

RED HOOK TOWN BOARD MEETING
November 2, 2022

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York was convened in public session at the Town Hall, 7340 South Broadway, Red Hook at 7:00 p.m.

Present:	Supervisor Robert McKeon Councilmember William Hamel Councilmember Christine Kane Councilmember Jacob Testa Councilmember Julia Solomon Town Clerk Deanna Cochran
Also Present:	Attorney for the Town Christine Chale Esq. Bookkeeper for the Town Ann Conway

Supervisor McKeon opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and reviewed the agenda.

Public Hearing – Preliminary Budget for the Town of Red Hook- 2023

Supervisor McKeon reviewed the preliminary budget for the Town noting topics such as tax changes, awarded grant monies, and investments to the community. Also, he compared the changes in taxes & costs for the years 2016 and 2023 and reviewed the benefits from the community choice aggregation program.

Public Comment-

Peter Pinto asked for clarification regarding the connection between Rec Parks East & West and questioned how maintenance will look in the future.

Supervisor McKeon answered the connection is planned as a multimodal path installed on town owned property from the north parking lot of Rec Park East along Fruit Bud Lane and continue across Linden Ave to the entrance of Rec Park West.

Anthony Formisano asked if political party affiliation was a factor in the decisions regarding increasing the Supervisor's position to full-time and increasing the salary. He questioned why the Town Board has decided to make these changes.

Supervisor McKeon responded that the Board represents all people regardless of political parties.

Councilmember Hamel answered that he investigated the issue of the wage disparities between the different elected officials of our Town. He noted that many town supervisor positions are part-time, but he proposed this wage increase due to how much more work this position now requires as well as providing a living wage for future officials.

Anthony Formisano again questioned why this change is being made considering that Robert McKeon ran for the position when it was a part-time position with a smaller salary and added the decision to change this position to full time should have been made by the people of the Town.

Supervisor McKeon addressed that is illegal to add anything other than the introduction of a new tax on a ballot in New York State as our state is not a referendum state.

Supervisor McKeon added that if one were to decide to run for this position, they would need to make that decision around March in an election year. A wage increase at this time would make the position more accessible and potentially attract more people in time for the next election. Currently the smaller wage only allows retirees and people with money to run for this position, which is not fair and not how democracy should work.

Anthony Formisano stated the Board has still not addressed why there is a need for a full time position.

Councilmember Hamel answered the visions for this town now require more time and energy to fulfill.

Councilmember Solomon added she supported this wage increase because of all the work Robert McKeon does for the town and because it will allow this position to become more accessible for people in the future.

Anthony Formisano suggested the wage increase could happen slower and over time.

Supervisor McKeon added there is a possibility some people will not be upset with this wage increase as many find the existing salary too low and reminded the timing of this increase coincides with the election to attract more potential candidates.

Gary Kowalski commented that he felt the increase should be instituted at the beginning of the next election for the next candidate. He asked for clarification on the 17% tax assessment increase as the taxes are so high especially due to the high school taxes.

Francis Duncan stated she supported the increase in salary for the Town Supervisor’s position as it will increase accessibility of the position to individuals looking for one income and one full time position.

Councilmember Kane answered that it is important to make changes that will be able to grow and change as we move forward into the future.

Supervisor McKeon added there were correspondences sent via email from the public that will be available as a matter of record.

Public Hearing Correspondences are on file at the Town Clerk’s office, or click: [Public Hearing Correspondences](#)

On a motion by Councilmember Hamel seconded by Councilmember Kane to close the Public Hearing

Adopted	Ayes	5	McKeon, Hamel, Kane, Testa, Solomon
	Nays	0	

On a motion by Councilmember Hamel seconded by Councilmember Kane to adopt the 2023 Budget.

Adopted	Ayes	4	Hamel, Kane, Testa, Solomon
	Nays	0	

Supervisor McKeon abstained from voting

Bookkeeper Ann Conway confirmed the 2023 Budget complies with the tax cap.

On a motion by Supervisor McKeon seconded by Councilmember Hamel to adjourn the meeting.

Adopted	Ayes	5	McKeon, Hamel, Kane, Testa, Solomon
	Nays	0	