

**STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ALBANY**

NOVEMBER 10, 2020

6:00 PM Reopen Public Hearing on 2021 Budget

Supervisor Lyons declared the public hearing reopened with the following members present Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Harris & Willsey. Town Clerk Clayton and Attorney Afzali was also present. Supervisor Lyons opened the floor to guests:

Dawn Jordan read a statement which is attached to these minutes.

Kevin Crosier stated that this administration was not involved in starting the paramedic program which is a necessity for the Hilltowns. The Albany County Sheriff's stepped up to the service and asked that it not be discontinued. He stated that the budget is a sham; misleading and underestimated expenses and overestimates revenue; not fiscally responsible and will bankrupt town; there should not be a wage for Deputy Superintended or a pay raise to Highway Superintendent or to the Code Enforcement Officer; town buildings falling down, senior van not used in 2 years; town has been gutted, not in favor of budget.

Barbara Crosier stated she is appalled and frightened of budget; excessive salaries to political cronies; reduction is sales tax by cutting the ambulance which is a lifesaving service; cutting budget for town park; Switzkill Farm; no senior transportation; paying dog control officer to do nothing; rejected a grant to reduce energy costs. Stated that this budget is an atrocity.

There being nor further comments, Supervisor Lyons made a motion seconded by Councilmember Palow to close the public hearing at 6:23PM. Motion carried with the following members voting aye: Supervisor Lyons, Councilmembers Palow, Conklin, Harris & Willsey.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita C. Clayton, Town Clerk

Statement for Preliminary Budget Public Hearing 11-10-2020

This year's budgeted amount for the annual agreement for the Albany County Sheriff's EMT-D and ALS services – page 6, line A3120E for those who have a copy – is \$32,608 less than what was contracted and budgeted for 2020.

To those unfamiliar with the terminology, this service provides ambulance and Emergency Medical Technician coverage for the town when Helderberg Ambulance is already engaged or if they cannot raise a crew, and Paramedic support – personnel with advanced training in complex life-saving procedures such as inserting IV lines, administering drugs, intubation, etc. which Berne does not have. Given our distance from hospitals, Paramedics on board frequently make the difference between life and death in stroke, heart attack and accident victims in communities like ours.

The discrepancy between the 2020 and 2021 budgets makes no sense to me. When this arrangement was initially contracted for in 2018, the Sheriff's office offered a progressive path to the full cost – charging only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the actual cost that year, $\frac{1}{2}$ the actual cost in 2019, $\frac{3}{4}$ the cost in 2020, coming to the full charge in 2021. Therefore, it defies logic that the 2021 cost would be less than the 2020 cost. Please explain. Even if there is money left over from a line from last year or the money is coming from some other fund, the full amount must be shown on the expenditure lines in order for Albany County to be paid the contractual cost.

I am also requesting that a copy of the letter that the Sheriff's office always sends to the Town Board at budget time outlining the coming year's expenses for services be made available to the public.

The EMT-D/ALS service is essential for the people who live, work, and travel through the Town of Berne, and our residents and taxpayers deserve full transparency and the assurance that this service will be fully funded for 2021. Anything less than full disclosure of all the details – not just your verbal assurance, but proof in writing that this service will be fully funded, can only be taken as obstructionist and a clear threat to the safety of all who depend upon the life-saving services of the Albany County Sheriff's EMT-D and ALS.

Dawn Jordan
54 Gulf Hill Road