

# **SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

**November 4, 2009 7:00 p.m.**

## **AGENDA**

- Public Hearing for the Preliminary 2010 Town Budget and the Preliminary Budget for Special Districts

**STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF DUTCHESS  
TOWN OF LA GRANGE**

**TOWN BOARD MEETING  
NOVEMBER 4, 2009**

**Present:** Supervisor Jon Wagner  
Councilman Joseph Luna  
Councilman Gary Beck  
Councilman Steve O'Hare  
Councilman Edward P. Jessup

**Recording Secretary:** Margaret Schmitz, Deputy Town Clerk

**Others Present:** Chris Toussaint, Comptroller  
Wanda Livigni, Administrator of Public Works  
Steve Mance, Environmental Consultants

A Special Meeting of the Town Board was held on Wednesday, November 4, 2009 at the LaGrange Town Hall, 120 Stringham Road. Supervisor Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Deputy Town Clerk led the flag salute.

**Public Hearing**

Proof of Notice having been furnished, the Public Hearing on the 2010 Preliminary Town Budget as well as that of the 2010 Preliminary Special Districts Budget was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Supervisor Wagner read a summary of the LaGrange 2010 Budget. (SEE ADDENDUM)

Ms. Livigni summarized the Water and Wastewater Budgets. She reported the only two districts with a slight increase are Town Center Water Improvement Area and the Grandview Water District; they will have a three cent per 1,000 gallon increase; all other rates are remaining the same. Ms. Livigni added that this is based on no unforeseen catastrophes. There will be work done on the Titusville Water District with the use of a \$450,000 Grant the Town is being awarded that will result in 61% energy efficiency at the Titusville plant once implemented. Mr. Mance pointed out that even though the Grandview District rate went up three cents, the actual budget went down. The only reason it went up is we over estimated the amount of usage last year so the rate had to be increased slightly but the expenses in total went down.

Councilman Luna made a motion to open the public comment section of the Public Hearing, seconded by Councilman Jessup; carried unanimously.

The following person spoke against the 2010 Town Budget:

Ralph Rabasco, Ehmer Drive, indicated that the budget numbers sound reasonable; however, he was not in favor of the increase of the Town Supervisor salary to \$61,000. Mr. Rabasco made a rather lengthy argument that the salary of the Supervisor was handled in a legal yet unethical fashion. Mr. Rabasco questioned if the \$1,000,000 in grants that Supervisor Wagner had obtained for the Town and the tons of money saved by the Supervisor's actions, mentioned in the October 14, 2009 Town Board Meeting Minutes, can be substantiated? Mr. Rabasco publically questioned the ethics of the Town Board as they had not allowed the public to be heard before the salary and job classification was changed.

Councilman Jessup responded to Mr. Rabasco's questions regarding the \$1,000,000 in grants the Supervisor Wagner obtained for the Town of LaGrange. Councilman Jessup listed the following grants off the top of his head: court \$50,000; bathroom at Freedom Park \$200,000; building renovations \$5,000; Open Space \$100,000; Titusville Sewer District \$455,000; and a possible \$1,000,000 for refitting all the lights at all Town facilities which is currently being worked on. Councilman Jessup pointed out that these had been possible because Supervisor Wagner had been working full-time for the past four years at a part-time salary. The new salary is mid-range for County Supervisors which will be necessary for attracting good quality candidates in the future.

Councilman Luna responded to Mr. Rabasco "where you are standing here now expressing all your pain and dismay; is the place to have this public hearing; we are now having it."

