

STATE OF NEW YORK  
ONONDAGA COUNTY  
TOWN OF CICERO

SS:

The Cicero Town Board held a Special Town Board Meeting on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at the Cicero Town Hall, 8236 Brewerton Road, Cicero, NY 13039.

PRESENT:

Jessica Zambrano	Supervisor
Mike Becallo	Councilor
C. Vernon Conway	Councilor
Dick Cushman	Councilor
Mark Venesky	Councilor

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jody Rogers	Director of Parks and Recreation
James Rowley	Budget Officer
Tracy M. Cosilmon	Town Clerk

Supervisor Zambrano opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Supervisor Zambrano stated that the public hearing was for the proposed budget for 2016. For anyone that was concerned that maybe we are doing this a day late, we did consult with the Association of Towns who said, “Well, November 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a Sunday, so you’re fine to have this on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>”. We’ve had a lot of information already presented about the budget; we’ve had a lot of hearings, and that has been our intention; to have as much exposure and public input to the proposed budget as possible.

Supervisor Zambrano: This is a public hearing; it was published. We are going to talk about the general funds, as well as the special districts tonight.

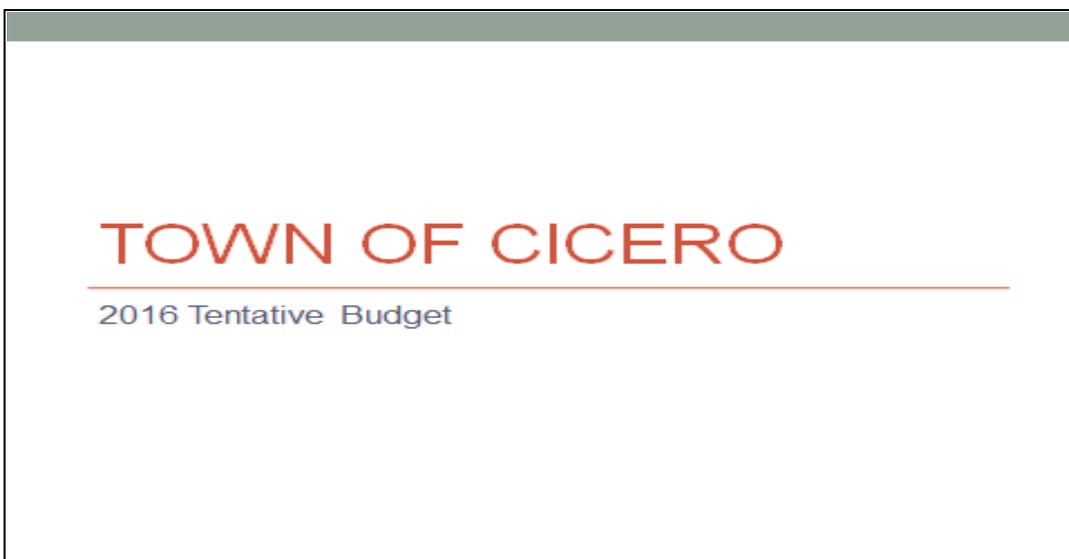
Supervisor Zambrano pointed out the emergency exits and asked everyone to silence their cell phones and to keep chatter to a minimum.

Councilor Conway led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Conway requested a moment of silence for our troops overseas.

**2016 PRELIMINARY BUDGET PRESENTATION GIVEN BY JAMES ROWLEY,  
BUDGET OFFICER ON THE SPECIAL DISTRICTS**

Jim Rowley, Budget Officer gave a slide presentation on the budget:



Jim Rowley: I think what this tentative budget tries to do is strike a balance between taxes and services. On a macro basis you will see that there is little change to the bottom line; there are some changes within the details. I want to stress that there is no paving money in this budget, or no equipment money in the highway fund. And again, based on my conversations with some board members the strategy is to start bleeding this back into the budget next year.

Cicero Tax Burden - Current Rank (13th lowest out of 19)				
	Town	Highway	Eq Rate	\$150K Home
Geddes	5.6407	4.5951	93.00%	\$ 1,427.89
Camillus	3.7051	2.9333	100.00%	\$ 995.76
Fabius	4.4153	2.0814	100.00%	\$ 974.51
Otisco	58.4817	221.5634	2.17%	\$ 911.55
Salina	2.2953	2.7840	100.00%	\$ 761.90
LaFayette	5.1884	0.0000	97.00%	\$ 754.91
Manlius	3.7513	1.1797	100.00%	\$ 739.65
Dewitt	3.2000	1.5400	100.00%	\$ 711.00
Elbridge	3.4156	1.1745	100.00%	\$ 688.52
Marcellus	3.557	1.0024	100.00%	\$ 683.91
Van Buren	1.7837	2.5891	100.00%	\$ 655.92
Tully	2.9361	1.0526	100.00%	\$ 598.31
<b>Cicero</b>	<b>2.0032</b>	<b>1.6956</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$ 554.82</b>
Clay	18.3235	43.1632	4.33%	\$ 399.36
Onondaga	0.6795	1.9382	100.00%	\$ 392.66
Spafford	0.9695	1.3895	100.00%	\$ 353.85
Skaneateles	1.8972	0.4611	100.00%	\$ 353.75
Pompey	2.1219	0.0000	100.00%	\$ 318.29
Lysander	0.7856	1.3029	100.00%	\$ 313.28

This first slide is just a revisit of where we started in 2015, relative to other towns. It is the tax burden for \$150,000 homes located outside the village, relative to other towns in the county. In his opinion, the Town of Cicero’s tax burden was in pretty good shape relative to other towns, giving the level of services that are provided here. You can see that Cicero came in 13 out of 19 towns.

APPROPRIATIONS					
Fund Description	2014 Final	2015 Final	2016 Preliminary	2016 Tentative	CHANGE
GENERAL FUND	\$2,883,587	\$2,876,118	\$3,101,397	\$3,247,355	\$145,958
PART-TOWN OUTSIDE OF VILLAGE FUND	\$3,099,859	\$3,152,550	\$3,469,934	\$3,385,105	-\$84,829
PART-TOWN HIGHWAY FUND	\$3,971,664	\$3,950,309	\$4,260,602	\$4,165,257	-\$95,345
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,955,110</b>	<b>\$9,978,977</b>	<b>\$10,831,933</b>	<b>\$10,797,717</b>	<b>-\$34,216</b>

REVENUES					
Fund Description	2014 Final	2015 Final	2016 Preliminary	2016 Tentative	CHANGE
GENERAL FUND	\$1,300,620	\$1,229,820	\$1,227,820	\$1,227,820	\$0
PART-TOWN OUTSIDE OF VILLAGE FUND	\$436,295	\$446,686	\$468,000	\$468,000	\$0
PART-TOWN HIGHWAY FUND	\$372,200	\$367,001	\$403,000	\$403,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,109,115</b>	<b>\$2,043,507</b>	<b>\$2,098,820</b>	<b>\$2,098,820</b>	<b>\$0</b>

APPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE					
Fund Description	2014 Final	2015 Final	2016 Preliminary	2016 Tentative	CHANGE
GENERAL FUND	\$314,981	\$203,065	\$203,065	\$203,065	\$0
PART-TOWN OUTSIDE OF VILLAGE FUND	\$106,751	\$80,129	\$80,129	\$80,129	\$0
PART-TOWN HIGHWAY FUND	\$276,972	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$698,704</b>	<b>\$483,194</b>	<b>\$483,194</b>	<b>\$483,194</b>	<b>\$0</b>

TAX LEVY					
Fund Description	2014 Final	2015 Final	2016 Preliminary	2016 Tentative	CHANGE
GENERAL FUND	\$1,267,986	\$1,443,233	\$1,670,512	\$1,816,470	\$145,958
PART-TOWN OUTSIDE OF VILLAGE FUND	\$2,556,813	\$2,625,735	\$2,921,805	\$2,836,976	-\$84,829
PART-TOWN HIGHWAY FUND	\$3,322,492	\$3,383,308	\$3,657,602	\$3,562,257	-\$95,345
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,147,291</b>	<b>\$7,452,276</b>	<b>\$8,249,919</b>	<b>\$8,215,703</b>	<b>-\$34,216</b>
SPECIAL DISTRICTS	\$4,566,011	\$4,604,890	\$4,818,803	\$4,727,526	-\$91,277
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,713,302</b>	<b>\$12,057,166</b>	<b>\$13,068,722</b>	<b>\$12,943,229</b>	<b>-\$125,493</b>

This is the numbers slide, if you will, and it sort of summarizes the changes in the budget. The first budget that is usually on the table is the preliminary budget, but you can see that:

- The total Appropriations have gone down \$34,216 and the make-up of that, you can see the A Fund is up, the General Fund, the Part-Town Town fund is down, and the Highway Fund is down as well.
- The major change in the General Fund is the addition of an appropriation to purchase land, and I believe this is for the Highway Garage of \$170,000; offset by some cuts in the Parks Department, in the Capital Equipment outlay line, as well as the Improvement line.
- There are some other changes within the A Fund. Town Board Contractual was reduced slightly to \$6,000, again there’s money in there for an audit next year, as well as services relative to bonding.
- Tax Collection Salary line we did increase \$11,808 and that was to cover part time help, which was formerly paid out of a grant from the STAR program that’s no longer available.

- The money for the Budget Officer line, the original proposal was to eliminate it, there was \$3,000 left in that; that's really just sort of a hedge to get through next year.
- The Town Clerk salary was decreased slightly a little over \$2,700.
- The whole Law Section was increased \$20,000, and that's based on the fact that we have negotiations coming up and increased litigation that the Town has faced over the past year.
- Information Systems are up a little over \$5,000 on the contractual line and that is for maintenance and support costs.
- Traffic Control area was increased \$6,000 as well. This is based on historical spending and there are some other small changes within the A Fund, but again the \$145,000 increase is for the most, aside from these other minor changes, the increased appropriations for purchase of land for the Highway Garage, offset by cuts in the Equipment Outlay and Improvement line in the Parks Department.
- The B Fund, the General Fund Outside Village that was reduced \$84,000, and that is basically in the Police Department. There was some provision in the salary line to take care of a retiring police officer; we decided to take that out at this point. We don't know if we'll pay the whole thing this year, or if it's going to go into next year, but we felt that given where we were from a tax perspective that it was better to take that off, and if we need to cover it we will cover it some other way.
- Police Equipment, there was a large appropriation in there for the leasing of cars, as a side to that we would reduce the amount of cars that are going to be leasing in the next year; so we reduced that a little over \$11,600.
- We did fine tune the Workers Comp line in here and decrease that about \$8,500, and then there's some small miscellaneous reductions of about \$4,500/\$4,600.
- The Highway Fund was reduced by \$95,000, the two things that we reduced were:
  1. Salaries – there was a proposal for one additional CEO, and we eliminated that.
  2. We also reduced our estimate for salt purchases since we do have a full barn at this point, by \$50,000; that was offset by some increases in supplies, mainly in the pipe appropriation lines, and then there are some miscellaneous reductions as well.
- If you go down to the bottom of this slide you'll see a reduction in Special Districts of \$91,277, and there's two things that pertain to that:
  1. A reduction in the Fire Protection Budget of about \$36,750, and we've sort of targeted the Cicero line in that budget for various reasons, and then
  2. in the Drainage District we took out personal services of \$60,000 after some discussions with Shirlie we felt that we did need to spend those services; we do cover it with some contractual money, it's already budgeted in the Drainage line.

2015 FINAL BUDGET								
	Appropriations	Est Revenues	Fund Balance	Tax Amount	2015 Rate			
General	\$ 2,876,118	\$ 1,229,820	\$ 203,065	\$ 1,443,233	\$ 0.6872			
Gen Outside Village	\$ 3,152,550	\$ 446,686	\$ 80,129	\$ 2,625,735	\$ 1.3159			
Highway	\$ 3,950,309	\$ 367,001	\$ 200,000	\$ 3,383,308	\$ 1.6956			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 9,978,977</b>	<b>\$ 2,043,507</b>	<b>\$ 483,194</b>	<b>\$ 7,452,276</b>	<b>\$ 3.6987</b>			
Taxable Assessment		2015	2016	% change				
	Part Town	\$ 1,995,358.849	\$ 2,004,584.721	0.46%				
	Village	\$ 104,857,020	\$ 106,223,557	1.30%				
	Town Wide	\$ 2,100,215,869	\$ 2,110,808,278	0.50%				
2016 TENTATIVE BUDGET								
	Appropriations	Est Revenues	Fund Balance	Tax Amount	2016 Rate	2015 Rate	Increase	%
General	\$ 3,247,355	\$ 1,227,820	\$ 203,065	\$ 1,816,470	\$ 0.8606	\$ 0.6872	\$ 0.1734	25.23%
Gen Outside Village	\$ 3,385,105	\$ 468,000	\$ 80,129	\$ 2,836,976	\$ 1.4152	\$ 1.3159	\$ 0.0993	7.55%
Highway	\$ 4,165,257	\$ 403,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 3,562,257	\$ 1.7771	\$ 1.6956	\$ 0.0815	4.80%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 10,797,717</b> 8.20%	<b>\$ 2,098,820</b>	<b>\$ 483,194</b>	<b>\$ 8,215,703</b> 10.24%	<b>\$ 4.0529</b>	<b>\$ 3.6987</b>	<b>\$ 0.3542</b>	<b>9.58%</b>

