

**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
OF THE TOWN BOARD HELD ON JANUARY 15, 2014
AT 7:00 PM AT TOWN HALL, ONE OVEROCKER ROAD
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK**

PRESENT: Supervisor Tancredi
Councilman Baisley
Councilman Carlos
Councilman Conte
Councilman Cifone
Councilman Krakower
Councilwoman Shershin
Town Attorney Nelson
Town Clerk Salvatore

Item # 01:15-COW 2 was placed before **Item 01:15-COW 1** per Town Supervisor Tancredi.

Supervisor Tancredi: First Discussion will be with our Grant Writer, Susan Roller-Brown, who has done a great job for us for 8 years. It's hard to believe its been 8 years, but Susan has brought Martin Schneider with her and is recommending Martin to fill her spot, as she is now retiring. Martin, please tell us a bit about yourself and Susan give us a recap over what we've accomplished over 8 years.

01:15-COW 2 DISCUSSION

**Grant Writer Susan Roller-Brown
Town of Poughkeepsie Grant
Writer for the Town of
Poughkeepsie**

Susan Roller-Brown: First I want to say, it's been a real pleasure working with the Town. As some of you know, I actually worked for the Town before becoming your official Grant Writer during my years at Marist College when the Town was a very vital partner in the development of Longview Park at Marist. Many of the grants that we received for that project, had to have a municipal sponsor and the Town, I believe I worked through four different Supervisors, half a dozen other changes in staff, but the Town was very co-operative and I would prepare grants and they would be signed and submitted by the Town and so my relationship with the Town goes back many years. As Todd mentioned, I am retiring, I do want to assure you I am not going anywhere else. Dutchess County will continue to be our home and as I have indicated, I will be available on an "As needed basis" if any questions come up on projects that I secured grants for on-grant administration issues. There will be continuity there if need be. I think that all of you received a copy of my last quarterly report and I did attach a list of the key grants that we received during my tenure here with the Town. I'm very proud to have had the opportunity to assist the Town in approving the quality of life for your residents as well as improving the

efficiency of government operations here in the Town. Everything from new sidewalks to records management, improvements to park development and solar electric power on the roof of the building. So, we've had a broad range of opportunity to bring in support to the Town and part of my decision to retire was really contingent on being able to identify someone that I felt comfortable in recommending to my Municipal clients as my replacement. As I contemplated this over the last year, I've talked to a number of colleagues, particularly the program officers for some of the key State industries that do a lot of the Grant funding and I discovered what I had suspected, is there are very few people, at least here in the Hudson Valley, who do what we do and so I was delighted when several State Agency Program Officers recommended Marty Schneider. From the several meetings that we've had and we've had some in-depth discussions, traded war stories and compared notes and I am convinced that he has all of the requisite background and has the integrity that you really need in a person who is doing this kind of work to be a really great addition to the Town's consulting staff. At this time I will turn it over to Martin and he can tell you a little bit about his background, particularly the work he's done in other municipalities and the types of grants that he has secured and you will see are very, very similar to the types that we have been getting here in the Town.

Martin Schneider: Thank you Susan and thank you for having me here and for your time and attention. I'm looking forward to working with the Town based on my experience and passion for community development. I was really gratified to hear from Susan because Susan has an excellent reputation from other Grant Writers and from the State for her integrity and attention to details. When she approached me, I was very humbled and so I am also humbled in submitting this application to you as a proposal to serve the Town. I have nineteen years of experience in Grant Writing which has taken me from the non-profit world where I was a Grant Writer for a Community Development Organization for about thirteen years and then for the past six and close to seven years I've been working as a consultant for municipalities, schools, community college and writing grant applications to State and Federal Governments as well as foundations and I've been fairly successful in getting Grants and Awards for local municipalities from some of the similar State Agencies that Susan has gotten for the Town of Poughkeepsie. In particular, they range from local waterfront projects to senior hybrid vans to police cars, fire equipment, sidewalk projects, local government records projects, some LED traffic lights and so they range and in that process I've been involved in providing both development support as well as Grants Management support and I can get involved as the Municipal Client wants me to get involved in. I look forward to answering any questions you may have and look forward to working with you and plan on being attentive to your needs and also want to know what your needs are so I can help you with identifying and prioritizing and getting funding opportunities to you.