Councilman O'Hare explained to Mr. Rabasco that the discussion at the October 14, 2009 Town Board Meeting did not make Supervisor Wagner's position a full time position. The Town wants to recognize that the Supervisor is here full-time and wants to pay him for the results he gives us. The Supervisor can make \$100,000 a year and show up one day a year. Councilman O'Hare explained that restrictions as to maximum or minimum number of days worked cannot be placed into any kind of a statute; that is the Town Law. Councilman O'Hare stated the Town Board raised the subject and put it in the meeting minutes for the public to see. The salary is strictly a budgetary decision. Councilman O'Hare stated nothing was changed as far as the job description because there is no job description. Councilman O'Hare stated that the Town Board did nothing remotely unethical; yet everything that was legally required, including offering the public an opportunity to be heard at this Public Hearing on the Town Budget.

Councilman Jessup reminded Mr. Rabasco that Supervisor Wade was the person who proposed the Supervisor going from part-time to full-time.

Mr. Rabasco replied "George never turned around and did not have a Public Hearing. George did not act; it's one thing to have an idea, George did not act on it without having a Public Hearing; and George would not have acted on it without a public hearing."

Supervisor Wagner stated that if you look back into past records you will find that Supervisor Wade expressly began raising the salary of the Supervisor to have a goal of making it a full-time position and the current Town Board has had lengthy discussions about making the Supervisor position full-time during this transition period. Supervisor Wagner stated that the reason Councilman O'Hare made a Resolution at the October 14, 2009 Town Board Meeting was to set a salary level that needed to be contained in the Notice of Public Hearing published by the Town Clerk's Office for this meeting. Supervisor Wagner pointed out the Resolution Councilman O'Hare made was equally intended to bring this to the forefront, have a set of minutes, have it out in the public so it could be discussed at this Public Hearing.

The following persons spoke in favor of the 2010 Budget:

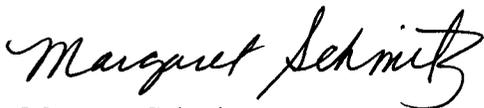
Joe Egitto stated that the Supervisor is doing a great job and that he had never seen a budget that was as rung out as this one. Mr. Egitto congratulated Mr. Wagner and stated "You work full time and you should be paid full time; thank you, Mr. Wagner."

Gary Gilberti stated that he is amazed that the Town can find someone part-time willing to do all the stuff that needs to be done for a town this big. \$60,000; there are bus drivers in Valhalla making \$65,000 a year and all they took was a driver training test. Mr. Gilberti stated this is a well run operation, as smooth as can be. Mr. Gilberti also stated "\$61,000, I wouldn't do it; thank you very much."

All persons desiring to be heard, having been heard, a motion was made by Councilman Luna to close the public hearing, seconded by Councilman Jessup; carried unanimously.

Councilman Jessup made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Luna; carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Margaret Schmitz  
Deputy Town Clerk

## **ADDENDUM**

- **Affidavit of Publication: Public Hearing on the 2010 Preliminary Budget**
- **Affidavit of Publication: Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budgets for Special Districts**
- **Summary of Town of LaGrange 2010 Budget**
- **Hand-out from J. Wagner - Excerpts from October 14, 2009 Minutes**

# Poughkeepsie Journal

Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

## AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of New York  
County of Dutchess  
City of Poughkeepsie

Rita Lombardi, of the City of Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, New York, being duly sworn, says that at the several times hereinafter mentioned he/she was and still is the Principle Clerk of the Poughkeepsie Newspapers Division of Gannett Satellite Information Network, Inc., publisher of the Poughkeepsie Journal, a newspaper published every day in the year 2009 in the city of Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, New York, and that the annexed Notice was duly published in the said newspaper for one insertion successively, in each week, commencing on the 2nd day of Nov. in the year of 2009 and on the following dates thereafter, namely on:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

And ending on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year of 2009, both days inclusive.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of November in the year of 2009.

