

STATE OF NEW YORK  
ONONDAGA COUNTY  
TOWN OF CICERO

SS:

The Cicero Town Board held their Preliminary Budget Meeting on Wednesday, October 27, 2010, at 6:00 p.m., at the Cicero Town Hall, 8236 S. Main Street, Cicero, NY 13039.

Present: Judy A. Boyke, Supervisor  
Jessica Zambrano, Councilor  
C. Vernon Conway, Councilor  
Lynn Jennings, Councilor  
James Corl, Jr. Councilor  
Tracy Cosilmon, Town Clerk

Others Present: Christopher Woznica, Highway Superintendent  
Sharon Edick, Receiver of Taxes  
Joseph Snell, Police Chief  
Jody Rogers, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Wayne Dean, Director of Planning & Development  
Shirlie Stuart, Comptroller  
Brad Brennan, Assessor  
Pamela Williamson, Secretary to Supervisor  
Anthony Rivizzigno, Town Attorney  
Brenda Colella, Town Attorney  
Ronald DeTota, II PE, C & S Engineers  
Catie O’Toole, Post Standard  
Maranda Pennock, Star Review

Absent:

The meeting was opened at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.  
A moment of silence was observed in remembrance of our men and women serving in the Armed Forces in harms way.

Ms. Boyke indicated where the fire exits were and read the following statement:

The Cicero Town Board acknowledges the importance of full public participation in all public hearings and, therefore, urges all who wish to address those in attendance to utilize the microphones located in the front of the room. At this time please turn of your cell phones and be sure to speak into the microphones to enable all to hear.

S.E.Q.R.  
(State Environmental Quality Review Act)

Motion was made by Ms. Boyke, seconded by Mr. Jennings, that all actions taken tonight are Type Two (2) actions under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act unless otherwise determined.

The motion was approved as follows:

Mr. Conway: Yes  
Mr. Jennings: Yes  
Ms. Zambrano: Yes  
Mr. Corl: Yes  
Ms. Boyke: Yes

## PUBLIC HEARING PRELIMINARY BUDGET FOR 2011

Proof of publication and posting was presented to the Town Board by Town Clerk, Tracy M. Cosilmon.

The public notice read as follows:

TOWN OF CICERO  
PUBLIC NOTICE OF ANNUAL PRELIMINARY BUDGET

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual preliminary budget of the Town of Cicero for the fiscal year 2011 has been completed and that the Town Board of the Town Cicero will hold a public hearing on said preliminary budget on Wednesday, October 27, 2010 at 6:00 p.m., at the Cicero Town Hall, 8236 S. Main Street (Route 11), Cicero, NY 13039, Onondaga County. A copy of the 2011 preliminary budget will be available for inspection in the Town Clerk's Office by any interested person during office hours, beginning Monday, October 25, 2010. At such hearing, any person may be heard in favor of or against the preliminary budget as compiled or for or against any item or items therein contained. The Town Board meeting will immediately follow the budget meeting.

The following are the proposed 2011 salaries of certain Town Officers of the Town of Cicero to wit: Town Councilors \$11,013 each per annum, Supervisor \$46,371 per annum, Receiver of Taxes \$48,161 per annum, Town Clerk \$42,627 per annum, Superintendent of Highways \$57,968 per annum, Town Justices \$36,000 per annum.

By order of the Town Board

Presentation by Comptroller, Shirlie Stuart as follows:

This has been an economically challenging year for all local governments and the Town of Cicero is no exception. This past January, the new administration, reviewed the 2010 budget and the fiscal condition of the town. They suggested asking each department for an additional 15% "give-back" from their current budgets. The writing was on the wall, due to the 2010 inflated budgeted revenues, un-appropriated expenses, declining fund balance, a flat town-wide assessment, the 2010 budget needed to be trimmed to prepare for the road ahead. Everyone came aboard and we were able to reduce 2010 expenses by nearly \$200,000.00. I'm proud to say that this effort to reduce spending continues each and every day in Town Hall. You, the tax payers need to see and feel that local government is doing their part and the best way is by example.

On the third page of the 2011 Preliminary Budget there is a summary sheet which clearly states that appropriations have been reduced over- all by nearly 3%. Revenues are on the decline by over 34%. Please remember that our large revenues are generated by other levels of governments and the town at the local level has little or nothing they can do to increase, or as in sales tax to sustain. Our fund balances have been depleting over the past four years due to out of control budgets with no tax increases. So yes, the 2011 Preliminary Budget is using monies from the fund balance, but, this decision was made so that relief of any additional tax levy could be passed on to our residents and also to support a fiscally, sound budget.

