

The workshop meeting of the Borough of Riverdale Mayor and Council opened on the above date at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor William Budesheim presiding.

ROLL CALL: Present: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzels, Carelli
Absent: None

Also Present: Police Chief Smith, Fire Chief Sturm

Mayor Budesheim announced that proper notice of this meeting was made as to time, date, place and agenda.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NO. 1:

There being no comments, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, to close the public session.

ALL IN FAVOR.

PUBLIC HEARING ON AGREEMENT FOR SHARED SERVICES FOR TAX COLLECTION.

Mayor Budesheim stated that this isn't an easy decision. We have to find ways to cut spending. Earlier this year we did a shared service agreement for Tax Assessor and that is saving us about \$22,000 a year. Our bookkeeper retired and we're going to have a part-time bookkeeper and that's going to save us about \$30,000 a year. The other area in which we can save a considerable amount of money is Tax Collector. Salary and benefits versus the cost of the shared service agreement will save about \$55,000 a year.

Mayor Budesheim opened the meeting for public comment.

Councilman Guis stated the agreement requires clerical support in Riverdale and asked how we plan to fulfill that requirement. Mayor Budesheim stated the only thing that has to be done is posting of the daily collections and I believe we could use the existing personnel to do that.

Councilman Falkoski stated that the hours of service are not listed on the agreement. Mayor Budesheim stated there will not be any set office hours. Existing personnel can collect the taxes and post it on the computer. The tax collector in Butler will be able to answer any questions and tie into our computer. Councilman Falkoski asked what the benefit to Butler was for providing a part-time tax collector for \$30,000. Mayor Budesheim stated that he doubted they were going to pay the tax collector \$30,000. I'm sure it's a fraction of that and Butler is to make some money. Councilman Falkoski wanted assurance that the agreement could not be amended without input from the Council. Borough Attorney Oostdyk stated that it would require the Council's input. Councilman Falkoski asked about service to the community. Mayor Budesheim stated that the majority of taxes are paid through mortgage companies or banks. The taxes can still be paid here in the night deposit box or handed to people here.

Councilwoman Wetzels stated that she didn't know if sacrificing all of our long-term dedicated staff is really beneficial to the residents. I know financially it appears to be, but it's very sad that we're losing dedicated employees and I wonder at what cost. I feel like we're little by little selling ourselves off to surrounding communities. I wonder how we're going to remain a viable municipality if we have no one here working. That's a big concern of mine and I don't like it. Mayor Budesheim stated that it's not to remain viable – it's to remain in existence. Police, Fire, First Aid are our number one priorities in the

PUBLIC HEARING ON AGREEMENT FOR SHARED SERVICES FOR TAX COLLECTION (continued).

community. Next comes Public Works – our roads, our infrastructure. Those are all essential services and it's getting more expensive to maintain those services. We need two new police cars, we're getting new firemen and that costs a lot of money for the equipment and turnout gear which increases the clothing allowance which increases the LOSAP. It's a big chain reaction. I don't see any other way without these shared services.

Councilman Mastrangelo asked for confirmation that this is reversible if it doesn't work out. Borough Attorney Oostdyk stated that it is and the statute requires that the same employee be offered the position.

Resident Mary Gambino asked if the tax collector would be willing to take a cut in pay and work two or three days per week which would save money.

An unidentified audience member stated that Mary Ann does a lot of things for the seniors that we appreciate. She extends herself more than she has to. Mayor Budesheim stated that we realize that.

Councilman Astarita stated there's a new reality in business and nobody likes it. We like Riverdale the way it is but financially we can't do it. We can't raise taxes more than 2%.

An unidentified resident asked why Riverdale is always giving up a job to another town instead of taking in their jobs. Let's try to get some more money on our end to keep the town hall that we have or we're going to lose it and have nothing. Mayor Budesheim stated that we tried but we're the smaller town and a bigger town doesn't want to do business with us in that respect.

An unidentified resident asked why we are buying property if we have no money. Another asked why we don't get rid of some of the things we don't need.

Councilman Carelli stated that it is very compelling to look at a spread sheet and say we're going to save \$50,000 and that's great. The Mayor has it at \$54,000 but I feel it's somewhere in the \$41,000 to \$42,000 range. If you have to provide clerical support then there's a cost associated with it that should be incorporated into this analysis. I don't look at it as a Tax Collector – I look at it as Mary Ann. This is a real person who has a family and it's one of the most serious things we have to do. There's no doubt that it's our job to save money but the other part of our job forget is we also have a duty to the people that work here. This is their place of employment and we have to give them an environment and a place where they can thrive and make an honest living. I'm a finance guy and I want it proven to me that we don't have the money so I dig deeper and look at the costs and where we are. We're under budget about \$47,000 this year so that's a good start. We have the potential to save \$181,000 through attrition next year without eliminating positions depending on when people leave. In the last three years we've had on the table sharing the Police Department, the Municipal Court, the Construction Department, the Tax Collector, and the Tax Assessor. We moved on the Tax Assessor position. When I look at the residents and the services we provide there are maybe three or four people that you would actually come to speak to. By eliminating these departments, what's left of our town? I'm not opposed to this proposal but it seems like we're reacting too quick. My advice would be to study this a little more and do this when we do our 2014 budget. Currently we have over 13 positions that have or may change in the upcoming months. What I would like to know with the pending retirements, what is our plan for next year? I don't know what the vision is or where we want to be as far as staffing the front office. It is never easy to eliminate a position but I think we owe it to the employee and ourselves to make sure we do our due diligence. It's certainly not my