Elizabeth A. Farkas  
Notary Public

My commission expires 9/30/13

TOWN OF LAGRANGE  
NOTICE OF RELEVY  
WATER & SEWER  
DISTRICTS  
TAKE NOTICE THAT I, the undersigned Receiver of Taxes of the Town of LAGRANGE, County of Dutchess, and State of New York, pursuant to the provisions of law have sent a list of delinquent water & sewer districts to the Dutchess County Commissioner of Finance after authorization from the LAGRANGE Town Board as of November 4, 2009.  
TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that these delinquent amounts will be levied onto the 2010 Town & County Tax bills. They include the following water districts: Deerfield, Grandview, Noxon, Knolls, South West LAGRANGE, and the following sewer districts: Thurville, Noxon, Knolls, Sunset Ridge and Bright Frank Farm.  
SUBMITTED  
Jane Sullivan  
Receiver of Taxes  
5787

ELIZABETH A. FARKAS  
NOTARY PUBLIC, State of New York  
No. 01FA4844793  
Qualified in Dutchess County  
Commission Expires 9/30/13

# Poughkeepsie Journal

Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

## AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of New York  
County of Dutchess  
City of Poughkeepsie

Rita Lombardi, of the City of Poughkeepsie,  
Dutchess County, New York, being duly sworn, says  
that at the several times hereinafter mentioned he/she  
was and still is the Principle Clerk of the Poughkeepsie  
Newspapers Division of Gannett Satellite Information  
Network, Inc., publisher of the Poughkeepsie Journal, a  
newspaper published every day in the year 2009 in the  
city of Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, New York, and  
that the annexed Notice was duly published in the said  
newspaper for one insertion  
successively, in each week, commencing on the 28th  
day of Oct. in the year of 2009 and  
on the following dates thereafter, namely on:

And ending on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in  
the year of 2009, both days inclusive.

Rita Lombardi  
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 29<sup>th</sup> day  
of October in the year of 2009.

Elizabeth P. Jarka  
Notary Public

My commission expires 9/30/13

ELIZABETH A. FARKAS  
NOTARY PUBLIC, State of New York  
No. 01FA4844793  
Qualified in Dutchess County  
Commission Expires 9/30/13

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PRELIMINARY BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF LA GRANGE FOR THE YEAR 2010  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Preliminary Budget of the Town of LaGrange, Dutchess County, NY for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2010 will be completed on October 28, 2009 and on October 28, 2009 the preliminary budget will be filed in the office of the Town Clerk where it will be available for inspection by any interested persons during office hours at the town clerk's office located at the Town of La

Grange Town Hall, 120 Stringham Road, LaGrangeville, NY 12540 and the Clerk's office hours are 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on all business days, except Tuesdays when the hours are between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Board of said Town of LaGrange will meet and review the 2010 Preliminary Budget and hold a public hearing thereon at 7:00 P.M. on November 4, 2009 at the Town Hall, 120 Stringham Road, and that at such hearing any person may be heard for or against the Preliminary Budget as compiled or any item or items contained therein.

AND FURTHER NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 113 of the Town Law that the following are proposed yearly salaries of town officers of the Town of LaGrange:  
Supervisor \$61,000  
Councilmen \$57,000  
Town Clerk \$50,367  
Receiver of Taxes \$48,564  
Superintendent of Highways \$48,564  
All persons attending the public hearing have the right to provide written and oral comments concerning the preliminary budget by October 14, 2009.  
Margarit Schmitz  
Deputy Town Clerk  
October 14, 2009



## Town of LaGrange 2010 Budget

LaGrange anticipated the current economic downturn and has been reducing or controlling spending over the past several years. The Supervisor has negotiated lower insurance rates, cheaper phone service, less expensive electric and instituted a strict spending policy with spending capped at a 2.7% increase in 2008 and a 0% increase in 2009.

This budget funds all Highway repairs, all snow removal, brush work and all associated highway work including union contract salaries, overtime and benefits. It also funds all services of the Building Department, Planning Department, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Town Clerk's office, the Town Justice Court, Tax collection, assessing, the Town's Attorney, the Town's Engineer, the CAC, Planning Board, ZBA, Public Safety Committee, Recreation Committee, Board of Assessment Review and a NY State Police sub-station. The salaries of all Town Hall employees and elected officials as well as almost \$600,000.00 to fund the LaGrange Library are also included in this budget.

