



## **Town Board Regular Meeting**

**Monday, November 6, 2023**

**This regular meeting was held in person and began at 6:00pm**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Supervisor Parete called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and Councilwoman Foote lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ROLL CALL**

Town Clerk Moody took roll call:

Supervisor Parete – Present

Councilwoman Foote – Present

Councilman LaFera – Present

Councilman Davenport – Present

Councilman Tim Hunt – Absent

**Also, Present:** Heather Moody, Town Clerk/Tax Collector

### **APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS & AMENDMENTS**

Town Clerk Moody stated there were no amendments to the vouchers submitted on October 17, 2023

Town Clerk Moody submitted the following vouchers for approval:

<b><u>November 6, 2023,</u></b>	<b><u>Vouchers</u></b>	<b><u>Total Payment</u></b>
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>V#726-755</b>	<b>\$6,382.63</b>
<b>Highway Fund</b>	<b>V#308-328</b>	<b>\$30,049.61</b>
<b>High Falls Water District</b>	<b>V#115-119</b>	<b>\$21,186.90</b>
<b>RMC</b>	<b>V#</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Marbletown Fire Protection District #1</b>	<b>V#22</b>	<b>\$76.10</b>

A motion was made by Councilman Davenport and Seconded by Councilwoman Foote to approve these vouchers.

Councilman Davenport	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman LaFera	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilwoman Foote	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman Hunt	Voting <u>Absent</u>
Supervisor Parete	Voting <u>Aye</u>

**4-0, 1 absent; motion carried.**

### **MEETING MINUTES:**

- Councilwoman Foote made a motion, seconded by Councilman LaFera to approve the meeting minutes from 10/17/2023 4-0 Aye, 1 Absent; motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- No public comments on the resolutions.

### **PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT GENERAL, HIGHWAY & SPECIAL DISTRICTS 2024 TOWN BUDGET, FINAL**

- At 6:03pm a motion was made by Councilman LaFera, seconded by Councilman Davenport to open the public hearing to adopt general, highway & special districts 2024 town budget, final, 4-0 Aye, 1 absent motion carried.
- Supervisor Parete stated Town Clerk Moody had legally noticed the public hearing in the Daily Freeman on Saturday October 28, 2023. The legal notice as also posted on the town website and the Town Clerk's Community Board.
- Bill Terpening, resident, read and submitted a prepared public comment on the 2024 general budget. Mr. Terpening pointed out the following:  
Not including the Parks employee (A7110.1) and not including Highway personnel, 16 of the Lines for salaries show increases that go well beyond the 2024 Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA), which is 3.2%. These proposed increases range from 5.66% to 71.43%.  
I list the largest:  
Councilmembers—14.60%  
Supervisor—15.38%  
Supervisor, under his duty as Budget Officer/Director of Finance—71.43%  
Assessor's Assistant—26.51%  
Deputy Town Clerks—10.91%  
Separately, I make special note that the percent increase for our Town Clerk, Heather, is 3.82%, which is not much above the COLA. And, she is actually underpaid if the total of the COLA increases for the years 2023 and 2024, 11.9%, is taken into account. The total of her increases for these two years is only 8.05%. This means that her proposed income for this Line is \$2,093 less than if the COLA increases for these two years was applied. In contrast, the Supervisor, in his Budget, proposes to increase his total yearly income from \$36,000 in 2023 to \$43,500 in 2024: a \$7,500, 20.83% increase.  
I realize that the Councilmembers are placed in an awkward and uncomfortable bind if they were to reduce the large salary increases that the Supervisor's Budget proposes for Town employees. Obviously, they will not be happy if their expectations are disappointed were the Board to reduce their proposed salaries. In any case and most strikingly, the excess over the 2024 COLA of the increases proposed for the 17 Lines, comes to a significant amount, **\$47,403**. Consequently, I find it especially difficult to square such large increases, which no one on the Board has questioned, with the Board's repeated, expressed doubts around whether to fund needed repairs to the Town's beloved Community Center to avoid its sale.
- At 6:07pm there being no more comments or questions to adopt general, highway & special districts 2024 town budget, Councilman LaFera made a motion seconded by Councilman Davenport to close the public hearing to adopt the 2024 general budget, 4-0 Aye, 1 absent, motion carried.