PUBLIC HEARING ON AGREEMENT FOR SHARED SERVICES FOR TAX COLLECTION (continued).

style to eliminate an employee three weeks before Christmas without exhausting our options.

Mayor Budesheim stated that the numbers he presented were certified by our CFO. We're not looking at saving money. The question is making money available to continue to provide the services. If you want the Police Department, the Fire Department, First Aid Squad and Road Department that we have you're going to need these savings because there's no where else to get them. In the past we were able to raise the taxes but by law we can't do that anymore. I'm negotiating with a couple towns right now for the Building Department.

An unidentified audience member asked Councilman Carelli if his numbers were certified by the CFO. Councilman Carelli replied that they were not but his numbers were almost the same as the Mayor's except he didn't account for the clerk we have to supply. The audience member stated the line item for the Building Department in the budget was \$65,000 and asked how much was brought in so far. Councilman Carelli stated the line item we wanted to put in was \$60,000 and the CFO certified his budget at \$88,500 and I don't know what we brought in. I think its \$35,000.

There being no further comments, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to close the public session.

ALL IN FAVOR.

Thereupon, Councilman Mastrangelo set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, to authorize the execution of an Interlocal Service Agreement for Tax Collector Services with the Borough of Butler to be effective January 1, 2014.

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Astarita, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel
Nays: Falkoski, Carelli
(4 ayes – 2 nays – motion carried)

COPY OF INTERLOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 137-A

RESOLUTIONS:

Councilman Carelli set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to approve the following resolutions:

- 1) Payment of Utility Bills/Claims. (including the following)
 - a. PSE&G - \$106.40
 - b. Verizon - \$ 24.74

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel, Carelli
Nays: None
(6 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)

COPY OF BILLS LIST IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 137-B

MAYOR REPORT:

Mayor Budesheim reported that starting January 1st we will have single stream recycling so you will be able to put out co-mingles and papers every Friday. We worked out an

MAYOR REPORT (continued):

agreement with our contractor and there will be no additional cost to us. Borough Clerk Talerico asked if there was an amendment to the contract. Mayor Budesheim stated they are just doing it and there is no amendment.

Mayor Budesheim reported that he asked the CFO to work on amending our Capital Budget which has the money for the Pompton Lakes/Riverdale First Aid Squad. They bought a new ambulance and they sent a request for money to outfit it. We're looking at about \$28,000 to put in a power load system.

Mayor Budesheim reported on the work being done on the rock wall at the Enclave. The homeowners association contracted to have as much work done as possible. They got about 40% of the job done and it did come in under budget. There's still a large section of the wall there and according the experts the rest of that wall will come down. It cost about \$7,000 just to bring the equipment to the site and the road has been shut down for 3 weeks now. With the likelihood of that wall definitely coming within the next few years we were discussing the possibility of completing the job right now. There are only 31 homeowners there and they would not have the money to do this. I spoke to our CFO and Attorney about an added assessment to put the money up front.

Borough Attorney Oostdyk stated that he believed it could be done as a special assessment project. This would benefit the borough as this has been a long standing problem that keeps involving us. It more specifically benefits the community that would be assessed for the cost of it. It would be a borough project and would have to go to bid. Councilwoman Wetzel asked if the majority of homeowners would have to agree to do this. Mr. Oostdyk stated that would be up to the Council. They can challenge an assessment so you would want support from the local community. Mayor Budesheim asked if there was any way they can contract for the services and we contribute towards it. Mr. Oostdyk stated that would be a decision we would have to make but you wouldn't be doing it as special assessment. That is the only way you're secured to be sure that you get repaid.

Nick Ilaqua, 14 Overlook Terrace, stated that they would be willing to take on a special assessment because it would help the homeowners and the town. We've spent quite a few dollars on attorney fees and all so I'd like to put this behind us. If we could get the cooperation of the town that would be really appreciated. Borough Attorney Oostdyk stated that we would need to look at the details.

Councilwoman Wetzel stated she would like a clear comparison of the two scenarios. Councilman Guis stated that he has a lot of questions but they should be asked in closed session. This condition that we're talking about is not isolated to one area and as a governing body we have to be extremely careful of any precedents we're setting. Mayor Budesheim stated that this one is in our right of way. Mr. Oostdyk explained why we can't just loan the money and have no involvement in the project.

