**Colton Town Board Public Meeting, October 16, 2023**

**County of St. Lawrence, State of New York, 94 Main St., Colton NY 13625**

Present: Ronald Robert, Town Supervisor Councilpersons: Lisa Fisher

Jennifer Cole, Town Clerk Jacob Poste

Stephen Knight

Kevin Beary

Meeting attendees: Anne Townsend, Andrea Malik, Ed Fuhr, Mary Jane Watson

Zoom attendees: The Town was unable to offer zoom for this meeting.

Supervisor R. Robert led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting opened at 6:00pm. This public meeting was advertised by flyers being distributed around the Town of Colton in both post offices, local businesses, and the display case at the front of the Town Hall. This meeting was called to discuss the tentative 2024 budget for the Town of Colton.

Motion #1

Mr. Knight made the motion to move this meeting to executive session, seconded by Mr. Poste.

Discussion as to why executive session was needed and/or necessary.

Ayes 4

Noes 1 - Beary

Motion carried

Time executive session was called was 6:03pm.

Motion #2

Mr. Knight made a motion to leave executive session and return to the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Poste.

Ayes 5

Noes 0

Motion carried

Time regular meeting was brought back in session was 6:39pm

\*NO RESULTS OF EXECUTIVE SESSION\*

There was confusion among the public present as to whether they would be able to speak at this meeting. Supervisor Robert stated that before we heard from the public, the board would like to speak to department heads. Ms. Fisher stated that typically the town follows the union contract for all employees when giving annual raises. Currently the union contract is still in negotiations. Supervisor Robert stated that he and Mr. Knight have had one union/teamsters meeting and there is another meeting this Thursday. Supervisor Robert stated that after speaking with other towns regarding union wages, the Town of Colton is behind. The current tentative budget for 2024 shows a 3% wage increase across the board for all employees, except those requesting more. Mr. Beary felt that percentages should be cut. He stated that the judge’s salary should be brought back to $14,000.00. Ms. Fisher said she would like to see a 10% increase across the board for all employees’ wages, instead of 3%. Then once contract negotiations were final, have a conversation with department heads. Supervisor Robert and Mr. Beary both agreed to 6% across the board for wage increase until contract negotiations are completed. The remainder of the board agreed. Questions on the engineering line in the tentative budget. Currently at $77,300.00. Supervisor Robert stated that it needs to be brought down to $15,000.00. Question on summer help. Currently there is a budget of $10,000.00, enough for two summer employees for 2024. Mr. Beary felt that this line should be brought down to $5,000.00 and only hire one person for summer help in 2024. Mr. Knight disagreed. He felt that having a little extra there for “in case” purposes was wise. It doesn’t mean we have to hire two employees. Questions on the Transfer Station Admin line. There was an increase of 105.98% and for the personnel services an increase of 56.58%. Mr. Beary stated that for the library wall that needs repair, the library should pay for all of it out of their fund balance. Mr. Knight disagreed, stating that if they did that how would they subsidize their other costs, i.e. bills, employee pay, general maintenance etc. The library’s fund balance would be depleted quickly if used for both.

Motion #3

Ms. Fisher made a motion to approve the town of Colton paying for 80% of the library wall repair, and the library picking up the remaining 20%, seconded by Supervisor Robert.

Ayes 4

Noes 1 - Beary

Motion carried

Mr. Knight stated that he would like to understand better where the library fund balance is used.

Ms. Fisher brought up zoom for meetings and how much should be paid to the zoom coordinator per hour. Discussion on $20.00 per hour, $18.00 per hour, and $16.50 per hour. Ms. Fisher calculated the cost of the zoom annual charge and what would be paid monthly to the zoom coordinator. Annual cost total for zoom would be approximately $1,200.00.

**Adjournment:**

Motion #3

With no further business to discuss, Ms. Fisher made a motion to close the public meeting at 7:29pm, seconded by Mr. Beary.

Ayes 5

Noes 0

Motion carried

Meeting minutes by Colton Town Clerk Jennifer Cole