## **PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT 2024 HIGH FALLS WATER BUDGET**

- At 6:08pm a motion was made by Councilman LaFera, seconded by Councilwoman Foote to open the public hearing to adopt 2024 High Falls Water budget, final, 4-0 Aye, 1 absent motion carried.
- Supervisor Parete stated Town Clerk Moody had legally noticed the public hearing in the Daily Freeman on Saturday October 28, 2023. The legal notice as also posted on the town website and the Town Clerk's Community Board.
- At 6:09pm there being no comments or questions to the 2024 High Falls Water District budget, Councilman LaFera made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Foote to close the public hearing to adopt the 2024 High Falls Water Budget, 4-0 Aye, 1 absent, motion carried.

## **RESOLUTION #95-2023; TO ADOPT GENERAL, HIGHWAY, & SPECIAL DISTRICTS 2024 TOWN BUDGET, FINAL**

The following Resolution was offered by Councilman Davenport and seconded by Councilwoman Foote  
**WHEREAS**, the Preliminary Budget for the Year 2024 has been duly prepared by the Supervisor and Town Board and a duly publicized public hearing was held on the 6th day of November 2023 at 6:00 o'clock P.M.; and

**WHEREAS**, at which time all persons desiring to be heard were heard; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that, pursuant to Section 109 of the Town Law of the State of New York, the Town Board of the Town of Marbletown hereby

**ADOPTS THE PRELIMINARY BUDGET**, as amended, altered, and revised, as the Budget for the Town of Marbletown for the Year 2024.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call which resulted as follows:

Councilman Davenport	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman LaFera	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilwoman Foote	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman Hunt	Voting <u>Absent</u>
Supervisor Parete	Voting <u>Aye</u>

**4-0, 1 absent; motion carried.**

- Supervisor Parete explained highlights from this year's budget process, along with trying to comment on Bill Terpening's comments on the budget. Parete pointed out that the increases for the staff are part of the Union contract and the town is in year three of a three-year contract. Parete added that he has been committed to raising salaries since the last administration had made most employees part time. Parete also pointed out that after the Rosendale Assessor's Clerk retired the Rosendale Supervisor and Parete discussed having one clerk and splitting the cost. The salary and the health insurance for Melissa Wright is split between Rosendale and Marbletown. Parete addressed his salary and when he became supervisor he lowered the salary from \$45,000 to \$30,000. Councilwoman Foote mentioned the town should be thinking of the future of the town and making sure employees are taken care of.
- Councilman Davenport made a motion to increase the Supervisor line 1220.1 from \$37,500 to \$44,500 and reduce the Youth Program A7310.12 from \$60,000 to \$53,000. Line A7310.12 pays camp counselors. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Foote. Davenport added that the previous Supervisor's salary was higher. Davenport also added that the average supervisor's salary was \$64,000, statewide. Councilman LaFera added he agrees with this, and it is still less than what the previous supervisor made. 4-0, 1 absent, motion carried.
- Councilman Davenport suggested adding in a line for a grant writer. Supervisor Parete stated he would like to hold off for the year coming up as it would effect the tax levy.

