

**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**

Present: R. William Grinnell, Supervisor
David Iuliano, Councilman
Fred Hunsdon, Councilman
Chattie Van Wert, Councilwoman
Karla Vigliotti, Budget Officer
Amy Quesnel, Budget Clerk
Tonya M. Thompson, Town Clerk

Absent: Wayne Taylor, Councilman

Others: John McDonald, Steve Boyce, John Bartlett

Supervisor Grinnell opened the Budget Workshop just a bit past 10:00 a.m. and invited those in the public to speak.

Library

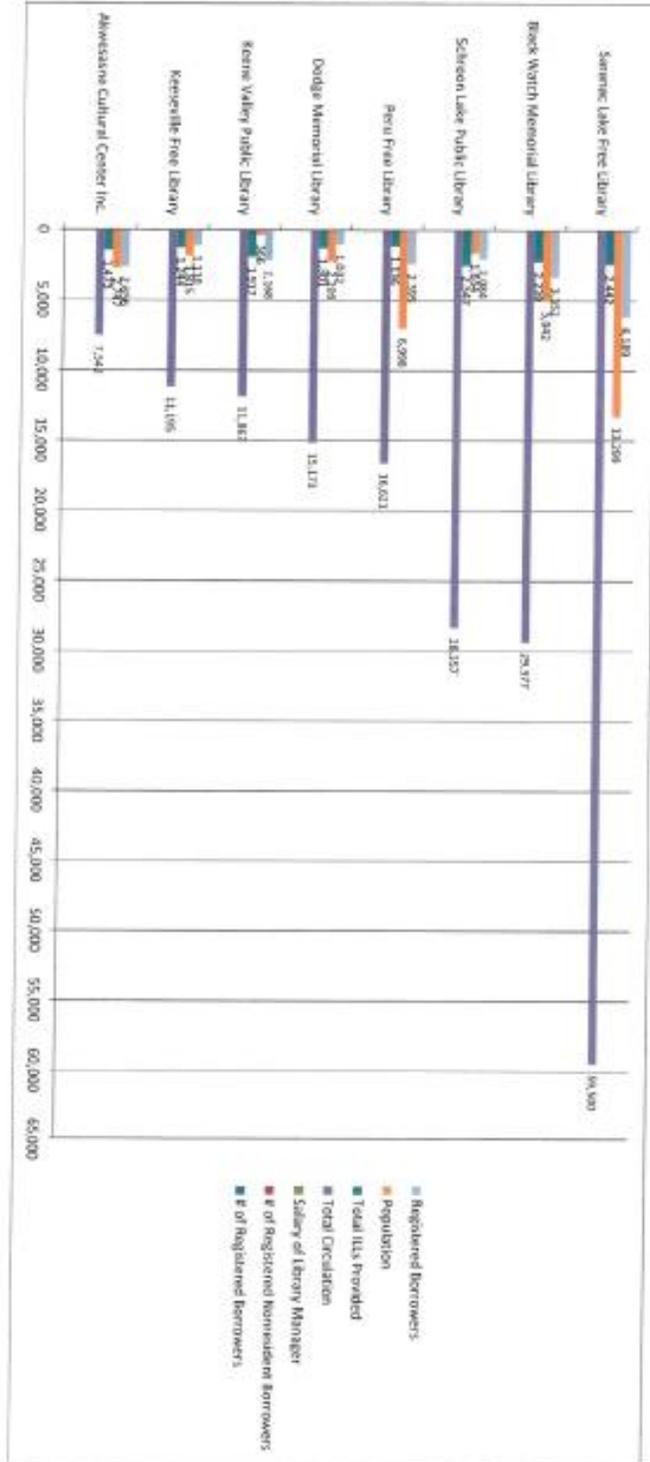
Mr. McDonald would like to say a few about the status of the library, it doesn't think that the board, this board or past boards, or even the library board really realizes that even though that we are a regents library that was constituted in the early 20's, we are really separate board from the Town, we are the only board other than the Town Board in the Town. Regents Library's and small museums, etc. are constituted through the education law and we have powers and abilities to do things on our own. If you have questions about that you can look at Section 245 of the Education Law. We are looking for a little more money, for the librarian over and above what the board has suggested for us and he thinks she serves as an exception even though she keeps hearing that she is not a director - that doesn't make any difference. People should be paid for what they do. A little something that the Town may not be aware of is that we get about \$4,500 of State Aid and that comes from Betty Little and Clinton, Essex, Franklin Library Assoc. and this money is sent to the Library - it doesn't say on the check "To the Town of Ticonderoga", the check is to the Black Watch Library of the Town. Steve Boyce has prepared some documents with some information for the board and he hopes you will look at it very favorably. This library, he has made the comment, "Have you ever been to the library" and he wasn't thinking about being inside the door, but have you ever been to the library and seen what the library does for the community, for the children, for the elderly? He thinks that the town for the money that they appropriate for the library would agree to that. He thinks that the town gets top dollar for their money. In the summer time, he sees people that will stop him and say we understand you are on the library board - what a wonderful library you have here for the size of this community. That is important for a community because people will talk about what is available when you come to Ticonderoga and they bring people to Ticonderoga. The library has been able to do things within the library confines itself because we have a right to do those things to make the library more attractive - come in and look around to see what is in there now. Ask the librarian and the girls what can the library do for you, think about that.