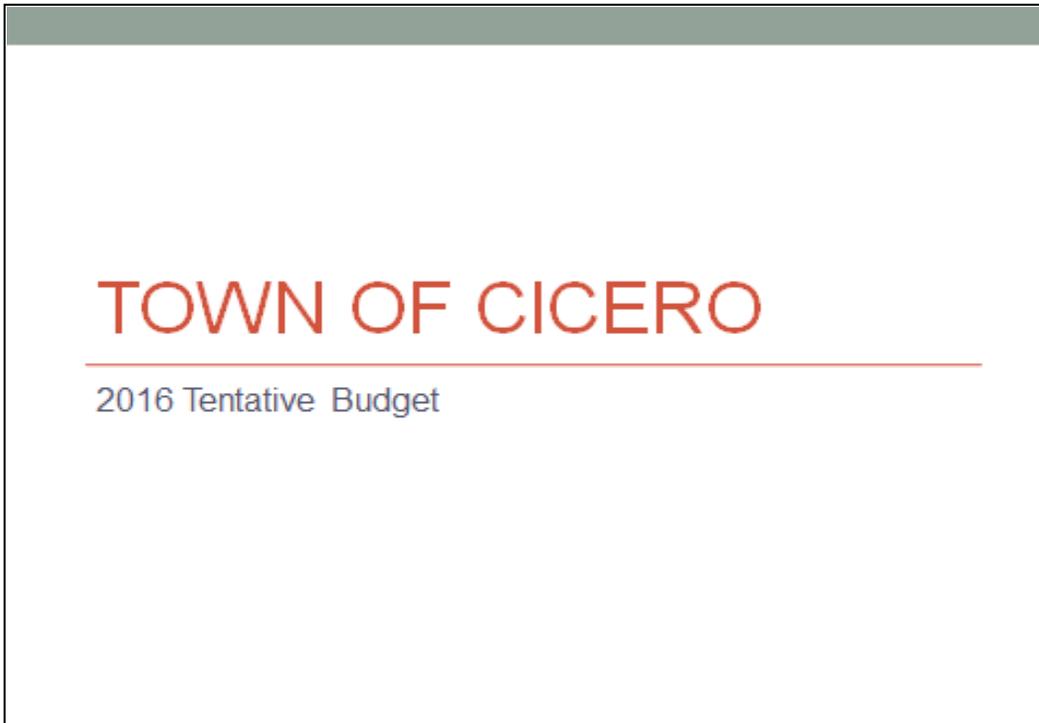
This is just a summary of where we are on the tax rate (a calculation of the tax rate). It doesn't include the special district charges that someone would encounter because it depends on where that person lives.

The big numbers, as you can see on the bottom (of the slide):

- Appropriations are up 8.2 percent
- Tax Levy, which is up 10.24 percent
- The Tax Rate is up only 9.5 percent, and the rate is lower than the Tax Levy because of the increase in the Taxable Assessment.

Tax Impact of Tentative Budget					
		Town	Highway	Eq Rate	\$150K Home
2015	Cicero	2.0032	1.6956	100.00%	\$ 554.82
2016	Cicero	2.2758	1.7771	100.00%	\$ 607.93
			Increase ->		\$ 53.11
		Town	Highway	Eq Rate	\$150K Home
	Geddes	5.6407	4.5951	93.00%	\$ 1,427.89
	Camillus	3.7051	2.9333	100.00%	\$ 995.76
	Fabius	4.4153	2.0814	100.00%	\$ 974.51
	Otisco	58.4817	221.56	2.17%	\$ 911.55
	Salina	2.2953	2.7840	100.00%	\$ 761.90
	LaFayette	5.1884	0.0000	97.00%	\$ 754.91
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2016	Cicero	2.2758	1.7771	100.00%	\$ 607.93
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	Pompey	2.1219	0.0000	100.00%	\$ 318.29
	Lysander	0.7856	1.3029	100.00%	\$ 313.28

The final slide sort of summarizes what happens to Cicero relative to other towns in this budget that's on the table. The last time that I presented the total burden for the budget for a \$150,000 home was \$611.04, you can see in this proposed budget that we have whittled it down a little bit to \$607.93. Based on the current 2015 budgets of every other town Cicero moves up one slot. I'm not sure if that will hold true once everyone else's 2016 Budget becomes known, but again, you're in the 12/13 out of 19 towns in terms of tax burden for a \$150,000. Again, I would ask you to consider all the services that Cicero does supply for that amount.



After the presentation of the budget Jim Rowley solicited any questions the Board or the audience had.

Supervisor Zambrano asked if these numbers reflect a 7.35 percent increase.

Jim Rowley said that was correct.

Supervisor Zambrano said that equates to a \$53.11 increase in a home.

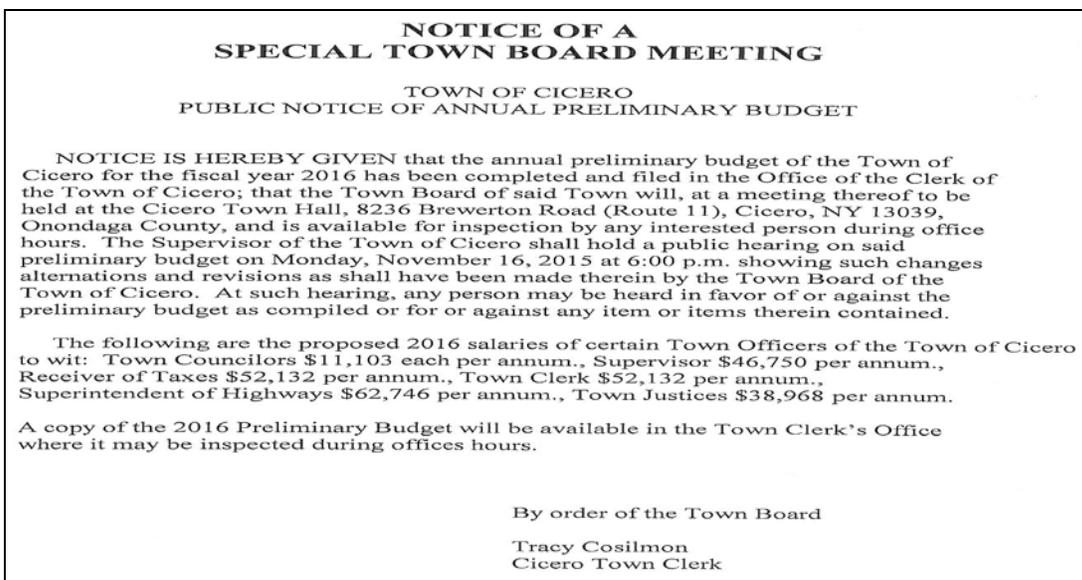
Jim Rowley stated a \$100,000 home would see an increase of about \$35.00. A \$150,000 home would see increase of \$53.11.