## **RESOLUTION #96-2023; TO ADOPT 2024 HIGH FALLS WATER BUDGET**

The following Resolution was offered by Councilwoman Foote and seconded by Councilman Davenport

**WHEREAS**, the Preliminary High Falls Water Budget for the Year 2024 has been duly prepared by the Supervisor and Town Board and a duly publicized public hearing was held on the 6th day of November 2023 at 6:05 o'clock P.M.; and

**WHEREAS**, at which time all persons desiring to be heard were heard; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that, pursuant to Section 109 of the Town Law of the State of New York, the Town Board of the Town of Marbletown hereby

**ADOPTS THE PRELIMINARY BUDGET**, as amended, altered, and revised, as the Budget for the High Falls Water District for the Year 2024.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call which resulted as follows:

Councilman Davenport	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman LaFera	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilwoman Foote	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman Hunt	Voting <u>Absent</u>
Supervisor Parete	Voting <u>Aye</u>

**4-0, 1 absent; motion carried.**

- Supervisor Parete gave a brief overview of the water district and that there are about 206 water meters in High Falls that are not working. During Covid the process of finding a company to install the meters started and then because of Covid and having to go into resident's homes, they put the project on hold. Taxes will have to be raised in the water district. It will cost approximately \$240,000 to replace all the meters.
- Councilman Davenport made a motion to increase Real Property taxes, line 1001 from \$10,400 to \$55,400 and Metered sale line 2140 from \$184,600 to \$197,808 and add Loan Payable-Water Meters line SW9710.6 (principal) to \$44,983 and add Loan Payable (interest) line SW9710.7 to \$13,225, seconded by Councilman LaFera, 4-0, 1 absent, motion carried.
- Supervisor Parete added that the High Falls Water District will go to the Bank of Greene County for the loan and the hope is to pay it off in 5 years.

## **RESOLUTION #97-2023 SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR REPLACEMENT OF WATER METERS FOR THE HIGH FALLS WATER DISTRICT**

The following Resolution was offered by Councilman Davenport and seconded by Councilwoman Foote

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board of the Town of Marbletown, Ulster County, New York, has caused to be prepared a map, plan and report, including an estimate of cost, pursuant to Section 202-b of the Town Law, relating to the increase and improvement of the facilities of High Falls Water District, in the Town of Marbletown, Ulster County, New York (the "Water District"), being the replacement of water meters, including incidental improvements and expenses in connection therewith, at a maximum estimated cost of \$200,000; and

**WHEREAS**, said capital project, as proposed, has been determined to be a Type II Action pursuant to the regulations of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation promulgated pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act, which regulations state that Type II Actions will not have any significant adverse impact on the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, it is now desired to call a public hearing on the question of the increase and improvement of the facilities of said Water District, in the matter described above, and to hear all persons interested in the subject thereof, concerning the same, in accordance with the provisions of Section 202-b of the Town Law;

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED**, by the Town Board of the Town of Marbletown, Ulster County, New York, as follows:

Section 1. A public hearing will be held in the Town Hall, in Cottekill, New York, in said Town, on November 21, 2023, at 6:00 o'clock P.M., Prevailing Time, on the question of the increase and improvement of the facilities of High Falls Water District, in the Town of Marbletown, Ulster County, New York, in the manner described in the preambles hereof, and to hear all persons interested in the subject thereof, concerning the same, and to take such action thereon as is required or authorized by law.

Section 2. The Town Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to cause a copy of the Notice of Public Hearing hereinafter provided to be published once in the official newspaper, and also to cause a copy thereof to be posted on the sign board of the Town, such publication and posting to be made not less than ten, nor more than twenty, days before the date designated for the hearing. The Town Board hereby ratifies the provision of said Notice of Public Hearing to the official newspaper prior to the date hereof.

Section 3. The notice of public hearing shall be in substantially the form attached hereto as Exhibit A and hereby made a part hereof.