**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**

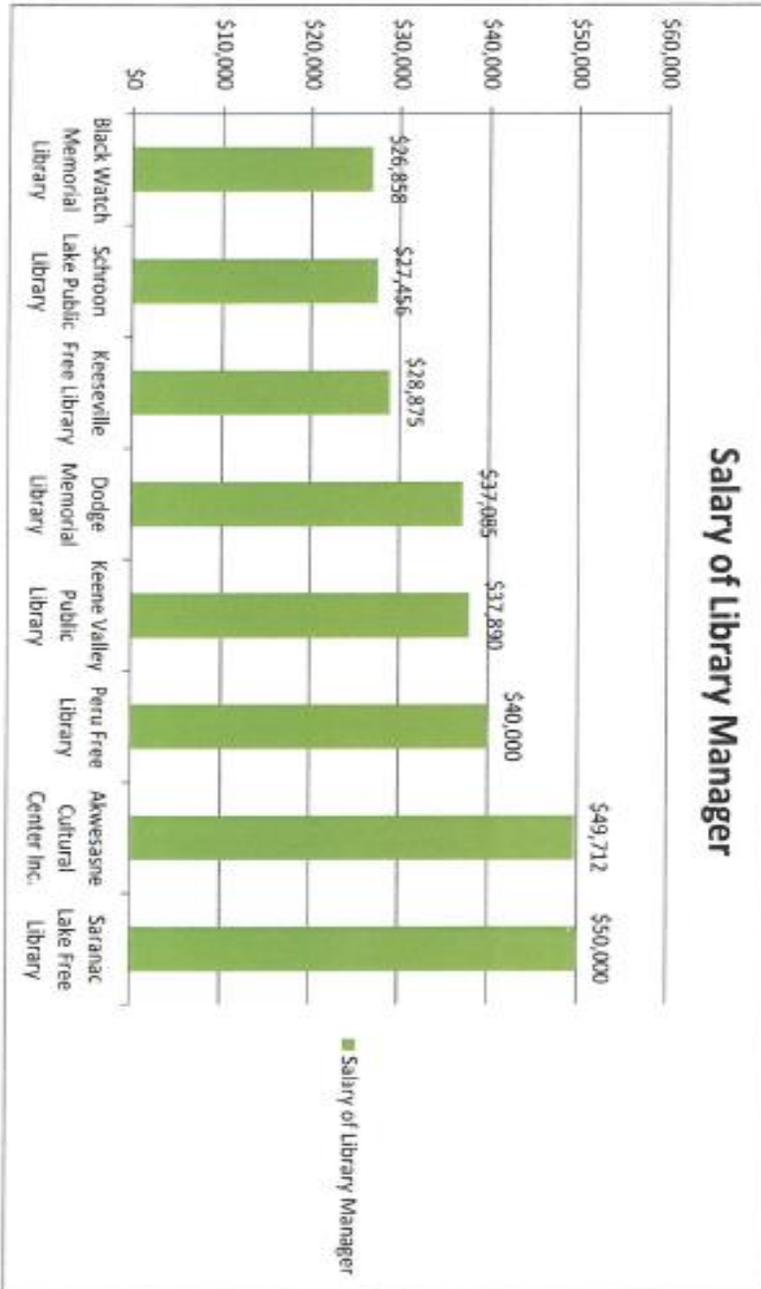
Mr. Boyce would only add is that besides the shared responsibility of the Library Board and the Town Board, there are certain mandates that New York State has for Public Libraries and that is our responsibility to make sure that those mandates are being met, that we are providing the services that the Town the size of Ticonderoga should have. One of them is how long the library is open, it is open 35 hours because that is what New York State says for a community our size is the minimum it can be. Our library is a busy place. The other thing, besides the fact that we are a board - appointed by the Town Board, and Chartered through New York State, we have a community support group called The Friends of the Library and they really do a great job supporting the library, they come up with money to help purchase books for the library, they buy equipment sometimes, they pay for minor repairs and the also, more importantly they volunteer in the library - sometimes you walk in the library and the person there that might be dealing with the books is not a Town employee, they are a volunteer and we shouldn't over look that, they really subsidize the Town in a way with money and time. Wouldn't it be nice if we had a Friends of the Sewer and Water, too. We came to you last year and here is our issue - in our budget this year we proposed 4% increase in salary for the librarian. That was reduced back to 2%, but what we would like to do is make a case for feeling that the librarian should be paid more and we think we can do it without changing the Town budget and staying within that. We have a one year proposal (see attachment). What we did was take the six library's that are in the Clinton, Essex, Franklin library system that are closest to ours. We have to be open 35 hours a week which is the average out of these six. We are looking at the circulation and what you notice is the Black Watch Library in terms of overall circulation if this was a league, we'd be in second place. This points to what Mr. McDonald is saying - this is a busy library, very busy for the size of the community. It is the friends of the Library that buy the candy for activities - such as for this Friday's trick or treating and last Friday the library held a Halloween party and it was packed with kids. Library staff did crafts and read books, but the cost was born by the Friends of the Library. Next, you can look at the salaries at the Libraries that are comparable in size to us - and again if we are a league, while we are in second place for circulation, we are in last place for salary. This is information that was passed out last year and based on 2013 statistics. We feel this is a problem - we have a busy library, well run library and a librarian that is not getting the amount of money that she should get. He knows in the past that one of the issues that came up is her civil service classification, she is certified as a Senior Library Clerk and that the pay is not out of the ordinary. That is besides the point, he can tell you on this list that it is all over the place in terms of civil service designations. Here is our proposal, we have some money and we will call it 'our' money, whatever her designation is, she is running a good busy library and it is well run. What we would do - we said 4% and you said 2% - for next year, we would provide the additional 2%, we would expect the Librarian to begin the process of changing her civil service designation, taking the education and taking the tests to be necessary to raise her to the next step of whatever that is. She will do that, we will give her a year to do that and we would expect that by the end of next January she would have increased her civil service title. If she hasn't done that, then what we will do is her base will drop down to what it would have been if she hadn't gotten the additional 2% at her Senior Clerk. That is what we are talking about.

Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.

Library Statistics for Comparable Libraries



**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**



Councilman Iuliano reiterated - you are coming up with the difference in the 2% to offset her salary, for this year. How do we deal with the retirement on this?

**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**

Mrs. Vigliotti stated that she is a full-time employee at 35 hours a week. They are just talking about her salary. Retirement is based on her salary, how would we handle this?

Supervisor Grinnell asked how the money is going to get into our budget to supplement her salary? How do we show this money and where it is coming from?

Mr. McDonald stated that he will bring it down, a certified check made out to the Town of Ticonderoga, it is coming from the Black Watch Library, being Chartered by the State of New York.

Councilwoman Van Wert noted that the library has a revenue item, can't it go into one of those items.

Mr. Boyce again stated that if Ms. Johns has not gotten her new designation then it would drop back to that salary. We don't want to be in this position of subsidizing her salary because it would eventually mean that we are cutting back on services and we don't want that. You don't want to commit to doing this all the time because it means differentiating between your staff.

Councilwoman Van Wert explained that she has been going to the Library meetings for almost two years now and this has been something that the Library Board feels very strongly about, there have been very few meetings where it has not been discussed. She feels that Ms. Johns does do a good job for the library and it is well run, there is room for improvement anywhere, but anytime she has been there, there are lots of people at different ages so it serves well our community and some of the surrounding communities. They have done their due diligence in showing where her salary falls in relationship to other libraries and where her salary falls in relationship to other libraries and the visitation. They have done their homework, we can't ask them to do anything more. They certainly have been very creative in coming up with a solution that they feel very strongly about. The part-time people will stay at the 2% increase, so it is just this one position. She supports what they are proposing. It is something that is important to do everything that they can to make it happen.

