

**TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 24, 2007**

**PRESENT:**

Douglas Bloomfield	Supervisor	Louis Cappella	Councilman
Philip Canterino	Councilman	George Lyons	Councilman
Kenneth Newbold,	Councilman		

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dennis Caplicki, Town Attorney; William Standish, Budget Officer

**ITEMS DISCUSSED:**

**1. Larchwood Drive:** Attorney Caplicki stated he talked with the Building Inspector and the Inspector said he did an inspection last week and took digital photos. The Building Inspector also did a survey of the property, under the Town's dangerous building section. Attorney Caplicki stated it will be off of the survey that the Town will certify the actual construction activity, which will include boarding up, not just cleaning up the property. He said right now the house seems to blend into the country side, the growth is so high. He said when the Town starts mowing and cleaning up "you are going to see a nightmare." He suggested it be done gradually, as the neighbors might then want it condemned. However, the Building Inspector says the house is physically sound. Attorney Caplicki said the work should start some time next week, when the Building Inspector returns from vacation. The cost will be charged back to the home owner.

**2. SALESIAN STATUS UP DATE:** Councilman Canterino reported he took a walk through the park on Sunday and was very pleased with the cleanup that had been done. Supervisor Bloomfield said he had heard the new caps for the fence do not fit. Councilman Canterino said he was not aware of this, but would look into it. The Board also discussed the maintenance of the driveway. Councilman Cappella said Trustee Cione said the Library's insurance company would like to have the driveway maintained as a regular road. However he said this is not a road, it is a driveway, and Highway does not maintain driveways. Councilman Canterino said it is a municipal access to the park and will have to be maintained. It was agreed potholes and such will be repaired, but not to the standards that are used for our regular roads.

**3. STATUS OF SCOTCHTOWN WATER DISTRICT:** Supervisor Bloomfield reported all the meters have been installed, except the one home that is unoccupied. He said the initial reading has been taken and the next bill will be based on a time period at base rate. Then the bills will be based on and billed in the same manner as the other districts.

**4. O & R TREE TRIMMING:** Supervisor Bloomfield stated this is a maintenance trimming done regularly and not putting in new poles, which caused the destruction of so

many trees on Arcadia Road. Councilman Lyons asked if possibly Orange & Rockland would trim some of the trees within the park. Councilman Canterino will inquire.

**5. JUSTICE VAN HAASTER: REVIEW OF COURT BUDGET:** Justice Van Haaster, Justice Cione, William Standish, Budget Officer and Isabel Klein, Justice Clerk joined the Board. Supervisor Bloomfield informed the Justices that the Board has been looking at the budget with a very critical eye this year. He said many of the Department Heads have already cut their budgets any where they could.

Justice Van Haaster explained she and the Supervisor had gone over their budget, comparing the court as it was, and how it is now functioning. She said the review of this showed us the bottom line and she would then work backwards. She said the following: there will be a 37% increase in volume and in money coming in, that is a significant increase. Justice Cione said the Court generated \$222,000. last year and is projecting 350,000 this year. Justice Van Haaster said this is due to an increase in the workload, and the requirements of the automation to the State, which was a big undertaking. The transformation required skilled people to do this and the court was very lucky to be able to hire two people experienced and familiar with the automated system. She discussed the significant growth of the Village, Town and County in the five years she has been in office, and again stated how important it is to have skilled people in the office. She said the Court, under the new system, is able to function much more effectively and efficiently, and able to follow their cases and get them closed in a proper manner.

Justice Van Haaster stated they have taken their department to a totally different level and that is why there is a serious increase across the board, but they have the skill, the knowledge, the experience and expertise to justify it and still leave the Town with a good amount of revenue. Justice Cione gave the background of his clerk, Isabel Klein and how she has brought the office up to date and cleared a backlog that was long standing. Therefore, he felt her requested increase was in order. He asked for an increase for the justices and their staff. They would like to keep their two part timers.