Councilman Krakower: Do we have a proposed agreement from Mr. Schneider yet for the Grant Writing?

Jim Nelson, Town Attorney: I have an agreement which we've used with Ms. Roller-Brown in the past and I've not spoken with Martin as to the same agreement and rate he would be ---

Councilman Krakower: Are we looking at the same rate effectively on the same terms as ---(Yes) are there other Municipal clients that you have worked with locally, that we could touch base with, with references ?

Martin Schneider: I can give you the list of references and the phone numbers for Michael Blough in the Village of Terrytown and City of New Rochelle.

Councilman Krakower: I appreciate Susan's reference, but I also want to touch base on the client's side. I think having a Grant Writer makes a lot of sense and what happens is, when you have staff members who try to fill those voids, sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't but I think generally what you end up doing is leaving money on the table, but with a Grant Writer having someone actively pursuing it, I think it has worked out well for the Town of Poughkeepsie we are always looking and seeing what's out there and so when Susan came in she kind of filled the void and it's worked out very well for the Town and so I would love to continue that continuity and her recommendation is very valuable in this situation. So, I'm definitely in favor of making sure we fill that position.

Councilman Baisley: Martin, there are no other municipalities in Dutchess County you are working for currently are you? (No) So, basically Westchester and down that end and so it wouldn't conflict with anything along the County line or anything like that? (No)

Councilman Krakower: The Safe Route to Schools Grant that we got in Fairview, I believe Spackenkill is trying to apply or are applying and I don't know if it went to Susan or to Jim or somewhere else, but, I got the impression that Spackenkill School batted the ball into our court and were waiting on us to do something with that.

Supervisor Tancredi: That's news to me.

Susan Roller-Brown: I think that I, about a year ago perhaps, looked into the possibility of that.

Councilman Krakower: They are looking to do sidewalks from Hagen Elementary School to the High School, up Hagen Drive and I got the impression at a District Safety Meeting a couple days ago and they gave me the impression that they had sent it over to us to take a look at or move it forward.

Jim Nelson, Town Attorney: I have a fine list of things I haven't yet completed, but I don't think that's on it.

Susan Roller-Brown: Stephan, let me check my files because that does ring a bell and I believe that I had followed up on an initial inquiry on that a couple of years ago and I can't recall what the obstacle was, but, there was a reason why it may not have qualified for that funding stream. Let me go back and look into the files regarding that.

Councilman Carlos: Martin, does your scope of employment include notifying the Town when you become aware of something we might want to be involved in? (Absolutely) And that goes to the Supervisor? (Yes)

Councilman Krakower: Susan was very good at sending us a Quarterly Report to the entire Board so we could all know what was going on. Todd deals with the whole Town, we deal with just our Wards and it's worked out well that we all know what's going on and get the feedback.

Supervisor Tancredi: Marty wants from us to know what our needs are, in other words, we have a Sewer Plant that we need to do an upgrade on and things like that. Also, to have things prioritized so when he looks for things he will know when to give us a "Heads up" .

Councilman Conte: We would also always like you to be pursuing things that may be in the interest of the Town as well, outside our scope of requests, we would hope that you would bring that to us, also.

Martin Schneider: Absolutely. I go through the Federal Grants as well as the New York State Grants, Gateway and knowing what your needs are, like the top ten list as well as I look for grants, I also keep that in mind, but also if there is something not in that list of ten, I will forward to you as well because there may be some other opportunities that come along that you would like to look at and see if you want to go for and I would try to do that on an on-going basis.

BOARD THANKED SUSAN ROLLER-BROWN FOR HER SERVICE AND ALL HER WORK ON THE TOWN'S BEHALF.

