

STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF ALBANY

TOWN OF COLONIE

A PUBLIC HEARING AND SUBSEQUENT VOTE AS IT
RELATES TO ADOPTING THE PROPOSED 2021 ANNUAL
BUDGET

THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above
entitled matter by NANCY L. STRANG, a
Shorthand Reporter commencing at 7:28 PM on
November 5, 2020 at Memorial Town Hall, 534
New Loudon Road, Latham, New York

Board MEMBERS:

PAULA A. MAHAN, SUPERVISOR

LINDA MURPHY, DEPUTY SUPERVISOR

MELISSA JEFFERS

DANIELLE FUTIA

RICHARD FIELD

JILL PENN

DAVID GREEN

1 ALSO PRESENT:
2 MICHAEL C. MAGGUILLI, ESQ., TOWN ATTORNEY
3 JULIE GANSLE, TOWN CLERK
4 P. CHRISTOPHER KELSEY, COMPTROLLER

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1 MS. GANSLE: Our final public hearing is
2 being held by order of the Town Board to hear
3 all persons in relation to the preliminary
4 budget of the Town of Colonie for the fiscal
5 year beginning January 1, 2021. Notice of
6 this public hearing has been published in the
7 official Town newspaper which is the
8 Spotlight and also in the Albany Times Union.
9 In addition, the notice has been posted on
10 the Town Clerk's bulletin board. I have an
11 affidavit for each. The Town Board will now
12 hear all persons interested in this matter.

13 MR. KELSEY: I just want to start the
14 hearing tonight just going over minor changes
15 from the tentative budget that was filed with
16 the Board on the 30th of September and
17 distributed on the first. None of them amount
18 any dollar changes. It is all semantic
19 changes, I guess.

20 In the Assessor's office on page 3, their
21 Typist position was originally labeled as an
22 Assessment Clerk. It should have been Typist
23 and that was my error. I had the wrong title.

24 On page 16 there was a transposition
25 between positions of salaries between the

1 Senior Recreation Maintenance Worker and the
2 Golf Course Mechanic. Again, no overall amount
3 changes. It was just between those two
4 positions.

5 On page 19 within the Senior Resources
6 Department, there was some staff turnover.
7 There was a change in a position that was
8 going to be filled via half a year from a
9 Caseworker to a Senior Resource Specialist.
10 Again, no overall dollar changes, just
11 staffing changes as to which position would be
12 the half-year backfilled position.

13 Those are the only changes other than the
14 six fire districts, as required by the state
15 Comptroller's office, are now included in here
16 for presentation purposes only.

17 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: Thank you, Chris.

18 We're going to have a brief overview of
19 the budget for the Board and for those of you
20 in the audience.

21 As you can see, we've got a couple places
22 that you can follow the budget process started
23 May 2020. Budget worksheets are issued to all
24 departments. The departments are advised to
25 submit budgets that are cost-effective. while

1 maintaining a high quality of services.

2 June through October 2020 the Budget
3 Review Committee works with the department
4 heads to review budget requests. The Committee
5 consists of representatives from the
6 Comptroller's office, DPW, Police, Information
7 Systems, Civil Service, the Supervisor's
8 office and the Town Board rep.

9 Reducing requests to a .54% year over
10 year increase.

11 September 30, 2020 - tentative budget was
12 filed with the Town Clerk. November 5, 2020 -
13 that's tonight - the preliminary budget
14 hearing. The deadline for our adoption of the
15 budget is November 20th. Year-round the Budget
16 Committee monitors actual activity; activity
17 versus the budget and recommends budget
18 modifications. We also, due to Covid 19, as a
19 Budget Committee also met with departments and
20 department heads did a lot of work because
21 there were significant cuts that had to be
22 made to get through our financial obligations.
23 As you know, during that time. There was quite
24 a reduction in the sales tax we received and
25 other fees again due to Covid and businesses

1 being shut down. Those cuts that were made
2 were made with the help of all the
3 departments. The department heads did an
4 outstanding job on working with their
5 departments to help us get to a point that we
6 needed to get to. In the end, it definitely
7 was beneficial then and it will be beneficial
8 moving forward. We thank the department heads
9 for that, as well.

10 Chris?

11 MR. KELSEY: This is just a quick
12 summary of the last 10 years of adopted
13 budgets for the Town of Colonie. As you can
14 see, it highlights 2021. It's slightly under
15 \$100 million of operating budget; a \$535,000
16 increase, or roughly half a percent and that
17 is the smallest increase we have seen in
18 eight years, primarily due to the revenue
19 decreases in sales tax related to the
20 pandemic.

21 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: This slide tells us
22 what the General Fund is composed of and it's
23 all administrative departments; Historian,
24 Pruyn House, Parks and Recreation, Community
25 Services, Senior Resources, Police, EMS,

1 Emergency Management, Building and Fire
2 Services and Justice, Planning, DPW and
3 Engineering.

4 These are the other funds and special
5 districts. They include Highway, Library,
6 Latham Water District and Pure Waters
7 District. As noted, the special districts have
8 their own revenue derived from water usage
9 charges and Latham Water and the sewer roll in
10 Pure Waters.

11 MR. KELSEY: The William K. Sanford
12 Library is another fund of the Town. It's
13 budget for 2021 is approximately \$2.9 million
14 dollars. It is funded almost 100% through the
15 Town property tax rate, which for 2021 is
16 proposed at \$4.06. Of that, \$0.54 roughly per
17 \$1,000 of tax value is dedicated to the
18 library. For 2021 that dollar for the median
19 value home is roughly \$64. That is down
20 slightly from 2020.