Supervisor Zambrano asked the Town Board members if they had any questions for Mr. Rowley.

Councilor Becallo asked Jim Rowley if he could give the Board just one sheet of paper just documenting where the actual cuts were on the line items.

Jim Rowley said he could do that and get it to them later that evening.

**PUBLIC HEARING**



Supervisor Zambrano solicited any questions or comments from the Board before she opened the public hearing, of which there were none.

Supervisor Zambrano opened the Public Hearing at 6:16 p.m. and stated they would start with comments. They would separate the comments first on the general funds and then special districts on the end.

Supervisor Zambrano noted there were two people signed up to speak on the general funds (Don Snyder and Judy Boyke).

Don Snyder addressed the Board. He said he knows they have got an impossible job to do, but talking to a number of people in the town they really expected the election this year to make a change in direction of where we are going.

Don Snyder read from the following:

Page 1 of 2:

### Final Budget Review – Town of Cicero

November 16, 2015

I need to say upfront I am a Republican I am not the other Party

Proposed tax increase is 7.35%

For that we get:

Fund balance use of \$483,000

Road repair borrowing of \$850,000

Equipment borrowing of \$500,000

An out of balance budget of \$1,833,000

Town currently owes \$3,800,000

Add 2016 \$1,833,000

Total owed \$ 5,150,000

See funds for Highway Garage land. What are our plans going forward?

No funds for engineering of Highway garage. We should allocate at least \$50,000.

We are returning lifeguards to the beach at a net increase of \$18,000 to the budget.

You talked about a safety program to bring down workers comp. Where are the funds to accomplish this?

All salary increases are 2% except the Police which is 6.5 to 7%

Police budget before fringe benefits is adding 1% of the 7.35% increase.

Police are only staff that gets longevity pay. 2016 it will be \$15,500.

Police contract ends 12/31/15 - change staffing to reduce overtime \$75,000 in 2016

DB fund bans show no increase in funding for 2015 highway borrowing.

In 2014 & 2015 we borrowed to purchase highway equipment for 15 years

Make a cut of 5% to all non salary and fringe benefit lines. I have not included lines that cover fuel, utilities, renovations or special items.

*For putting some money in the Garage fund, if you take a 5% cut, for example if you say to every department head, you take a 5% cut from all non-salary and fringe benefit line items it will give us in:*

Fund A about \$375,000 or \$19,000

Fund B about \$208,000 or \$10,000

Fund DB about \$ 364,000 or \$18,000

Total reduction of \$47,000

Salt budget for 2016 is \$400,000. We have spent \$625,000 in 2015 short \$225,000.

In response to Don Snyder's question of **what are our plans going forward in regards to the Highway Garage land**, Supervisor Zambrano answered that it is true that there has been no money budgeted to start the process. We have selected a design firm. We have yet to engage with them. We don't have a written agreement with them; we don't know what the services will cost. The reason we don't know what the agreement will say at this point is because we are still trying to make determinations on the suitability of the land; there's testing that's going to be conducted before the purchase of that property becomes final.

Don Snyder suggested that we allocate in this budget at least \$50,000 to keep that thing moving.

In response to Don's question of **where are the funds to accomplish the safety program to bring down Workers Comp**, Supervisor Zambrano told Don Snyder that there is a safety committee that includes two of the Board members (Councilor Venesky and Councilor Cushman). We started it last year in doing an analysis in what was happening with the Workers Comp program, so we had a lot of consultants come in at no cost to the town, so we had a lot of reports that were shared with the board. We have reconstituted the safety committee this year and they have been meeting in earnest to review accident reports. We've also been assured that we will get extra training from the collective bargaining units who will provide safety education to the members. We have not allocated any additional money, no we have not. We hope to take advantage of consultant services at no cost from our carriers.

Don Snyder said these funds are responsible for the increase in our taxes this year. He arrived at these figures by taking the number that each one of these funds increased divided by \$120,000 (which is about what 1 percent of a tax increase gets us):

Fund A responsible for 3.9% increase

Fund B responsible for 1.9% increase

Fund DB responsible for 1.8% increase

Don Snyder: If we want to show that we are moving forward, we are doing that with the Police Department. We're moving forward with a facility for them, and yet their facility is not as demanding as necessary as our Highway Garage. So in order to keep things kind of moving in both areas we need to seriously look at putting funding in this budget, and I would say at least \$50,000 so we continue on our road to the Highway Garage because if we don't have it in there we won't have money to do pre-engineering until 2017. It's going to take at least a year to design it, so that means 2018. It's going to take two years to build it, that's 2020 before we see a new highway garage – that is a disgrace for what we now require our people to work in.

Supervisor Zambrano thanked Don Snyder.

Judy Boyke said in the Assessor's department we were told by hiring a full-time assessor and a part-time clerk that it would save us money, when in fact it appears that we have an \$116,000 increase in that line.

Supervisor Zambrano said she thought the other expenses, other than salary, went up in that department.

Judy Boyke said it was the contractual line, but anyways it still increased \$116,000.

Supervisor Zambrano said they changed the staffing in there and we were getting a full-time assessor, which she thinks is advantageous for the town.

Don Snyder told Judy Boyke the amount she gave was not correct, it went down from \$195,000 to \$168,000 total for the assessor's office.

Councilor Venesky stated that it wasn't an increase, it was a decrease.

Supervisor Zambrano said that there were some increases in the contractual line.

Don Snyder said yes, but the total for the assessor's office went down this year compared to last year.

Judy Boyke said she apologized for that if that's the case. The budget lines that she has she will relook at.

Judy Boyke said the purchasing of the land on Route 31 (the fact that she is a licensed realtor), concerns her because she is obviously the purchaser of this property now because she is a taxpayer. The line item indicates \$170,000 for the land, which has no sewers. The assessed value is \$80,000. When it expired in September it was listed as \$160,000; there was no one beating the door down to buy that property. She intends to FOIL (Freedom of Information Law) the information regarding the purchase offer of this property because she would like to know how it was negotiated in the favor of the taxpayers of the town because it appears that the fiduciary laws do not cover us because we paid more than they were asking for, and the fact that there are several different tests that need to be done that she is hoping that it was negotiated that the seller pays for them and not the buyer.

Judy Boyke said she noticed that there is nothing for animal control. She asked if it was correct that we as a town are not paying for animal control anymore.