01:15-COW 1 PRESENTATION

**By Town Comptroller Jim
Wojtowicz Re: 2013 Fourth
Quarter Review**

Jim Wojtowicz, Town Comptroller: Basically there is a lot of detail attached here. The month of November is closed and the Supervisor and I met with each department in mid-December to discuss the December results. We want to make sure there are no negative surprises. So, we feel pretty confident. I know Councilman Carlos is new and he's been asking a lot of great questions lately. If you want more details, you can stop in any time or call, Supervisor Tancredi's door is open as well. Basically, we met with each Department Head in mid-December and we touched on some of these issues as we went along. Without further ado, the first

screen is something Supervisor Todd created a couple of years ago. Basically, this is the Tax Division. This is the five different types of folks that live in the Town of Poughkeepsie, the Combination of School Districts and Fire District. We thought this would be interesting and this is going to be on the Web as well for folks at home. Slide one, first column that is folks living in the Arlington School District and the Arlington Fire District. So, the Town tax remains the same. We are 4.6 per \$1,000 of assessed evaluation. The County is \$3.65. The School Districts are all different and the three different Fire Houses are all different, as well.

Councilman Krakower: I have a question. The 3.65% doesn't count all the money they take in Sales Tax and all the other stuff, right? Or does it?

Comptroller Wojtowicz: No, that's the cost to the residents living in the Town. There are all different rates depending on what Town you live in, but for our folks it is \$3.65. That's what you are going to see in your Tax Bill.

Supervisor Tancredi: That's the levy to the residents.

Councilman Krakower: Actually, the County's share of what they take out of our pockets is a lot higher because of taking sales tax. I think that's a pretty good "Bang for your Buck" in all honesty. When you look at 4.6 % of the overall and we are providing Police and everything else.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: If you look at the red up there, 4.6 compared to 5.54 and that includes Highway, Police, Recreation, Building support.

Supervisor Tancredi: The reason I like these graphs is we collect money for the School's, fire, etc., but this gives the residents a good idea where their money is being spent and how it's being spent and whether the impact is right for each area, whether it be Fire, School, or County. I think it's an interesting way to look at where the money is going.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: The next graph is shown a little bit differently, look at the fourth column from the left. That's Wappinger School District down in the First Ward area of the Town. The New Hamburg Fire District is low in the red, I believe they do a lot of volunteer work down there. (Yes, it's all volunteer) The School District is a little bit better, too, down in Wappingers.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Just, for a point of reference, this will be on the website if people want to see where their tax dollar goes. The Supervisor has this on the Bulletin Boards in the Town. Our Tax Receiver has it and the Assessor has one, so, just for points of information. Now, I'm going to start the presentation. The first slide, slide 3, is our General Fund. It includes a portion of the Town that represents the Village of Wappingers. Now, our Police do not go into the Village and the Highway Group does not go into the Village. They are strictly outside. General, but outside village.

These expenses are strictly representing the Town. For example, Todd's Office. He picks up the phone and if it is a resident in the Village of Wappingers on the Town side, we represent them.

Councilman Krakower: Are Villages required to be part of the Town and pay taxes to the Town? (I believe so)

Comptroller Wojtowicz: The Village of Wappingers is split in two.

Councilman Krakower: But the Village of Wappingers, if they wanted to—they have no choice, they have to be part of Wappingers, Town of Poughkeepsie or part of both?

Councilman Baisley: I think you are correct, there is no village in New York State that is not part of the Town.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Ok, Column one is the Annual Budget. Column two is what has actually been expended to eleven months and column three is what we have remaining in the Budget. So, just a few highlights, but you do have a hard copy. The election expenses are all budgeted and paid for by the County. It is tied into the Sales Tax adjustment we got tied into in 2012, more on that later. Not really a good story, but...a positive is the unallocated insurance in property. Ever since we switched over, we've been in a surplus on our insurance.