Mandated expenditures, which are expenses we have no control over, include:

1. Three contractual unions – CSEA, PBA, and Teamsters
2. Medical Insurance cost
3. NYS Retirement contributions
4. Liability Insurance
5. Worker's Compensation Insurance
6. Post employment benefits

All five of these elements complete about 60% of your town budget, leaving 40% of the budget in which we do have control of.

2011 Payroll mandated cost within this budget include:

- 3% pay increased for CSEA, and non-union employees
- 4% pay increases for members in the Teamsters Union
- Step – increases for police officers
- 15% increase in medical cost
- 15.6% to 21-3% in NYS Retirement Contributions

2011 Departmental Reduction is:

- Supervisor's Office – No raise
- Town Board – No raise
- Comptroller's Office – No raise
- Budget Officer – Eliminated
- Assessor's Office- One full-time Assessor's Clerk position
- Justice Department – One part time position
- Park and Recreation Department – Several contractual reductions in all areas – Learn to Swim Program eliminated and William Beach will be closed for 2011.
- Highway Department – Over-all reduction in contractual expenses - \$400,000.00 for gutters was removed and the salt expenses were reduced by \$100,000.00.
- Police Department – Reduction in personal services and no raises for the Police Chief and Officers, but, per union contract, officers will receive their step increases.
- Contractual reductions in all departments

Shirlie stated that Chief Snell just reminded her that the Step increases were removed from the Preliminary Budget.

### **2011 Tax Levy**

The tax rate for the General Town line of your tax bill will be \$27.79 per 1000 assessed valuation. If you live within the Village of North Syracuse, your tax rate for General Town line of your tax bill will be \$10.39 per 1000 assessed valuation.

The tax rate for the Town Highway line of your tax bill will be \$35.91 per 1000 assessed valuation.

Over-all increase of 4.11%

Judy Boyke explained that to break that down, homes that are valued at \$100,000.00 and are assessed at \$4,900.00, the increase for your tax will be \$11.36 or \$.95 a month. This will reflect the general town and highway lines of the 2011 property tax bill. Homes within the village of North Syracuse will have an increase of \$17.76 on the general town line of your tax bill. I think that explains it a lot better than talking in percentages.

The public hearing was opened at 6:11 p.m.

Speaking for:

Don Snyder complimented Shirlie Stuart and Diane Cellucci for their work on the Preliminary Budget, stating that they did a great job. Don stated that he was concerned because we don't have the figures from the County regarding their budget.

Don also stated that when you look at Parks & Recreation, there is over \$500,000.00 that is budgeted when you add fringe benefits and subtract out the income that her department gets. 5% of the budget is in that area and is a place where that the town citizens should look at.

The 4% pay increase for Teamster Members includes 100% of cost for health, legal, life insurance and disability and the contract gives another 4% increase in 2012. I believe that health insurance costs \$17,400.00 per family per the contract signed in December 2009. I call on the board to re-open this contract and get concessions from the union that would put this agreement on par with the real world. I also would like the board to take into consideration, the 15 non-union employees of the town, when setting up compensation packages in the future. If I were one of the non-union people, I would be seeing how fast, I could be signing up to become a union member. Also under A1420.40 Law Contractual, we've gone from the 2010 of \$63,000.00 to a modified 2010 budget of \$73,000.00 and for the 2011 budget, \$93,000.00. Why don't we have a contract with a lawyer that pay's them by the hour for what they do and monitor their contract closely? Also, by 2013 we will lose over \$600,000.00 in sales tax revenue, which we will need to cut \$600,000 from the budget before January 1, 2013. If we think it's been tough this year, wait until then.

Under the Highway Fund, we continue to try and fund a gutter replacement program and this year it had to be cut. We need a long term plan on how we can fund this important item. We also have a truck included in the amount of \$205,000.00 but, we have to reign in the costs. We continue to purchase 10 wheel dumps, but, the State seems to be buying 6 wheel dumps, so I wonder if we should be looking at a change in that area.

In this time of chaos, I can't believe that we have also only cut staff by 1.5 positions. In order to cut \$600,000.00 from our future budget due to sales tax loss, we'll have to bite the bullet and make the hard decision.