Supervisor Zambrano said we made a decision last year. People were calling here with requests for animal control that were beyond the responsibility of the town. We had one resident who tried to submit a bill for fourteen squirrels, so her position was that if we have an animal control issue we will deal with it when it comes up instead of advertising that we have animal control. There's a lot of animal control situations which belong to the property owner and not the responsibility of the town. If there were a public safety issue, such as rabies or something, certainly we would get involved with the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation), but she doesn't think its good financial sense to be advertising that we are going to take care of your nuisance animals when we're talking about skunks, etc.

Judy Boyke said she understood that, as she experienced it herself. She is just concerned. She asked where this money comes from. Is there a separate line to pay for the dog control and all of that that we contract with the Town of Clay?

Supervisor Zambrano said there is a section for dog control; we left it where it was. We are trying to develop this program with Clay and we may need to make adjustments later.

Judy Boyke: Just as a reference, I noticed there was about a \$100,000 increase in the Parks & Rec department. I noticed that there's only \$1,000 allocated for the Brewerton Revitalization program. We do have, I believe, three grants out there with a time line on them, are we going to lose those grants?

Supervisor Zambrano told Judy we are not going to lose any grants, and she didn't know which ones Judy was referring to. Right now the big push for 2016 is to get the land acquisition, so if we actually purchase those two properties we will extend the Schumer grant by another ten years; we have already allocated the money for that, it is in reserve. We did put \$1,000 in this budget to start a fund for Brewerton Revitalization. Right now we are trying to finish up projects from this year and some next year. We have submitted other grants, but we will probably only become aware of whether we got the award next year, which will put us into the next year, so we are not planning any big construction project for Brewerton Revitalization for the Riverfront Park in 2016.

Judy Boyke said the Stirpe grant did not show in the budget as revenue.

Supervisor Zambrano told her it was because we don't have it yet.

Judy Boyke asked if we are going ahead with this project without funding.

Supervisor Zambrano said no, not necessarily. If we don't get the Stirpe grant that will pretty much scrap the renovation for the vacated South Bay Fire Department building for the police.

Judy Boyke said part of the problem in trying to decipher this budget is the fact that there is no actual line for the layman to look at when they are looking at the budget. She noticed there was an increase in the CHIPS program of \$35,000, and asked if they knew the actuals.

Supervisor Zambrano said she thought that was based on revenue that we got this year.

Supervisor Zambrano: Just out of curiosity, how did you handle that when you were supervisor, to give late information out about the budget?

Judy Boyke: How did I? I had several work sessions with the board members, who all sat in on it, as you very well know, the first year. The second year I was excommunicated, so to speak, from the budget, as you very well know. So the first year of the budget it was a learning curve

for all of us and we found that having actuals when someone asked a question, there was an answer for them. Garbage and brush, do you have the contract costs? Have they changed?

Supervisor Zambrano said no, they did not change. We extended the brush and trash contracts for one year at the same rates, and because trash pick-up for the Town Hall was not covered we added that amount to the budget.

Judy Boyke said I saw that in the line item. I would have thought maybe you would have negotiated that 4000 dollars.

Supervisor Zambrano explained that they wanted an increase, so she was happy to continue at the same rate.

Judy Boyke: I have \$1,652,230.00 approximately for garbage and \$245,000.00 for brush, is that correct?

Supervisor Zambrano said she wasn't sure.

Judy Boyke: Well, if you add those together with the line item of \$2,073,969.44 it appears that there is an increase of about \$400,000.00.

Supervisor Zambrano said she would look into that.

Supervisor Zambrano solicited any further questions regarding general funds.

Tom Beaulieu said we have a lot of challenges ahead, not just in the next two years, but the next ten years. On page 37 of the budget Cold Patch, it's usually \$5,000 and now all of a sudden we've gone up to \$10,000. We spent about \$32,000 for the Hot-Patch machine, so why are we buying \$10,000 worth of cold patch, which will last about a day; if it lasts that long when you throw it in a wet hole, instead of going out there and properly fixing these pot holes that need to be fixed and utilizing a piece of equipment that we spent \$32,000 for; it doesn't make any sense at all.

Councilor Becallo asked what the difference between cold patch and hot patch was.

Tom Beaulieu said the cold patch is basically like funny putty; it's cold. They mix it at the plant, they can leave it outside for six months, it might get kind of hard but you can go over there with a loader and mix it up, they ship it over here and these guys go down the road with a small pick-up truck or small dump and they dump it in the whole. He doesn't know if they even pat it down. Every one of your cars goes over it and about 15 minutes later it's all in your gutters, and there's a hole there and there's water in the hole again. Sometimes it works if it's dry out, but in the winter time to fix pot holes you are wasting your time and you are actually creating a hazard for the people that are out there trying to do their work.

Supervisor Zambrano said she didn't believe they used it in the winter time.

Tom Beaulieu said of course they do, if they have to. It can be used at any time as long as it's flexible they use it. Hot mix, we have a machine that's set up, you feed a certain amount of asphalt and stone into it; they go out and put down a pretty good patch. The patches on Diffin Road have held up pretty good for over a year now. They are not the final solution but they are staying in place; if it was cold patch they would be out there fixing them all the time. To him, it is just kind of going backwards, especially when you have the equipment to fix these things. He spoke with Councilor Venesky about getting the money and moving forward with getting the sidewalks done. Everything is geared towards four wheels or motorcycles; bicycles, pedestrians they aren't given a second thought. We don't even have sufficient shoulders for someone to be riding. He expressed his frustration with the lack of sidewalks and said the Town should be taking the lead on this, he said, 'the only time sidewalks are poured is when it's done through site plan approval.'  
(tape change)

Tom Beaulieu's final comments were:

"We the taxpayers of this community look to you our elected officials to not place a burden of taxation on us that really decreases the quality of our life. Our government is not the magic elixir to solve all the problems. There are only so many programs and layers of government that we can afford. You are going to have to find a better solution then spending almost double digit spending and dipping into the Fund balance or even worst...our wallets!"

“I know this year obviously is very difficult trying to hold that budget. I know you are hoping to, as you say, change the trajectory of the way government is done in this town and there are some serious challenges there because the only way you are going to be able to do that is get a handle on pension costs, benefits, Workman’s Comp; those things are growing at such a rate that you are either going to be raising taxes...you are going to have to look to make government smaller by doing that, not decreasing services, but decreasing manpower.”

Supervisor Zambrano solicited any further comments or questions, of which there were none.

At 6:30 p.m. Supervisor Zambrano stated they would now begin discussing Special Districts, including Fire Protection, and asked if anyone would like to address the Board.

Jon Barrett said we don’t know how the figures are going to work out, but he wanted to thank the Board for meeting Thursday of the week before. He said it was a positive meeting with some truth coming out, and explaining how the protection/fire corporation, and stuff like that works.