Councilman Krakower: That's the Jack Smith? (Yes)

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Plus \$44,000. We paid the full bill for the year and we had a budget of \$120,000 and it cost us \$76,000 + 40,000 there. Judgment and Claims, this isn't a great story, but I want to mention that about half the way down the page, \$300,000 budget, you spent \$291,000 and there is no more in December. Todd won't allow me to exceed that \$300,000. So, by "Hook or by Crook" we stayed under the \$300,00 and folks, believe it or not, that number was Budgeted at \$60,000 in 2010. So maybe it's the "Sign of the Times" that tax certioraris are out there. Recreation Administration: + \$20,000. We had a reconstruction in that Office. A full time clerk retired. Tom hired a part-time person and she will work more hours in the summer. There was kind of a restructuring and it's worked out good so far. Unemployment Insurance: This is another area we've cracked down. We are much more diligent before we hire someone. You never really know, so we are going to exceed budget on all our Unemployment Insurance. Day Camps: The structure changed a little bit in 2013 and 2014 as well. They are very popular with the residents in the Town. Our required subsidy required was about \$25,000, meaning that the Camps required to run costs us about \$78,000 and the revenue that came in was about \$55,000 and I know I spoke to Tom this morning and he feels his budget has improved in 2014. I guess there were some issues in getting going. This is very popular with the residents. Adult Recreation: We have a surplus there as well. This is a function of the Senior Center and it opened a little later than we expected,

but we saved the money and encumbered it and anticipating additional expenses and that's been very positive since it's been open. Workman's Comp is a negative, but we have taken action on that as well. We switched over to the Dutchess County Plan. There was a savings in the 2014 Budget. We were negatively affected by the new New York State laws out there. The fee per employee went up from \$400 to \$800 and a couple other taxes involved there but, we did take an action. We got the woman from Dutchess County in the other day and we are expecting that to work as well. The bottom line here is we expect the total expenses of 5.7 million. On the appropriation side, we expect to be at budget and that is on all five major funds. Todd works closely with the Department Heads and we expect to meet the challenge. The 2013 is the Revenue side. We have a negative \$130,000 in the mortgage tax. B Fund, the appropriations are very positive. The Police continue to work within the Budget constraints. He meets with the Supervisor regularly. We made out well with the Property Insurance. The B Fund is our largest Insurance Fund. We are plus \$150,000 in the Property Insurance. The Retiree's Medical Insurance is negative. The Police retired with 100% Medical. We saved some money on the salary, but when the police retires he goes out at 90,000 say, and a new policeman starts out at about \$55,000 and we kind of take it up that way. We did increase the Budget for the retirees to over a million in 2014 but we more than make it up in our appropriates and they will be better than Budget in the B fund. B Fund Revenues: We are going to have a shortfall here. See line 3 and 5: the Sales Tax in the Dutchess County Grant. They locked us into the sales tax at \$1,925,000.00 and in exchange for that; they are going to pay for the Election expenses which are about \$93,000. Then in addition to that, they are going to make us whole. Somehow this is the combination we budgeted in 2013 and then making us whole is for an issue outside of our operating budget and has to do with the salt spreaders. So, we have a hole in our revenue of \$250,000. We plan on making that up. The Building Department through 11 months is +\$120,000.

Councilman Krakower: The sales tax. The County took about \$600,000 in Sales Tax out of our pockets and put it in theirs, right? (Yes) The Grant Program that they said was going to help make us whole year in and year out if we became more efficient and shared services. Did they renew that in 2014 Budget?

Supervisor Tancredi: I know the County Executive did his portion. It was a million from him and a million from the Legislature. I don't know if the Legislature has or not. We will have to look into that.

Councilman Krakower: Ultimately, they are going to take the Sales Tax Revenue that was our portion, \$600,000 and then if we become more efficient, throw us a few dollars back. I think we've proven that we've become more efficient over the years without having the County take our money and hold it with a carrot out in front of us. I just think that when you look at that 3.65 for the County budget, it's an artificial number that if you have a tax cap of 2%, we have to live with it and the school districts have to live with it and you would think that the County and State government should have to live with it also and basically, raising the sales tax and