Deborah – Shirly did an excellent job in getting the budget down, but my concern is that these are difficult times for so many people and it would have been nice if the town employees would have stepped forward and say, how much can we give you back to save those jobs? That didn't happen. The other thing that concerns me is that we have three elected officials that are going to have raises this year. One of them has not had a raise in 3 years and I think she deserves one. I'm not saying people don't deserve raises, but, in these times, the two elected officials that have continued to take raises should not take their raise. It has been described as a pittance in the past and if it is still a pittance, I'm sure they could give it up. It would also be nice if all the Department Heads decided to give up their raises at least for this year and would set a good example.

Roy Mallette stated he is concerned about the Brewerton Revitalization project. Is that going to be in the budget? You told us Ms. Boyke that you were going to a meeting with the supposed developers of this project. Would you mind telling us what is going to happen?

Judy Boyke – Roy, this is public hearing input, but, I will make note of that and answer your question.

Roy Mallette – Is there any money budgeted for it?

Judy Boyke – There is no line item.

Speaking against:

Ed Hansen stated that he was concerned about the 60% that we don't have control over and felt we should be dealing harder with those items. If unions don't want to deal, you will have to tell them that you will be cutting back on staff as we can't let them dictate us into the ground. If you need to cut departments that aren't essential to clearing the roads, or sewers, you'll need to do it, but I appreciate some of the cuts you have made.

Tom Beaulieu stated that he, Don and Deborah, have sat in on most of the workshops and believed that there have been positive comments made relative to the budget. He agreed with Deborah that none of the elected officials should receive a pay increase this year. If not everyone can have one, then there shouldn't be one or two even though they may not have had one recently. The Comptroller did an excellent job and we didn't pay an extra \$10,000.00 like we did in the past. Shirly and Diane went through this looking for every

possible opportunity to cut this budget down to a bare minimum. If we don't have control over 60% of our budget and only have control of 40% of the budget, you don't have a good grasp. At some point, it's all going to be pensions and health care benefits and you're going to be lucky to be able to put a plow out there.

My first question to Shirlie is that she decreased the first portion of the budget by \$291,000.00 from last year.

Shirlie Stuart – Yes

Tom Beaulieu – I know you cut \$400,000.00 in gutters. How did you arrive at that?

Judy Boyke stated that she didn't think they were prepared to answer that but, for Tom to give them his questions and they would be happy to address them.

Tom Beaulieu stated that taxes are going to be raised by \$1,365,000.00 on the first part of the General Fund which is a \$397,000.00 increase. Is that going to be through a tax levy that is generated on the taxpayers of the homes? Also on page 3 under fines and forfeitures, forfeited bail was previously \$170,000.00 and this year, you're showing an increase to \$250,000.00. How would you project that number for an increase of \$80,000.00?

Shirlie Stuart – Currently we are at \$200,000.00 for the first nine months of 2010. We're projecting out for three more months at \$250,000.00 and those numbers are historical in lieu of what has been happening in the past.

Tom Beaulieu – When I look over the last 2 or 3 budgets, that has gone from \$150,000.00 to \$170,000.00 and have jumped up \$80,000.00 and there is no precedent to follow that.

Shirlie Stuart – You don't have year to date figures and those are just budgetary figures, so they could have exceeded those amounts.

Tom Beaulieu – Hopefully we'll be at \$250,000.00.

Shirlie – We will be.

Tom Beaulieu stated that the Highway Department does a good job with the money they have. We also have a design criteria which by implementing the amount of blacktop we're putting in our roads is guaranteed to fail. Running 10 wheel dump trucks with 60 or 70 thousand pounds of salt on them does a lot of damage to the town's roads. You have 4 ½ inches of blacktop which is what your driveway is holding and you're not running a 70,000 pound truck with salt on your driveway. As a construction engineer, I love to build stuff and I'd love to see new gutters in the town as they look nice. They have done a lot of projects, where they did them and they come out fine, but we can't afford them. We don't drive on the gutters, we drive on the road. If you were going to appropriate any additional funds next year above \$600,000.00 for the road ways, I think if you were to put a couple of hundred thousand more dollars into it, even though you don't have the money at this point, it would be money well spent because the roads are basically falling apart.

The hearing was closed at 6:30 p.m.