21 I meant 45. If I said 54, I apologize.

22 A summary of the increases and decreases
23 in the appropriations for 2021 - the salaries
24 went down by \$1.1 million to roughly
25 \$40,900,00. Capital items went down \$33,000 to

1 \$477,000. Operations which is contractual
2 utilities supplies, set projects for chemicals
3 and what have you went up \$144,000. Debt
4 service related to primarily our
5 infrastructure replacement programs in
6 Highway, Water and Sewer went up \$600,000 to
7 \$12.2 million. Our benefit costs, health
8 insurance, retirement and the like all went up
9 \$900,000 to \$26.7 million. Pure Waters is
10 continuing to replenish its repair reserve
11 with a payment of \$100,000, as required,
12 because that was used in 2019.

13 Again this just highlights the change in
14 the salary component of \$1.1 million. This
15 represents a 1% decrease from 2020 and roughly
16 11 positions were eliminated from the budget,
17 we hope temporarily. That was attained through
18 attrition and delayed filling the positions
19 until the later half or fourth quarter of
20 2021.

21 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: The 2021 budget
22 challenges - maintaining a level of
23 high-quality services while minimizing the
24 impact on our tax base. Covid 19 impact on
25 the economy and the strain on major revenue

1 sources; unfunded mandates; increased health
2 and insurance premium contributions and
3 retirement contributions.

4 MR. KELSEY: Just a brief summary of the
5 2021 overall budget, it is a \$99.9
6 million-dollar budget. It has a one-half a
7 percent increase - \$500,000 and a 2021
8 proposed tax rate increase of 6.8 cents per
9 thousand, which complies with the New York
10 State tax requirements.

11 The impact on the median value home which
12 is roughly \$210,000 fair market value or 142
13 taxable value, and 2020 that household paid
14 about \$600 in general property taxes. This
15 year they will pay \$617 or a nine dollar
16 increase for the year or \$0.77 per month. The
17 assessed value growth in 2020 of \$61 million
18 translated into roughly a 1% rate savings for
19 homeowners.

20 This just highlights for the homeowner
21 where their overall tax burden goes when you
22 pay your taxes every year. This is outside of
23 the villages; 67% of the taxes that you pay go
24 to the schools; 14% goes to Albany County; 10%
25 comes to the Town and 8% goes to the various

1 special districts - Water District, Sewer
2 District or your local fire district.

3 The revenues that help us support this
4 almost \$100 million budget - as you can see
5 there are three main areas; the property tax,
6 the sales tax and the various fees that are
7 charged by our departments. The balance of
8 that is 13% from the ad valorem taxes for
9 water and sewer and then you've got minor
10 items like fees - federal and state and
11 interest. As you can see, we are very
12 dependent upon the economic revenues of sales
13 tax.

14 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: This 2021 budget
15 represents our best efforts at maintaining
16 excellent quality of services for our
17 residents and businesses, govern
18 cost-effectively, efficiently and
19 conservatively and continue to strengthen our
20 financial position and our bond rating -
21 which the Town's bond rating is an A plus.
22 That's the S&P rating service - that's our
23 bond rating.

24 All in all, it's a very conservative
25 budget. We could not of gotten these numbers

1 without working closely with our department
2 heads. Everyone has sacrificed a lot this year
3 between Covid and the impacts from that as
4 well as everything going up every year. We
5 were extremely pleased that we were able to
6 stay within the tax cap calculation and the
7 New York State tax cap. We are able to do
8 everything that we need to do. We thank you
9 for all your help. I think it's a pretty good
10 budget for the times that we are in.

11 MR. KELSEY: I do just want to know one
12 thing for the Board and anyone else who was
13 listening out there tonight, the tax cap
14 lifted 2020 state adopted budget -- everybody
15 remembers they are getting rebate checks
16 related to the property tax. The budget
17 eliminated those rebates. So, staying within
18 the tax cap going forward has no impact on
19 those checks. Those checks are gone. So, if
20 somebody doesn't get a check, it's not
21 because we didn't stay within the cap like it
22 was driven before. It's because that program
23 has been eliminated from the state budget.

24 MR. GREEN: You not suggesting that we
25 pull the cap, right?

1 MR. KELSEY: No, I'm not. I'm just
2 saying if someone asked you did you not stay
3 within the cap because I didn't get my check,
4 it's not because of anything we did. It's
5 because the state.

6 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: Thank you, very much.
7 Does the Board have any questions?

8 (There was no response.)

9 Okay, we will close the public hearing.

10 MS. GANSLE: We have a Resolution
11 adopting the proposed 2021 annual budget.

12 MR. GREEN: So moved.

13 MS. JEFFERS: Second.

14 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: Supervisor votes aye.
15 Clerk, call the roll.

16 MS. GANSLE: Councilwoman Penn?

17 MS. PENN: Aye.

18 MS. GANSLE: Futia?

19 MS. FUTIA: No.

20 MS. GANSLE: Jeffers?

21 MS. JEFFERS: Aye.

22 MS. GANSLE: Murphy?

23 MS. MURPHY: Aye.

24 MS. GANSLE: Green?

25 MR. GREEN: Aye.

1 MS. GANSLE: Field?

2 MR. FIELD: No.

3 MS. GANSLE: The ayes have it, Madam
4 Supervisor.

5 SUPERVISOR MAHAN: The Resolution is
6 adopted.

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8 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was
9 concluded at 7:41 PM)

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CERTIFICATION

I, NANCY L. STRANG, Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of New York, hereby CERTIFIES that the record taken by me at the time and place noted in the heading hereof is a true and accurate transcript of same, to the best of my ability and belief.

Date: _____

Nancy L. Strang
Legal Transcription
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