putting money in their pocket that way and saying they've stayed under the 2% tax rate, is not, in my opinion, an honest way to approach it. I think we've always been honest with our residents about what we spend and how we spend it and we didn't raise our fees 30% to cover a shortfall in the budget, we basically paid our bills, so, to me that's annoyed me from the day they started looking at that. The Town of Poughkeepsie, Town of Wappingers, and Town of Fishkill I think generate the bulk of the sales tax revenue, it doesn't go to us, it goes to Dutchess County, City of Beacon and there was an opportunity to change that and basically nothing was really done to help us, it was to help the County and make their numbers artificially look better. While I'm on it – D Tax, I think is just a year or two of the same thing. They are raising \$7 million by taxing utilities and that's not balancing the budget, that's just taking money out of people's pockets that already can't afford it. I know they throw back that we are getting a piece of that and in my honest opinion, I would rather have the Town Taxpayers pay a fraction of a point less than getting any of that money from the County because I think it is offensive that they are even charging it.

Councilman Baisley: It's not fair or equitable anywhere along the line. They raised their Budget over 2% and told Albany "You stop the mandates" the system will work better. They are just taking what they need to balance their Budget and instead of just going to Albany and have Albany cuts these mandates out. They are just throwing an extra couple of hundred dollars on us, which is probably a 20% increase by the time you pay your energy taxes. The Towns are generating all the sales tax. Our Police Department could be half the size, if we didn't have Routes 9, 44 and 55 and it is not paying a portion of what that is. It doesn't cover hardly any of that Budget.

Councilman Krakower: I think if we could not charge that, whatever percentage the Town is supposed to get of that energy tax, if we could not charge it, I think it would be worthwhile. We didn't budget it into our 2014 Budget, I think it is a good idea. If we could rebate it to residents.

Supervisor Tancredi: We're not going to be able to rebate it. It would cost us more to cut a \$5.25 check, but I hear what you are saying.

Councilman Krakower: The trouble with these energy taxes, it's the little guy that can't afford it. It hits the little guy who is struggling to pay their taxes and now their heating bill becomes much more unaffordable.

Councilman Carlos: Jim, on the Dutchess County Grant, we budgeted for income from them 252 thousand and the income is zero? (Yes) What is that?

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Yes, that's a long story, but that goes back to the Sales Tax issue.

We had our Budget in 2012 at 2.3 million and the County came up with the idea that they were going to cut back on the sales tax and make us whole between the election expenses and a Grant and so we budgeted it.

Supervisor Tancredi: This is the revenue side and on a whole, we are not going to be short for 2013. The Grant we received from the County is an off operating budget item. It's for salt spreaders which are more of a capitol expense. We didn't have it in the operating budget. We budgeted the 252 thinking that the grant would make us whole but we couldn't find anything within our operating budget. We passed a few ideas by them of things we had in our operating budget, to see if we could fund through that grant, but none of them would fly. The salt spreaders, which we think is a great idea, although it is not in our operating budget, so that is why that is zero. On the revenue side, sure it makes it short \$250,000 but overall, we are going to make it up. Even on the revenue side, if you look at this, overall, this is through 11 months and so we should be fine on the sales tax as well.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Bill, we knew about this earlier in the year and so we were watching expenses and trying to make this up.

Councilman Carlos: We were given these salt spreaders, which is about \$250,000 worth of equipment?

Supervisor Tancredi: The grant is for \$250,000. It's a shared grant with Hyde Park and I think it's for 17 pieces of equipment and we are going to use 10 and they are going to use 7 and I think our share is somewhere around \$225 or \$235 something like that.

Councilman Carlos: And so, when you talk about the big picture, it's unbalanced then?

Supervisor Tancredi: Those spreaders were not in our operating budget.

