

**VILLAGE OF RED HOOK
BUDGET WORKSHOP
APRIL 5, 2012**

Present: Mayor Blundell, Trustee Kovalchik, Trustee Trapp, Trustee Norris was absent, Trustee Seymour was via telephone. Officers Hildenbrand and Truitt were also present.

Mayor Blundell opened the meeting at 7:15 with a discussion on the new police union contract, raises have been misapplied (anniversary date and contract date) averaging 5 % yearly. Fastracs has donated \$ 2000.00 to the Police Department. Thursday April 12th is the budget Public Hearing. Police salary line is at \$ 265,000.00, Mayor Blundell is asking for \$ 220,000.00. Taxes will go up 13 % if police stay at the \$ 265,000 and that figure is too high. Chief Truitt was requested to submit to the Board a police budget that would work with \$ 229,000 and has not yet received this. Sergeant Hildenbrand stated the Village has been trained in public safety for 100 years, money is tight, but when looking at the budget why does the Village pay \$ 12,000.00 to Panda? Panda or public safety? The PD is already at the bare minimum. It is impossible to run a PD with a salary line of \$ 229,000. Feels numbers are off and not accurate, no other department is being asked to punch their budgets, just police. The Police Department is effective and the court should catch up on cases. Chief Truitt has increased productivity and brought down cost. Mayor Blundell stated that he is torn, but there is a cash flow problem and we are at the end of the budget year. DM Kovalchik stated the Highway Department rebuilt and made repairs instead of buying new, there is no capital cost and most of the work is part-time. Chief Truitt stated that they may lose money in the end and not provide a great service – always cutting back on the budget. Bard College wants to purchase police services at \$ 50.00 an hour.

Chief Truitt gave some lectures and has established a good relationship with Bard. Mayor Blundell is not sure if the Village can provide protection to Bard since they are already in the Town. Chief Truitt stated that it is legal. Trustee Trapp would prefer charging Bard more money per hour. Mayor Blundell does not agree with the PD working off Village grounds and does not see a profit. The Village PD contracting to Bard would be considered into the next budget year. Currently the Board must focus on building a fund balance. Clerk Cole stated that each Board member must have a complete understanding of each line item and watch the spending, then build a fund balance. Chief Truitt stated that the solution is not to cut public safety and he moved his family to Red Hook for the schools and the public safety. Mayor Blundell stated that there are four payrolls left in this budget year and the PD is already over their salary line. Chief Truitt promises that it will not be over budget in the next budget year. Mayor Blundell stated that he may be forced to lay off employees to make the yearend payroll. Trustee Trapp stated that Panda is not worth the cost. Mayor Blundell spoke to Judge Triebwasser and the Village Attorney to discuss maybe looking for outside intervention. Trustee Trapp feels court updates would level out police budget. Sergeant Hildenbrand asked the Board if Panda should be more important than laying off employees. Mayor Blundell stated that shift reduction is mandatory to balance budget. Mayor Blundell wants police budget to be \$ 230,000 for the next budget year, police shifts should be cut 4 hours a day in shifts and maybe a Sunday shift, the Village cannot run a deficit. Chief Truitt appreciates the Board's efforts, but does not agree with their decision. Mayor Blundell understands the intention of the Board and appreciates the Chief's expertise and feels the Board will make the right decision.

Mayor Blundell stated that he would like to discuss in executive session the police union contract. This was made in the form of a motion by Trustee Kovalchik, seconded by Trustee Trapp. All were in favor.
(10:06 PM)

10:15PM the board reconvenes from executive session.

Trustee Kovalchik made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Trapp seconded. All were in favor.

Submitted by,

Cynthia Cole
Clerk/Treasurer