Justice Cione said another reason for the increase in their revenue is the prosecutor who is now working with the court, can prosecute all tickets and the police officers do not have to be present. He said he felt the increased volume and revenue warrant the increase in their budget.

Other items discussed were: The Justices would like to implement a credit card system. Justice Van Haaster said she has information about a firm that will provide the machine, at no cost to a government agency. She said it will increase revenue, as everyone wants to pay with a credit card. The fact that they close the office at 4:00 p.m. Justice Van Haaster stated all of the money has to be posted by the end of the day. With the high volume, this is the only time to do it. Justice Van Haaster said everything functions, phone calls, etc. with the exception of taking money. She said instructions are posted and sent to everyone that when paying a ticket, they must do so from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Safety in their offices and in the court: Councilman Cappella expressed concern for the safety of the Justices, Court Clerks and the staff in the Town Clerk's Offices. He felt the doors to the section going to the Town Clerk's office should be locked when court is in session. He asked about the Court Officer carrying a weapon. Justice Van Haaster said there is a course, our officer can take, that is offered free by the State that will certify him as a Peace Officer and allow him to carry a gun.

Justice Van Haaster stated there will be no more night court, and again the prosecutor was discussed. The Board discussed the increases with the Budget Officer and the Justices. Supervisor Bloomfield asked the Justices to look over their budget and cut or shave what costs they can and he said he felt a 58% increase is just too much.

Supervisor Bloomfield said the Board would go on to review the rest of the Highway Department, keeping in mind, the rules of the game the Board has been working with in reviewing the entire budget. "No new purchases other than PDR, pay as we go, or we don't go, maximize grants."

The Board went on to review Funds A and B of the Highway Department and commented on what an incredible job Highway had done in trimming it's budget.

The Board then went on to revenue. Councilman Canterino stated there were no erroneous or inflated figures used in compiling the numbers. Supervisor Bloomfield said the projection for Woodbury Commons looks good, but the Board will try to project conservatively.

The Board reviewed the Planning Board's budget and had further questions they would like to have answered. They went on to review the Senior Center, BOCES SRO officers, Building Inspector's Department, CSEA and Police. The following were discussed also: Planning Board engineers, the contingency fund, which is held to accommodate and cover any raises or monies given to the CSEA or Police Departments.

The Police budget was discussed at length. Full time officers and part time officers were discussed as the Police Chief is asking for two new hires. Councilman Lyons said the Chief has been saying how high the overtime is due to the fact there are not enough officers and the part timers cannot always work. The Board discussed the high cost of the full time officer when the benefits and the over time is added. Supervisor Bloomfield said we have eleven full time officers, "we are not a part time police department." The Board is hoping perhaps for better management. There was a lengthy discussion on the other requests. Supervisor Bloomfield said Highway and Police are the two big spenders. Highway has cut their budget down 1 or 2 %. He suggested instead of the 83% budget submitted by the Chief, the Board send it back to the Chief saying he can have an 8% increase and do what ever he can with it. He said for the other extras the Chief is asking for, he should be looking for grants. Councilman Lyons, liaison to the Police Department will go back and talk to the Chief. Councilman Cappella said we replaced the last officer he lost, and that brought him back to the number of officers he operated with last year and the year before. He said we are not adding another car or anything else, we have

three shifts covered. “What has changed for us to put another one or two more people on because he was operating that way last year?” Councilman Canterino said he feels there is a problem in the management. Councilman Newbold said part timers might not be available to follow up on robberies or more serious crimes. Supervisor Bloomfield said two sergeants and the Chief should be able to handle this. The Board agreed the Police Department does a good job, but feels they, as everyone else, have to cut back. The Board will continue to work with the Chief.

After briefly reviewing a number of other lines and deciding to take a harder look at the Justice Department. Councilman Cappella made a Motion to go into executive session to discuss the Sullivan and Serdarevic Litigation and the SRO-BOCES negotiation, with no intent to return. The Motion was seconded by Councilman Lyons. Motion carried unanimously.

Time: 10:00 p.m.

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Valma Eisma, Town Clerk