Board Comments:

Mr. Corl – Everyone put a lot of time into the budget over the last couple of weeks and I think that the public is also very helpful. Don had some good points relative to the increase in legal fees which is up about 30%. Once again, I have advocated for RFP's on those professional services to make sure we're spending those monies wisely. Perhaps we can take that up later. As I said at the last workshop with a 4% increase the average wage for those under the Teamster's contract is about \$33,000.00 plus additional health benefits of \$1,500.00 to \$1,700.00. That group of individuals is about \$35,000.00, which is about \$5,000.00 less than any other group of employees, within the Town of Cicero.

When we look at a particular contract, and we have to vote on it, we have to look at binding arbitration, attrition and things of that nature. We can not be misled by those figures and looking at what 4% means to those respective employees. In regards to reducing personnel, Jessica, brought that up I thought that perhaps we would have to look at the numbers before we discuss that, but apparently, after review of everything, we do have to look at what positions aren't necessary within the town. After tonight, I think there will be continued discussion amongst the board at another workshop as to whether or not the board wants to consider other employee reductions within the town, especially after hearing the public comments that were put out. In regards to no increases in salary for the elected officials, the town board hasn't taken an increase along with the Town Supervisor. Other departments and what not will be discussed further at the budget workshop. Over the last several years, there have been comments as to why taxes haven't been raised. This year, we're currently relying on the fund balance of about \$340,000.00, which in the past has been comparable. We have done everything in the past to make sure that costs are as low as possible along, with encouraging economic development within the town, so that we can get commercial dollars to increase the tax base. Gutters are taken out every year and you're right, there should be a plan in place relative to replacement of them. Reduction of salt was \$100,000.00. I think this is a good start and under these economic times, we need to be as diligent as possible in looking for other ways to cut and at our next workshop, we will have to take that under consideration.

Ms. Zambrano - I'd like to add my kudo's to Shirly and Diane as well as the Department Heads. I think everyone has tried to cut the budget as much as possible. I think it has been a good faith effort from all of the departments. I believe there are still some cuts that can be made and it will be a sacrifice. Some people won't be happy if we have to cut services and personnel. Perhaps, those things will be necessary. I think we have to look at the equipment line. I think if we really tighten our belts in 2011, that hopefully, we can get the town back into a good financial fiscal situation. I will warn all of the Department Heads and employee's now, that I don't expect to be approving anyone's continuous education except for those that are mandated. I think that we have to be very careful in sending people to conferences, or to luncheons. We have paid for those in the past this year and we need to be very conscience of those things. It is a very tight fiscal economy across the State and the Nation. We will be seeing increases at the County, State and Federal level as well. It is very grim, but, we're doing the very best we can to try to cut services and still try to maintain quality services to the residents of the town.

Mr. Conway stated that at the last meeting he brought up that we could save money by people being responsible for their own trash removal, rather than the town paying it. He didn't believe anyone would want to go with this as they are happy with what they have got. It is a possibility, if we had to do it and we could probably save a million dollars a year.

Don Snyder – How can you say that? We'd all get a higher bill for our garbage.

Mr. Conway – I'm not saying that, I'm saying you're going to have to pay the bill not us.

Don Snyder – It would cost us more.

Mr. Conway – I'm sure it would be.

Mr. Corl – Historically, in the past that is why towns enter into Municipal Agreements with the trash collector and I do think your bill would double if we were to go with a private basis where everyone pays on their own. It works better for the taxpayers, when this is done as a whole and that is why most municipalities do that.

Ms. Boyke stated that this is open session, and that there is going to be another workshop. These are just comments.

Mr. Jennings – I think Vern made a comment that irritated people. As the Supervisor said, there will be another workshop. If you have any comments, get them into the town hall as that is the only way we can reflect and look at this budget. You really can't just come in tonight and listen to this and say, that's it.

Also, the CSEA and PBA pay a certain portion into their health benefits and the Teamsters pay nothing. We really have to take a hard look at that. I am a former union member and I know what it's like. If you want to help some of your fellow workers, you have to make some concessions. It's a tremendous thing that was given to them, but, they need to look at it very closely because it can come back and bite them. I also want you to keep in mind the sales tax issue that is going to surface. You will be hearing more about that from Onondaga County and it is going to be tougher next year.

