

PUBLIC HEARING

LOCAL LAW #2 OF 2017: TO OVERRIDE THE TAX LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW §3- C

Town of Ulysses

September 12, 2017

Audio of the minutes are available on the website at ulysses.ny.us.

ATTENDANCE

TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Supervisor- Liz Thomas
1st Deputy Supervisor- Nancy Zahler
Board members- Michael Boggs, John Hertzler
Town Clerk- Carissa Parlato
Bookkeeper- Nina Thompson

ABSENT- Board member- Rich Goldman

OPENING THE HEARING:

Ms. Zahler made a motion to open the hearing at 6:50pm, seconded by Mr. Boggs and passed unanimously.

Ms. Thomas introduced the town officials in attendance and noted the subject of the hearing: the proposed Local Law to override the tax levy limit established in General Municipal Law 3-C.

STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR THOMAS:

Specifically this local law allows the town of Ulysses government to have authority to set the tax levy at a level it finds to be appropriate to provide the proper services that will keep residents safe and provide for a thriving community—otherwise stated as preserving the Health, Safety and Welfare of our community as dictated by the law. During the budget season from the end of September to the end of October, the Town of Ulysses board will be poring over expenses and revenues, and if we should find that more funds need to be expended or put into reserves for future needs, this override gives us the latitude to do so. We fully intend to stay within the cap if at all possible, but not all costs are in our control, for example last year, health care costs increased ~5%. The cost for Fire protection looks to be increasing by 12-15%—a cost that is 18% of the tax levy, with the decision under the full control of the Village of Trumansburg.

The costs to fix a problem with water district 3 continues to affect the overall levy, even though only WD3 users actually pay this levy. We do not know yet to what extent the water district levy will change.

On top of this, our highway equipment fund has been underfunded for years and we simply must put money into reserves to ensure our equipment is replaced on a reasonable cycle.

Copies of the proposed Local law are available at the back of the room.

The date of this public hearing was set by resolution of the Town Board on August 8, 2017 and a notice of this hearing was published in the Ithaca Journal on Saturday, August 19, 2017.

The purpose of this public hearing is to afford the general public an opportunity to make statements and comments about the Local Law. The hearing will remain open until all members of the public who are present at the hearing have been given an opportunity to make statements or comments on the proposed amendments. A public hearing is a time for the board to listen to comments from the public, not to engage in a dialog or ask questions on the subject. We welcome the public to ask questions about the budget anytime to myself or Town Board members directly, or during the budget process in September and October. A public hearing on the budget will precede its adoption, but it is best to engage before the public hearing.

Comments presented at this hearing will be taken into consideration by the Town Board when it considers action on the proposed Local Law. The Town Board may take action on this proposed Local Law tonight based on comments from the public.

Speakers should try to limit their comments to no more than 3 minutes. I request that each speaker state your name and the municipality in which you live. You may, but do not need to say your address. If you are appearing as a representative of an organization or governmental entity, please identify the organization or entity and state its address.

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Next I will address some administrative matters by noting the presence of the following documents:

1. The PH notice that was printed in the Ithaca Journal on August 19, 2017
2. The proposed Local Law.

I would now ask speakers to raise a hand should they like to speak.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Joanna Martinson said that she came to the meeting find out why the town is proposing the increase. She thinks that the reasons shared by Ms. Thomas seem reasonable. She further inquired why Water District 3 costs are separate from other town fees.

Ms. Thomas explained that by law, only those within the district pay for the costs of the district.

Tim Martinson inquired whether this is related to the Governor's tax cap.

Ms. Thomas confirmed that we need to pass it pre-emptively due to timing. If we find that it is not needed when the budget has been completed, the law gets rescinded.

CLOSING THE HEARING:

Hearing no further comments, Ms. Zahler made a motion to close the hearing at 7pm, seconded by Mr. Hertzler and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Carissa Parlato on 9/20/17.