Supervisor Zambrano told him the numbers were posted online.

Jon Barrett: One thing I want to task this new board, and then obviously there is going to be a new board member that comes in here the first of the year is, you guys got to start looking into the consolidation of the fire service. I know that we’ve been talking about this for years at the Town Chiefs’ meetings when I served the top dog for Cicero; nobody wants to do it, and take the big step because everybody’s going to lose something. Well, we’ve got four more years with Ms. Mahoney down in the County, and I don’t know how many people from this side or this side have been watching the Consensus Report, but it’s coming. It’s foolish to have these district lines, as we talked Thursday, or the protection district lines, it’s just crazy; they are old farm plots from 1915, all the way up, nobody knows what. We didn’t create them. You didn’t create them. But it seems when it comes time the certain ones that have the bigger piece of the pie are the ones at fault because back then in 1913 it was set up by the farm plot. So I would task this board to start looking at it. We are going to do it! Form one big fire district for the Town of Cicero, contract with the outside agencies, do it and move forward. Let’s do it our way before the County is going to come in, and Mr. Cuomo’s office. We know its coming, I don’t know how many people read the Consensus Report but that’s pretty extensive. We’ve got to get rid of our kingdoms and we’ve got to work together; let’s bring all the knowledge from these other fire departments and put it all in one basket instead of doing this with each other, and that’s whether it’s because of budgets, whether it’s because of dislikes, we need to do it together, bring the brains of the one operation and let’s serve the public. I don’t care what fire truck, what color, what name it says that shows up at my house, or what ambulance, as long as my family is protected. So I’ll take a look at those numbers, but please...Mark you’re taking over, I know years ago when you got on the board we talked with the Town Fire Chiefs meetings, you guys gotta do this. We are not doing it on our end, it’s not happening; we’ve been talking about this for years. Back in Chet’s regime, I spent three years of my life, along with some of the other people in this audience on that Town-wide Fire EMS Committee just for that package to go here and nothing happened. You guys have to push it, whether we like it or not, whether they like it or not, we have to do it. You’re going to have to do something before Joanie [Mahoney] does and Mr. Cuomo does, and we are not going to like it.

David McDevitt: I’m going to bring this up again, I was looking at the minutes and trying to reminisce from the previous workshops, so I just want to make sure that they are in the minutes, for the record. For garbage and refuse removal of \$2 million dollars, I went out and I tried to find other towns somewhat equivalent to our size; Town of Dewitt, two-thirds of our size in terms of population and square mileage, half the budget for garbage and refuse. The question was asked at previous meetings, ‘what was the difference in the bid price,’ we never got an answer. I also asked, ‘what was the reasoning from the Board as to why we decided to extend the contract and not put it out for bid,’ the answer that I was given was ‘we decided three to two that we would do that’ - that’s not a reason. I want to understand the reason behind the decisions you’re making on things that are affecting our taxes.

Supervisor Zambrano said three people decided that we have gotten good service from Syracuse Haulers and that it would be a good idea to extend that contract. She doesn’t know if it is anything more than that, except that we were satisfied, and she thought that they deserved another year. It was a 2 year contract; they provided great services, their complaint program, their response time were superior to the vendor that we had before. We had so many problems with the previous vendor that we just couldn’t continue in that mode.

David McDevitt: And this is the same vendor that has put out a notification that’s on our website for the Town that says that there are damaged receptacles that people have to replace or they can lease from them. Who is damaging them?

Supervisor Zambrano said told Mr. McDevitt she wasn't going to debate this. He asked her why and Supervisor Zambrano restated what she had already told him, and said it was her office that handles those complaints.

David McDevitt: What is the complaint ratio that you had with the previous vendor versus this one?

Supervisor Zambrano said we couldn't even tell because they were obligated to keep a people complaint log but they never did so we never could get a handle on it, accept a bunch of dissatisfied people calling here saying that they had complained and nothing was done.

David McDevitt: And one other thing that I brought up previously, the confusing format of this budget process. Again, I have looked at other towns' presentations of what their proposed budgets are and at the last budget workshop I asked, 'why are we not looking at actual numbers when we are presenting information,' and I was told it is New York State law to present it this way.

Supervisor Zambrano told Mr. McDevitt he wasn't told that. He was told, and she thinks it was by Jim Rowley, that it was one of the formats that could be used and the formats are approved and promulgated by the State Comptroller's Office, so this is the format that has been used in this town and unless he came in late, he also heard Mr. Rowley say that they are looking at a different format for next year.

David McDevitt: Which is good because I have looked at Town of Dewitt and they are showing:

- 2013,
- 2014,
- 2015 Proposed,
- 2015 Actual as of October 31<sup>st</sup>,
- 2015 Latest Estimate for Year End, and
- 2016 Proposed.

Supervisor Zambrano asked Mr. McDevitt if he was looking for the comparisons from year to year.

David McDevitt: No. What I'm looking for is: *what have we spent to date versus the budget that we put into place that year and what are we proposing for the next year.*

Supervisor Zambrano said that is a different document; which was also said at the last meeting. If he wants to look at what was spent to date it's a run of all of expenses per line item.

David McDevitt said Town of Dewitt's Budget Proposal includes that information. The Village of North Syracuse, they go back to 2009 showing exact dollar amounts for what was spent in 2009 through 2014.

David McDevitt: What have we spent to date on the current budget?

Supervisor Zambrano told him they would take a look at it.

David McDevitt: You told me in the last workshop, 'That is not what we do, and this is New York State Law as to how we are presenting this information.' I also want to see further detail on all the contractual items. Multiple other municipalities within their budget plans (the ones that I have looked at) are showing the contractual and then within that each individual line item. We have contractual items in our budget proposal; tens of thousands of dollars and in one of the previous meetings it was said that this is covering contract work for an individual, and that it was also covering contract information for the printer and paper; the individual was \$57,000, the contractual was \$40,000, are we spending \$17,000 on a copier lease and paper? We need details.

Supervisor Zambrano told him she has details; she knows what is spent.

David McDevitt: As a board, why are you not telling the public?

Supervisor Zambrano told him it is not being hidden from the public.

David McDevitt: Show me where to find it. How is it publicly available? You told Mr. Barrett that the new numbers are available on the website, where? I search for budget information and I find stuff from 2014. I find all the little budget manipulations that you're doing in each of your meetings. Make it easy to find!

Supervisor Zambrano told Mr. McDevitt she thinks that he is misinterpreting what she says. She asked Tracy Cosilmon (as a Department Head) to explain what comes out of contractual in her department as an example (what she charges under contractual). She said Mr. McDevitt is under the impression that it is one vendor and perhaps it should be bid.

