answer to the tax payers.

Councilman Markey asked what the intention is of the town board, if they are going to hit all of the employees for ten percent. Councilman Rounds said that as the payroll has become less, they should be able to start finding some room.

Supervisor Geraghty counted twelve towns and said every town contributes to the health insurance but the Town of Warrensburg, it is a Board decision, they can set the rates any where they want to, he is one vote and he did this to balance the budget.

Discussion ensued on the proposal to have town employees contribute to health insurance, and, if employees would rather take a pay freeze or contribute to health insurance for ten percent.

Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board he did not make any changes to the people who retired, and, did not make any changes to the people who are retiring this year. Supervisor Geraghty said they found out some information this afternoon, potentially the town can stay with Blue Shield, potentially the co-pays will go back to 25 percent, they are waiting to see what the product is, when they called today they found out that Blue Shield is making changes to the plan, as soon as they get the details they will look at it and if it falls in line with the premium that they built into the budget, there is some potential they will go back to the \$25.00 co-pay and lower hospitalization costs. Supervisor Geraghty explained this just happened this afternoon, they are saying they will let the Town of Warrensburg have these rates because they renew December 1st; go into this plan. Supervisor Geraghty said this would be something that would not upset the employees that much, he personally feels the contributions are something the Town Board should do, he really thinks it is time to do it.

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Councilman Markey said the Budget he has proposed currently, at the 1.9 percent increase, would raise the tax per thousand three cents.

Supervisor Geraghty said that was the way he calculated it, as well, and, that was with the increases and no contribution other than the total contribution for health insurance. Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board a lot of this budget had to do with reduction in fund balance, the town does not have the fund balance it had a year ago, they do not have the fund balance they had when they were earning seventy thousand dollars a year in interest. Supervisor Geraghty said he reduced the amount of money in fund balance to balance this budget, he did not tap into the fund balance, personally he thinks it is a bare bones budget.

Councilman Rounds asked if the Town was painting themselves into a corner by not building in a slight increase right now, in case they need equipment, with this percent cap. Supervisor Geraghty told the Town Board the Town is currently within the tax cap. The Supervisor cautioned the Town Board about the tax cap.

**RESOLUTION #160-11
ESTABLISH COPAYS FOR HEALTH INSURANCE**

On motion of Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Rounds, the following resolution was ADOPTED by role call vote:

Councilman Markey	Nay
Councilman Ackley	Nay
Councilman Alexander	Yes
Councilman Rounds	Yes
Supervisor Geraghty	Yes

IT IS RESOLVED, to have full time Town Employees begin contributing 10 percent of their salary towards their health insurance package and it is further resolved to have the town board members contribute 20 percent of their salaries.

2012 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Discussion ensued about the 2012 Tentative Town Budget. Numerous changes were made to the 2012 Tentative Budget.

**RESOLUTION #161-11
PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

On motion of Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Rounds, the following resolution was ADOPTED by role call vote:

Councilman Alexander	Aye
Councilman Rounds	Aye
Councilman Markey	Nay
Councilman Ackley	Nay
Supervisor Geraghty	Aye

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IT IS RESOLVED, to move this 2012 Tentative Budget to a Preliminary Budget and authorizing the Town Clerk to schedule and advertise a public hearing for Wednesday, November 9th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

On motion of Councilman Ackley, seconded by Councilman Alexander, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna A. Combs, Town Clerk