Section 4. This Order shall take effect immediately.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote on roll call which resulted as follows:

Councilman Davenport	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman LaFera	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilwoman Foote	Voting <u>Aye</u>
Councilman Hunt	Voting <u>Absent</u>
Supervisor Parete	Voting <u>Aye</u>

**4-0, 1 absent; motion carried.**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS :**

- Supervisor Parete stated that the town offices will be closed on Tuesday, Nov. 7 for election day and Friday, Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> for Veteran's day. The Transfer Station will be open Tuesday, Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> and closed on Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Supervisor Parete announced that at the November 8<sup>th</sup> Rosendale Town Board Meeting the discussion of cell towers put up on the RMC will be on the agenda.
- Supervisor Parete said he just received the report from Peak Engineering about the Community Center and will send out in the next couple of days.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- Sandra Guarino, resident of 569 Tongore Road, stated she has lived here for 16 years and about 10 months ago the Brown Tavern, on the corner of Atwood and Tongore, was sold. The new people have music indoor and outdoors late into the night. The road is blocked with about 10-20 cars at these times. Guarino looked at the website for this property and he is planning more events. Supervisor Parete said he was not aware of what was going on and he would discuss with the Code Enforcement Officer to see if he could go out to the home. Guarino added that they live in a residential area and these events are offensive to them and devalues the property. Guarino added that when they needed to get a new generator they had to apply for a permit, and when they wanted a barn they had to go through the permit process. Supervisor Parete pointed out that when the Guarino's complained that the grass was too long at 569 Tongore Road, the town sent a letter and then he mowed the lawn. There was an unlicensed vehicle on the property and the town sent a letter and the owners took care of it. All violations have been rectified.
- Christine Herbes Sommers, resident, asked about the estimate for the Community Center. Supervisor Parete reiterated he received it an hour before the town board meeting started and he would share in the next day or so.

- Bill Terpening, resident, read and submitted a prepared statement. Using the data for the AGED/Senior Exemption in the 2022 and 2023 Assessment Rolls, I calculated the impact of the increase in Senior Exemptions in 2023 on the amount this increased the Town property tax for non-exempt owners. Here are three examples:

— For a residence with an Assessed Taxable Value of \$300,000, which equates to an Assessed Market Value of \$491,803 their Town property tax of \$1,126 was increased by \$4.75 (.42%).

— For a residence with an Assessed Taxable Value of \$400,000, which equates to an Assessed Market Value of \$655,738, their Town property tax of \$1,502 was increased by \$6.34 (.42%).

— For a residence with an Assessed Taxable Value of \$500,000, which equates to an Assessed Market Value of \$819,672, their Town property tax of \$1,877 was increased by \$7.92 (.42%).

Consequently, the resulting increase this year for non-exempt property owners was de minimis.

Subsequent to the October 17th meeting, I emailed everyone on the Board a very detailed submission regarding the Senior Exemption and reasons for the Town to continue to **exclude** IRA distributions from income.

How do the members of the Board feel about this issue of whether to exclude or include IRA distributions as income for the Senior Exemption?

- Laura Cunningham, resident, brought up the senior exemptions and that the Town will have the discretion on the exemptions. Cunningham added keeping IRA contributions tax exempt. Councilman LaFera said that the board was going to discuss it more. LaFera added he personally feels the exemption is to help people in distress.
- Steven Grossman, resident, said he thinks the salaries are too low and the Supervisor should make more money. Grossman added the Superintendent and Town Clerk do a lot of work and it should be reflected in the salaries. Grossman also asked the board about the resolution to extend the Supervisor's term and would that take place next year or the year after?
- Wendy Saul, resident, mentioned she was getting nervous about the due date for the grant she is working on and would like to just get a commitment that the board will agree to have the roof done at the community center if this goes through. Saul also pointed out that the report from 2019 gave no indication of walls rotting. Supervisor Parete added that one of the basement walls is starting to cave in. Parete also told Saul she was welcome to come in and finish grant in his office and Councilman LaFera agreed to answer anymore questions she may have.

**Motion to adjourn:** There being no further discussion Supervisor Parete made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Davenport 4-0 Aye, 1 absent; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:04pm.

Respectfully Transcribed and Submitted,  
Heather Moody  
Town Clerk/Tax Collector