David McDevitt: No, that is not what I am asking for. What I am asking for is the detail of what is included. Is it a vendor? Is it supplies? Is it services? What is it?

Supervisor Zambrano tried to explain by stating that the detail is in the abstract. If you look at the abstracts it will tell you exactly what was paid to whom using what budget lines. That information is available to each and every town board member every time we approve an abstract. So each and every town board member, as well as the public, can always get a print out from the Comptroller about year-to-date spending on any budget line, so that information is available; it's not being hidden.

David McDevitt: I beg to differ. The Police budget has in there a line for what their copier lease is. Nowhere else in the budget, in any other department, is that type of information provided.

Supervisor Zambrano commented that it just happens to be set up for that particular line for that particular department.

David McDevitt: The other question that I have, and it came up in our workshop, is our debt load. In the last workshop the number that was provided was from someone in the public of \$3.8 million dollars, what is the actual value of our current debt load?

Supervisor Zambrano told him she just got a print out that day, to call her office and she will send it to him.

David McDevitt: Why will you not say it in front of the public?

Supervisor Zambrano told him she did not know it off the top of her head. She thinks that Don Snyder is correct, that we do have BAN's (Bond Anticipation Notes) of \$3.8 million, but there is also some other debt attached to it. When she has the complete report she will give it to him.

David McDevitt: These are all questions that were asked at the previous meetings, you should have the answers ready to provide at the next meeting.

Supervisor Zambrano thanked David McDevitt.

#### **Fire Protection Services:**

Supervisor Zambrano said there is one budget line for all Fire Protection Services. The number that we have at this point and time is \$1,721,375.00. Each of the fire departments has asked for some specific amounts:

- **Cicero Fire Department** asked for a \$81,000 increase. We did meet with them, we had a very constructive meeting, but a couple members of the board are not certain about those numbers, so we would like some additional meeting time with them because we want a better handle on those numbers. We can approve a number, but our final contract will have the actual numbers.

Tom Beaulieu said that's confusing, are you saying that you can approve the contract without the final numbers?

Supervisor Zambrano said no. We are going to approve a budget with a final number. The contracts don't come due until January so we would, for example, like to understand the Cicero Fire Department's budget's finances better. So without going into a lot of detail of what I wanted to discuss at a further meeting, unfortunately we weren't able to get together with the Cicero Fire Department representatives but we think that in the interest of making everyone satisfied that maybe we'd like to see an audit of the finances.

Supervisor Zambrano stated they will approve a final number. The contract is yet to be generated of what we actually approve.

Tom Beaulieu said if you are not sure of the numbers...

Supervisor Zambrano replied, 'we are sure.'

Councilor Venesky: First, of all we had a productive meeting with the members of the Cicero Fire Department, and quite frankly, keeping in mind a couple of things:

1. We have to ensure that we have proper fire protection in the town of Cicero; we have to protect the people.
2. We have an obligation to make sure that every dollar that is spent in the town of Cicero is spent correctly.

The Cicero Fire Department has asked for an \$82,000 increase in their budget and primarily because the reasons, if you attended the meetings, they've tried to build a new building and frankly, I am not (until looking at the numbers) satisfied that we should advance any additional money to the Cicero Fire Department unless we get something back; an audit of their books, and also some financial guidance. We were told in the meeting that they had some bad financial advice, and people make mistakes, and mistakes happen, I'm not saying that. My job is to make sure that mistakes don't continue to happen, they stop. We have something that fire department does not have:

1. A comptroller.
2. When the comptroller cannot answer my questions, I call our county comptroller; I speak with Bob Antonacci, he always gets back with me and he answers my questions satisfactorily, and Bob has agreed at *no cost* to the Cicero Fire Department to be able to come in, audit the books, offer some financial direction, and some financial guidance at *no cost* to the Cicero Fire Department. So before I would authorize any additional monies to go to the Town of Cicero Fire Department that would be a contingency that I would demand.

Don Snyder: Does that mean Jessica that what we might want to do is we might want to approve a budget that includes all that they in fact asked for so that we have it, but we may not in fact agree to when we do the contract. I guess what I'm scared of is if the numbers come back and Mark and the Board agree with the evaluation that they should in fact have everything they asked for. I don't want to short-change them because again, that affects our safety.

Councilor Venesky said he does not believe that the fire protection or the safety of the citizens will be compromised.

Supervisor Zambrano said we are looking to approve a final number. When we get to the contracts Mark is talking about having a contingency there that we are satisfied. We want to assist the Cicero Fire Department but we are just not sure of the numbers. We're not really understanding where are the problems and what do they need to do to go forward. Right now we are proposing instead of an \$80,000 increase. This number (and we are not going to vote on our budget tonight) includes a potential \$40,000 increase because of the financial situation that they are in.

Councilor Venesky said that's not an annual thing. His concern is that they're potentially could be issues with funding moving forward and he thinks we need a sound financial plan that we the Board can work with with our fire departments, so he wants to make sure that they have the opportunity to develop a sound financial plan moving forward so that we don't end up in crisis situations when it comes to budget time. So we will do some things differently moving forward next year, but right now we are not saying that there will be an increase but we will prepare for an increase contingent.

Supervisor Zambrano solicited any other comments.

George Hart (Brewerton Fire Department): I just want to remind the Board; we had our discussions earlier, we came in at 1.5 percent (5,100 dollars and something like that), that did not count the cost to us of \$18,000 on top of that. Last year, you took \$26,000 from us; we agreed on \$13,000. I thought we cannot do that this year. We need the \$5,000; that's just to make up for the little things on the side like workmans' comp and things like that. We've already instituted the safety things and what you are talking about now, and it's working for us. We had a guy get hurt the other day at the fire; not his fault, it was just one of things that somebody else did something and he was injured. Fortunately, it's not going to be a long comp case, but we cannot take that kind of hit like we did last year.

Supervisor Zambrano said we are not proposing any cuts to any of the fire departments and we are trying to make a one-time effort with Cicero Fire Department.

George Hart: What you do in Cicero is not my business.

Supervisor Zambrano told George he was not in jeopardy right now.

George Hart said he has to worry about Brewerton, the residents there, his district and the protective districts.

Tom Beaulieu: I think it's more that I need clarification. If they came in and asked for \$82,000 or whatever that number was, and you're agreeing to give them \$41,000; which is the taxpayer's money and is going to us. If we have a shortfall, we're taking money out of our fund balance to cover it, why aren't they just taking money from their fund balance and covering the costs that they need the 41 or 42 thousand dollars for.

Councilor Venesky: We are fortunate to have the members of the Cicero Fire Department here to answer that question, but my understanding (and correct me if I'm wrong) is they have no fund balance. As a matter of fact, their fund balance is showing a negative 44 thousand dollars.

