

PRESENT: Sup. F. Newlin; Councilmen A. Bax, S. Edwards, M. Johnson, and G. Pacioni; Finance Officer A. DiRamio; Town Attorney J. Leone; 2 Residents; 1 Press (N.G.) and Dep. Clerk C. Schroeder

The Supervisor opened the budget session at 7:10 p.m. The first order of business was to set a date for the public hearing on the 2007 Preliminary Budget. The Board would then meet with the Town Justices and Library Director to review their respective budgets.

Newlin called for setting the public hearing on Thursday, November 9 at 7:30 p.m. **Johnson MOVED for approval of this date and time. Seconded by Pacioni and carried 5-0.**

Councilman Edwards said he has a work conflict and would not be able to attend the hearing. He would appreciate a copy of the public's comments as soon as they become available.

In the Supervisor's Tentative Budget, Newlin said he imposed an increase in the tax rate for the Master Sewer (SS2) and South Sewer (SS3) districts. This was based on the best information available to him at the time. Now, that he was obtained up-to-date information, there is no longer a need for any tax increase in the two sewer districts. They will be frozen at the current rates.

Based on the updated assessment information the 2007 preliminary budget was adjusted to reflect the revisions to the SS2 and SS3 line-item funds as follows:

**Johnson MOVED to amend line-item SS2-1000-1001 to \$461,458. Seconded by Bax and carried 5-0.**

**Johnson MOVED to amend line-item SS2-1000-2121 to \$43,542. Seconded by Pacioni and carried 5-0.**

**Johnson MOVED to amend line-item SS3-1000-1001 to \$176,604. Seconded by Bax and carried 5-0.**

**Johnson MOVED to amend line-item SS3-1000-2121 to \$7,396. Seconded by Bax and carried 5-0.**

### Town Justices:

Tom Sheeran and Hugh Gee provided a brief overview of the justice's budget. Sheeran noted that the revenue generated by the courts in terms of the number and amount of fines for the current year is slightly behind where they have been in the past; however, the amount of money that is going to be returned to the community from the fines will be up from what it has been in the past. He anticipates the fines returned to the Town this year will be in the neighborhood of \$300,000. This is over what we had budgeted for and over what they had anticipated. A large measure of that is the stepped up enforcement by the Lewiston Police and closer attention to the violations that have taken place in the town and the ability to deal with them more accurately.

Councilman Edwards said the town has a new building inspector who is currently becoming certified. How does he prosecute a building code violation? Sheeran said that if it reaches the point where it literally has to go to trial, then it would have to be one of the town attorneys that would have to prosecute that. For the record, Sheeran noted that during the time he has served as town justice, he has never had a prosecution over building code violations because those people generally comply.

### Lewiston Library:

Newlin introduced the new director of the Lewiston Library, Ronald Shaw. The Director thanked the Board for the opportunity to meet. In 2001, Shaw said the library's budget was \$381,000. The amount allocated for 2007 is \$322,000, a 5% increase from 2006 but a decrease from the library's request of \$425,000. The problem, Shaw said, is that they are having difficulty providing services to the community that patrons are asking for. The

purpose and function of the library is to enrich the lives of those in the community in the town and village of Lewiston. The reason he is asking consideration for additional funding is because they are branching out to areas of the community they have never tried to address. They are partnering with Lewiston-Porter for support for summer reading assignments, special assistance on research projects and a summer reading program. We are working with Niagara University trying to access their collection system and provide inter-library loan between the university and the NIOGA system.

Patrons love their library, he said. They are highly valued. They are an important 21<sup>st</sup> century resource. We are still at the forefront of the information age. We use tax funds wisely. The public welcomes a greater role for libraries because they are safe and engaging for teens. They provide literacy skills for the work force. They are a center for community information and they provide greater access to technology. For every \$1.00 we receive we return at least \$4.00 in services, Shaw said.

Even though they are providing information and quality service, the library's costs are going up. The library provides a value for your money. We're an investment – not only in the community but in the children and in the investment in the future of this Country. In order for this community to remain vibrant and growing, we need to support children, our teenagers and we need to support adults and we need to reach out to underserved areas -- whether it's the Tuscarora Indian Reservation, migrant workers or whomever. We need to reach out to all segments of this society. The bottom line is, at this point, I cannot do that without your financial assistance.

Newlin said the entire Board is in support of the Library and will do its best to find non-traditional sources of funding. Not going into any specifics, Newlin said the Board has opportunities, perhaps in the business community to help the library with some of its needs. While we continue to feel financial pressures on the A- and B-budgets within the town, there may be a good opportunity for another source of revenue in spot circumstances when it needs a major capital improvement like a new roof. That is with the anticipation of NYPA money that will be coming, if everything goes according to plan, in September 2007. We're going to be reasonable and listen to all requests. We'll do our best to work together as a Board and come up with a priority list. The library may very well be within the first year's worth of funding. If not, it will be bumped up the next year. That is a reasonable way to address some of the funding concerns.

Johnson said the Village of Lewiston secured some grant funding in the past. He recommended they work with the Village to continue to apply for additional grants.

A question was asked about the hours of operation. Shaw said in their budget request of \$425,000 the library would be able to increase its hours to 49 and they would have been able to add three part-time positions. What is proposed in the Supervisor's budget, it would be difficult to change hours they are currently open. That is something we're looking at.

The Supervisor asked if any member of the public wished to comment. Peggy Salada asked the Board to please think deeply and hardily about increasing the library's funding. She considers the library her second home and a jewel of Lewiston.

Lastly, Newlin said they may want to schedule an additional budget session prior to the hearing. Johnson asked about the adjustments to the police budget that were approved at the joint police meeting. The finance officer said she doesn't have the figures that were approved. They were not made part of the minutes. Newlin said these could be adjustment before the hearing.

The Board agreed to schedule a budget session at 6:00 p.m., November 13 for review of the preliminary budget (followed by the regularly scheduled worksession). **This was in a form of a motion by Johnson. Seconded by Bax and carried 5-0.**

**Bax MOVED to adjourn, Seconded by Pacioni and carried 5-0.** Time: 8:05 p.m.

Transcribed and  
Respectfully submitted by:

Carole N. Schroeder  
Deputy Town Clerk