Councilman Krakower: We took a hit from the County so they could stay with the 2% tax cap, basically.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Highway Department has good news. The top part of the schedule is the appropriation side and they remained in Budget. The snow removal. We met with him in mid December and basically we were doing so well. The \$211,000 we are sitting on is still available. We still have bills out there for salt and materials and contractors. All of the salaries have been paid. So far we've paid \$68,000 in salaries and contractors. In 2012 we had a great year and one of the reasons was there was no snow.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Ok, our next line is our Water Fund. The Water Fund is one of our strongest funds in the Town. The Joint Water Plant continues to benefit our Town. We bought the plant back in 1995. 20 year debt, and this debt is going

to be leaving in 2016. That's going to be timely because we have a new project coming up based on New York State. The average family in the Town pays \$36.38 this year in the tax, based on New York State Audit, we were able to tax based on the debt service. The rate is \$2 per unit. A unit is 748 gallons of water. The average home uses 100 units a year and so the average residents in the Town are paying about \$60 a quarter. The City of Poughkeepsie is \$45 a year and that's \$240 a year. The City of Beacon is \$392 a year and the Town of East Fishkill is \$210. My Water Funds seems to be very strong. Todd works closely with Supervisor Ballard. Councilman Carlos is on the Water Board and Chairman Newton and Todd are still on the Board. We are well represented going into the future. A lot of decisions get made on that Water Board.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: Another success story, based on two strategy changes, we are in the best shape our Sewer Fund has been in years. We are building up a favorable fund balance. The United Water came in the second half of 2011. In addition, we've budgeted money for anticipated sewer plant upgrade. That's the \$200,000 that's in the bank. The Town rate for sewer is \$1.50 per unit. The same 748 gallons of water as it passes through the meter. With an additional annual tax based on the capital within that specific district. At present we have 28 districts. The capital tax is basically calculated on the pipe, manhole covers are about 40 years old.

Councilman Krakower complimented the employees throughout the Town in their ability to keep the expenses and taxes down.

Comptroller Wojtowicz: That is basically our 5 major funds and we will update you when we get the final numbers. We usually pay bills until the middle of March. The Auditors come in in April.

Supervisor Tancredi: The bottom line is that 2013 was a decent year for us. It wasn't as good as 2012 but wasn't as bad as some previous years.

Doreen Tignanelli: On the tax distribution. This isn't a percentage right, where Councilman Krakower said 3.65%, but it's really \$3.65 per thousand? Councilman Krakower: Right, I made a mistake.

Doreen Tignanelli: Ok, I just wanted to verify that. For the County and the Town is \$4.60 and Arlington Fire District is \$5.54 which is the highest.

Supervisor Tancredi: Outside of schools.

Doreen Tignanelli: When you talked about the Workman's Comp savings you're going to get for 2014 for the A fund, is that also the case for the B fund?

Comptroller Wojtowicz: All five funds.

COPY OF ENTIRE PRESENTATION ATTACHED TO FINAL BOOK COPY

Motion made to suspend the rules for public speaking on Town issues: Supervisor Tancredi/J. Conte

CARRIED: 7-0

NO SPEAKERS CAME FORWARD

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- 1. FINANCE** Councilman Krakower: No Report
- 2. FIRE ADVISORY** Councilman Conte: No Report
- 3. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS** Councilwoman Shershin: I attended a Green Energy Segment in New Paltz and they primarily discussed the development of wind energy off the coast of New York and the difficulties with green energy is not so much creating it as storing it and having a reliable energy source. The ocean there is a long shallow shelf and so they are talking about putting turbines five miles out in the ocean. In 2050, if it goes ahead, they could power the entire State.
- 4. LAND USE & PLANNING** Councilman Krakower: No Report
- 5. PERSONNEL** Councilman Cifone: No Report
- 6. RECREATION** Councilman Baisley: We met tonight and we are starting our beginning phase of preparing our parks for the spring and trying to do some work with the parks and bring things closer together and making things more efficient in some of the parks.
- 7. SENIOR CITIZENS** Councilman Baisley: No Report
- 8. TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT** Councilman Carlos: No Report
- 9. WATER, SEWER, HIGHWAY** Councilman Carlos: No Report

The Supervisor serves as an ad-hoc member of all Committees, except finance during budget process.

Motion made to close the Meeting: Supervisor Tancredi/W. Carlos

CARRIED: 7-0

TOWN BOARD ADJOURNED AT 8:00 PM