The history of the Town general and highway budget is as follows; 2007 - \$ 7.1 million, 2008 - \$7.3 million, 2009 - \$7.3 million, 2010 - \$7.0 million.

Reductions to the budget to bring us back to pre 2007 dollar amounts (>\$7.1 million):

- One Highway Dept job remains unfilled
- Legislative Aide cut to part-time
- All Part-time hours capped at 20 hrs per week
- Full time account clerk job remained unfilled- will revert to PT in 2010
- Many Town Hall functions utilize part time employees
- 0% wage growth in 2009
- Highway spending cut \$100,000.00
- Supervisor spending cut 53%
- Comptroller spending cut 72%
- Building, Planning and Zoning spending cut
- Assessor Spending cut
- Town Clerk spending cut
- Court use of civilian attendants cut 50%

- Negotiated capped attorney rates for town legal issues saving \$20-30,000.00
- Negotiated fixed rate for traffic ticket prosecutor services (\$350.00 per session vs. hourly rate)
- Eliminated all non essential overtime for Parks employees
- All out of town training cut – NO travel/hotel stays in 2009 or 2010
- Negotiated rental rate decrease with Library landlord
- Reduction of Library funding to a 0% increase
- \$450,000.00 grant for energy efficient retrofit of sewer plant
- Re-classifying some jobs in Town Hall to allow job sharing
- Negotiated curtailment of \$11,000.00 HRA account resulting in 11k savings per year into the future UNION EMPLOYEES
- Curtailment of \$ 8650.00 HRA account (NON –UNION)
- Negotiated suspension of vacation “buy back” for 2009/2010
- Full time Sr. Account Clerk to be replaced with PT Payroll Clerk and PT Accountant saving about \$16,000.00 per year

**Additions to the budget:**

- Clerk/Typist to Public Works made full time.
- Town Board has made the position of Town Supervisor full time - Salary \$61 Thousand per year.

**Result:**

- Spending has been decreased by 4.1%
- Non-tax budgeted revenue reduced by 12%
- Overall tax levy (total \$ to be collected) increases 4.7%

A home assessed last year at \$400,000.00 that saw an 8% reduction in that assessment this year to \$368,000 would pay an additional \$23.00 per year. 2010 tax rate will be \$2.04 per thousand of assessed value.



Excerpts from the October 14, 2009 Minutes

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Councilman O'Hare addressed the 2010 preliminary budget feels it is long over-due that The Supervisor of the Town of LaGrange officially be made a full-time position. In Councilman O'Hare's opinion, now more than ever, the amount of time that Supervisor Wagner spends in the office working on Town projects saves much more than his entire yearly salary. Councilman Jessup stated the grants have been close to a million dollars. Councilman O'Hare cited other than the grants; internal efficiencies have saved tons & tons of money. Councilman O'Hare proposed an Oral Resolution to make the position full time. Councilman Beck made the motion, seconded by Councilman Jessup and carried unanimously.

Councilman O'Hare listed the salaries of elected town officials; Superintendent of Highways - \$76,123; Town Supervisor \$61,000; Councilmen 4 @ \$7,800; Town Clerk \$50,387; Receiver of Taxes - \$48,654; Town Justice 2 @ \$23,795 and asked for a motion to set forth these salaries for next year's budget. Councilman Beck made the motion, seconded by Councilman Jessup, carried unanimously.

Supervisor Wagner thanked the board for their confidences and expressed that the Town has been moving toward making the Town Supervisor a full-time position for six years now; former Supervisor Wade started this movement. Due to the complexities of what is going on now and the amount of pressure coming out of the County alone, these are no longer part-time positions. Supervisor Wagner stated "This is not about Jon Wagner, it's about the Town of LaGrange and its' future." "If there is not someone working full time to watch the purse strings, you are going to get ripped off more than ever."