Judy Boyke – It is obvious that the Comptrollers, Shirlie and Diane and the Department Heads made the cuts that are very painful and everyone stepped forward. We are going to have one more budget workshop to finalize the budget considering the input from this evening or any comments the residents might have. We are pretty close to where we should be and everything has been addressed. I think our town level is in a better position than at the State or Federal level.

Mr. Jennings – Do you have a date for the workshop?

Shirlie Stuart – The final budget has to be adopted before the 20<sup>th</sup> of November and I will not be available next week.

Judy Boyke – It will be discussed and published and put on the website so that everyone is aware. I would think it will be within the next two weeks.

Mr. Corl – I believe we need to just close the public hearing and there is no need to make a motion. The Preliminary Budget is on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

**PUBLIC HEARING 2011 FIRE CONTRACTS**

Proof of publication and posting was presented to the Town Board by Town Clerk.

The public notice read as follows:

**PUBLIC NOTICE  
TOWN OF CICERO**

Please take notice that a public hearing will be held by the Town Board of the Town of Cicero at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 27, 2010 at the Cicero Town Hall, 8236 S. Main Street (Route 11), Cicero, NY 13039, to consider the 2011 Fire Protection Contracts. The contracts and amounts to be considered are:

<u>Protection Area</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Service Award</u>	<u>Total</u>
Brewerton	\$330,611.00	\$32,860.00	\$363,471.00
Cicero	\$352,780.00	\$61,000.00	\$413,780.00
South Bay	\$273,400.00	\$34,000.00	\$307,400.00
Bridgeport	\$126,275.00	-----	\$126,275.00
Village of North Syracuse	\$242,475.00	\$16,980.00	\$259,455.00

All persons wishing to speak for or against the contracts are invited to attend.

By the Order of Cicero Town Board

Shirlie Stuart read the figures for the Fire Contracts listed above and stated that the figures represented a zero increase over 2010.

Mr. Corl – No one is in excess of a 1% increase.

Shirlie Stuart – Cicero and Brewerton came in and were over and they were asked to go back and review. They did and they brought it back to exactly what it was in the 2010 contract.

The public hearing was opened at 6:45 p.m.

Speaking for:

Deborah – Until you start paying these individuals, I think you should give them what they want.

Tom Beaulieu stated that he remembered years ago when different departments would ask for 25% and those days are long gone. He wished to commend each of them for looking at less than .05 or .08 as this is a tight budget. They do an excellent job in protecting our community.

Don Snyder felt that this was a good budget deal and that they are very professional and courteous and they know their jobs. Since they aren't asking for an increase, I see no reason we shouldn't approve this budget.

Speaking against - None

The hearing was closed at 6:50 p.m.

Board Comments:

Mr. Conway stated that he felt that this contract should be approved. The fire departments do a lot of things that people don't realize. All rescue calls are free and the only thing that the fire department's get paid for are fires. About 93% of the calls are rescues and about 7% are fires. I think they all deserve having their budgets passed.

Mr. Jennings – All the fire departments do an excellent job and their response time is tremendous. I've seen them in action and monitored them at the church fire the other day. Their response was unbelievable and I agree that they should be approved.

Mr. Corl – I am also in favor of the contract. It is no question in my mind that the taxpayers are getting an excellent service and all of our volunteers should be greatly valued within the town. They do an excellent job. When folks talk about a county wide system, they should look at this type of contract, in which there is no increase. All of the volunteers are very diligent about what they are spending as it is taxpayer's dollars. I know that people have mentioned different types of systems, but, don't realize the contracts that the towns have with these fire departments. They may not understand ISO ratings, or the apparatus that is needed to respond quickly. The residents of Cicero should be very pleased with what they have and should be very proud of all of their fire departments.

Ms. Zambrano stated that she agreed with the comments of her colleagues. Volunteers provide big benefits to the residents of the town and we are fortunate to have understanding companies.

Ms. Boyke stated the cooperation received from all of the fire departments was appreciated as they provided us with a bear bones budget. The volunteers have to be commended for their training and service they provide the town and she wished to thank them for that.

Motion was made by Mr. Corl, seconded by Mr. Conway, to adopt the 2011 Fire Protection Budget Contracts as presented.

The motion was approved as follows:

Mr. Conway:	Yes
Mr. Jennings:	Yes
Ms. Zambrano:	Yes
Mr. Corl:	Yes
Ms. Boyke:	Yes

Tracy M. Cosilmon, Town Clerk

A 5 minute recess was taken, with the Regular Town Board meeting following.