Mike Mansoor, 19 Overlook Terrace, stated that if this is a two month process to get started then we have to decline. The objective was to try to get the job done starting tomorrow. Mayor Budesheim stated that it may be worth mobilization charges to do it come spring. He also thanked the Quarry who has taken close to 2,000 cubic yards of this material at no charge to the borough.

An unidentified resident of Sky View Terrace stated that it seems the council is considering this to be a private road and the residents are assuming all of the liability. It's not just the residents that are in danger. I think it's your responsibility to act on this because I think that we're all liable. Mayor Budesheim agreed but stated the process the attorney just described would be the process we'd have to follow no matter what.

MAYOR REPORT (continued):

Borough Attorney Oostdyk stated that if it was clearly a borough responsibility and a borough road that would be something being looked at. The problem is that it is not clear which is why we're in this mess.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT WORKSHOP:**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- 1) DPW – Determination of where the responsibility lies for the water/sewer lines for major projects – discussed at the October 7th workshop meeting.
- 2) Building Department – Shared Services – Agreement in working stage. (Possible November 18th Agenda item if finalized.) (Not finalized)
- 3) Purchase of DOT Property located at the Magnus Tract from the DOT for an amount of \$15,000 to \$16,000 – discussed at the October 7th workshop meeting.

There was no discussion on the above.

BOROUGH CLERK REPORT: No Report.

BOROUGH ATTORNEY REPORT: No Report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE: No Report.

PUBLIC SAFETY: Councilman Falkoski stated that he has a memo from the Police Chief and we're ready to move for those two Special Officers and a Part Time Dispatcher for the Police Department.

Thereupon, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to appoint Ronald Thomas and Eric Basek as Class II Special Officers and Jennelle Conahay as Part Time Dispatcher effective January 1, 2014.

ROLL CALL: **Ayes: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel, Carelli**
 Nays: None
 (6 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)

Councilman Falkoski reported that he has an application for membership as a Jr. Fireman.

Thereupon, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to approve the application from Michael Celento for membership as a Jr. Fireman in the Riverdale Fire Department.

ROLL CALL: **Ayes: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel, Carelli**
 Nays: None
 (6 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)

Police Chief Smith reported that Patrolman Eric Hollenstein tried out and made the County SWAT Team in October. It's a large commitment on his part and he does it on his own time. He has a proposal that he be provided a take home vehicle in lieu of taking the check he would receive for not taking health benefits.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued):

Patrolman Hollenstein explained that he's on a call out schedule and needs to respond from wherever he may be. It's not safe to respond in my own vehicle. I bought my own car and was donating it to the town and ask that it be registered, insured and outfitted. Councilwoman Wetzel asked if we know a cost factor. Mayor Budesheim stated that it will be \$3,100 to outfit. Patrolman Hollenstein stated he purchased the car for \$6,000 and the savings on his insurance would have been \$5,000 so he paid \$1,000 out of pocket to be able to do this. The vehicle would only be used to drive from home to work, to training and to calls. It would not be for personal use. Councilman Guis suggested the limitations be a written policy. Councilman Falkoski stated that the proposal sounds like a good idea.

Thereupon, Councilman Guis set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Falkoski, as follows:

The vehicle purchased by Patrolman Hollenstein shall be transferred over to the Borough. We will assume the car as any other car, subject to the Police Chief putting a written policy in place concerning fuel, personal use, etc.

ROLL CALL: **Ayes: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel, Carelli**
 Nays: None
 (6 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)

PUBLIC WORKS: Councilman Guis asked if a letter was put together for the DPW Superintendent for guidance on the utilities. Mayor Budesheim stated that he gave him the color coded maps. Councilman Guis asked Mayor Budesheim if he ever did a profit and loss sheet on the newsletter. Mayor Budesheim stated that the expenses have been covered and he will give an end of year report.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Councilwoman Wetzel reminded everyone they are invited to the holiday event tomorrow at the Community Center and the Christmas Concert at the Community Center on December 20th. It's a free concert by resident Leanne Weiss.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: No Report.

PERSONNEL: No Report.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NO. 2:

Dave Desai, 22 Cotluss Road, asked several questions regarding COAH and the Verizon building. Mayor Budesheim stated that the developer met with three council people and the attorney to discuss plans and the concept. They will meet with the public on January 14th at the Community Center.

Matt Oswald, 9 Cotluss Road, asked what was being done with the money from the car dealership that is renting space at the Verizon building. Mayor Budesheim stated that we went out to bid on that and we are getting \$21,000 a year which goes into the budget.

An unidentified resident asked if there was a reason that the residents and multi-family pay different water rates. Mayor Budesheim stated that there is only one rate.

There being no further comments, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, to close the public session.

ALL IN FAVOR.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to adjourn the meeting.

ALL IN FAVOR.

Adjourned: 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Carol J. Talerico, R.M.C.
Municipal Clerk