Tom Beaulieu told Councilor Venesky if I'm broke and I just spent my money are you going to loan me 50 bucks?

Supervisor Zambrano said she did not want to disparage anybody until we have some objective information. She said we are trying to be very careful in what we say; we have some concerns.

Tom Beaulieu said so we're all supposed to sit out here and guess and wonder what is going on behind the scenes, is that what we are talking about?

Councilor Venesky: Well no, there's no 'behind the scenes.' The Cicero Fire Department made a public budget presentation at the senior center a couple of weeks back; questions were raised. We called for a meeting with them (the officers of the fire department). We had a very productive and spirited discussion. I think we learned a lot, but there are still questions that need to be answered. In my mind, and I can't speak for the rest of the Board, but if we are going to spend a dollar in the Town of Cicero, and 'yes' all of those things you talked about Tom we talked about before - we have a plan moving forward. But, if we are going to spend a dollar I've got to, in my mind, make sure that that dollar is being spent correctly, and I have questions that have not been answered that I think can be answered.

Councilor Venesky said he also thinks that to help correct some of the bad financial information of financial direction that they were given if we have an organization or our county comptroller (who he has a lot of faith in) come in and offer them, at no cost to them, a look at the books and some financial direction; he thinks that is warranted.

Tom Beaulieu said that's got to be a win-win, he hopes for them, and also us, because if they've got some problems it will help them to make sure that they don't make the same mistake again.

Supervisor Zambrano thanked Councilor Venesky.

Supervisor Zambrano did not want to close the public hearing yet, she wanted to have some Board discussion. She said one of the Town Board members suggested that we restore the original proposal from the Police Department to go ahead and lease six cars next year and that would increase the amount by \$13,000, so she just wanted some feedback from the other Town Board members. We are coming in at 7.35 percent; if we increase that amount by \$13,000 we would still be at 7.4 percent. She said the telling figure is the \$53 increase for a \$150,000 house, so we are in good shape.

Councilor Venesky: When we relooked at that and looked at all of the budget lines, the suggestion was made that we push off the leasing for one more year and purchase a vehicle and at first blush, trying to reduce the cost of the budget, it sounded like it could be a good idea, however, what I didn't take into account is we took a Repair budget, we knocked the Repair budget down on the \$18,000 in repairs that was in the budget last year to take care of Crown Vics, and we are not really saving any money by not leasing the vehicles because if we purchase one vehicle next year instead of replacing the Crown Vics, then we have to fix them, and the repair bill then we are not saving any money so I asked the Supervisor and the rest of the Board to consider restoring the 6 or 8 thousand and let's just go ahead and lease them.

Supervisor Zambrano asked Councilor Becallo if he wanted to discuss the suggestions he had.

Councilor Becallo asked if the Town Board members were taking an increase in their salaries next year.

Councilor Venesky said he was not.

Councilor Becallo thanked Councilor Venesky for doing that. He said, 'that makes two of us.'

Supervisor Zambrano: I'm not affected, so I am going to defer.

Councilor Becallo asked if that meant they weren't increasing the supervisor's salary as well.

Councilor Venesky said we are not increasing the supervisor's salary.

Councilor Becallo said he appreciated that.

Councilor Becallo asked if the Town Clerk's salary was cut.

Supervisor Zambrano said there were adjustments made to the Town Clerk's salary line but her salary was not cut.

Councilor Becallo: Don [Snyder] brought it up tonight, and he brought it up over a month ago, we have got to look at overtime, overall. I know we need to bring this up for discussion. I'm not going after anybody this evening. Overtime cuts. Again, McDevitt brought up the great thing about each individual item for the public and again moving forward to next year, each individual item in contractual needs to, in fact, to be justified or accounted for – that's it, just account for it. McDevitt brought also brought up a good question on contractual for the assessor. So, \$40,000 is still in there, but looking at the abstracts I can't find where it equals up to \$40,000, if we could and as long as it's justified for, I'm okay with that. Also, the Brewerton Revitalization project was already brought up. Zoning cuts in the department of zoning, I know all of us up here do have very strong views on the zoning department. Again, we only issued three brand new home permits this past year, and the majority of the money that does come into the zoning department, a brand new truck does not bring it in – people walking in and pay fees for that; just looking forward about the department. That was pretty much the majority of it. You guys have a lot of what I've already put up on the internet; you have what I have. And then, let's just keep working, keep discussing, where we can work on it. I hear a lot of adding on more and more to this budget, yet I haven't seen a real cut discussed yet.

Councilor Venesky: I've got to tell you (just my feeling after knocking on 4,000 doors and speaking to half that amount face to face), people want the services. No one has told me to eliminate anything. People are telling him to please don't eliminate our police department, please repair our roads, please continue to pick up our garbage; that costs money and to Mr. Beaulieu's point; it has to be paid for. He thinks the spirit of the Supervisor's budget is to not whack the taxpayer in one sitting. If we put the entire cost of doing business in the budget (should the Supervisor had chosen to do that), we would have been looking at a better than 20 percent increase across the board; we have to weigh whether or not that is a realistic thing or whether or not it poses an undue hardship to the taxpayers of the Town of Cicero.

Supervisor Zambrano: If I had my brothers I would amend this budget to not take anything out of the fund balance, but that would add almost \$500,000 to the budget, to the tax levy, and I think it's just not fair to the taxpayers to do that all at one time. I do believe that we either have to cut services or funding at some point and time; no board has ever wanted to do that. We have cut some services mildly like, animal control, but still get grief about things. I am not sure that keeping Williams Beach is viable, financially, but we got many, many, many complaints from the public about wanting the beach open. People were irate that the beach was closed even though are hours (time open for the beach) is low. We reduced the time and it costs a lot of money to pay all of the people but people seem to want that, so I think we have tried to respond to what people want to see.

Supervisor Zambrano said she is concerned about the highway equipment and the paving. She said there is no doubt that we have to pave every year; the paving budget will be forever. Once we get through all these roads then we start over again, so it's not realistic not to fund paving out of this budget. But, when we took zero out of the fund balances, when we put all of the paving, and all of the highway equipment and some of the other things, it came to over a 20 percent increase so maybe that would come to a 150 or a couple of hundred dollars on a \$150,000 house. She thinks that sticker-shock is too great for a lot of people; they could go higher, she'd like to give everyone what they want but that just isn't possible.

Supervisor Zambrano closed the public hearing at 7:26 p.m.

**ADJOURN**

Supervisor Zambrano moved the adoption of a resolution to adjourn the Special Town Board meeting.

Motion was seconded by Councilor Becallo.

Ayes - 5 and Noes - 0. *Motion carried.*

There being no further business before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

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Tracy M. Cosilmon  
Town Clerk