Supervisor Grinnell explained that he spoke with John and Steve at his house last week and they had a discussion and he does have some concerns that they talked about. One of the biggest concerns was when you start looking for increases outside of what has been agreed to with your staff (or not), to him there has got to be some form of merit increase to qualify that and we have already had a couple of instances this year with people that have completed education requirements or passed longevity stakes that warranted an increase greater than the 2% and he told them, for him to support an increase in this position he really needed some sort of commitment on the merits side of it. The fact that they are willing to go to bat for this 2% with the requirement that the individual has to meet certain educational requirements within the next year he can support. If she doesn't meet the requirements it falls back. He thinks that is eminently fair and that is how he would like to see increases in pay for individuals, when they are bettering themselves, they are earning it and they are making the product better for the employer and that to

**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**

him is what it is all about. For that reason he could go along with the proposal that has been put forward.

Councilman Hunsdon noted that this is an initiative for her to advance herself which is excellent and he would have no problem with it as long as there is a way of transferring this money technically and legally.

Mr. McDonald stated that we are already giving you money that the State sends us as a Regents Library and it goes into your budget and we have given you that for as long as he can remember. He held up a record of over 800 donors, this money was raised by the library when the addition was added. The Town did not spend any money for the addition to the library, that came from two requests. There was some little money left over and that is where part of this money is coming from and that money was raised by the Ticonderoga Black Watch Library and not by the Town of Ticonderoga.

Mr. Boyce stated that further down the road we need to set up some classes or seminars, but someone from the library system should come in and talk with both boards or representatives of both boards to find out clearly what the responsibilities are of the boards. He thanked the board.

Codes

Supervisor Grinnell explained that just today we received a proposal from Codes in regards to their software program. He was asked to get quotes from our present software supplier and our county software supplier and with not having those quotes and not having had a chance to read the information presented he is not comfortable moving on this.

Discussion was held on the problems/issues with the current software?

Councilwoman Van Wert believes that we need to hold up payment for the current Codes program in order to figure out the issues with the program.

Discussion was also held on having money in the budget to help clean up properties.

Supervisor Grinnell mentioned that any clean-up fees will be relieved onto the taxes, additional money in the budget would not help; however, we have contingency if needed. We have also passed laws to help with that.

Councilman Iuliano stated that we need a list of the issues with the Codes current program and it should be presented to the board and the IT people. Spending more money isn't the way to do this.

**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**

EDC

Fishing Tournaments will need to be increased as the tournaments themselves are increasing.

Keep the budget the same - cut out one of the requested card racks to use that money for the fishing tournaments.

Tax Levy

Supervisor Grinnell announced that we are pretty well established with where we are going to be with our budget, we have done a lot of work - we have identified a lot of small changes that we have made here and there and they have been incorporated into the process and we have about \$75,000 in money that is not specifically designated to a line item and we spend that before we reach our cap number. His position is that the bulk of that money go to IT. We know we have some issues and he would like to know that we have plenty there to deal with any more issues that arise. We need to have that capability to adjust our IT equipment and process significantly in the next year and that is the way to do it.

Resolution #349-2015 brought by Chattie Van Wert, seconded by Fred Hunsdon to increase the tax levy A.1001 by \$76,431.00 and increase the Central Data A.1680.4 by \$76,431.00. **All in Favor**, R. William Grinnell - Aye, David Iuliano - Aye, Fred Hunsdon - Aye, Chattie Van Wert - Aye. **Opposed** - none. Wayne Taylor - Absent. **Carried.**

Library

Continued discussion on the Library's proposal for a 4% increase for the library director.

Councilman Iuliano stated that we are all holding at 2%. If they want to give her a raise let them take care of it - take that \$600 out postage. He is done with this. If we are going to do this he does not want to finagle with salary - put her salary at what it will be and reduce it somewhere else in the budget and let them make up that difference.

Mrs. Thompson wanted to speak on this proposal of a 4% raise. This Town has a lot of other people that do annual training and better themselves every year, they either just do it or they have to do it - they are not waiting to be told to do training and getting their raise before hand to prompt it. You've set a precedent that getting the education for a new title would be what would warrant a consideration for an increase as the Supervisor stated earlier. A while ago, this office tried to ask for the same thing - came in at a zero budget increase but took out the part-time clerk distributing some of those funds to give the clerk and deputy a raise to compensate giving up that position and foregoing the rest that was left over to go back into where ever it was needed and it did not fly. Not only did we not get the raises, but the entire money was taken away. This is a sore subject, you have a lot of people in this town that better themselves every year and absolutely

**Minutes for Ticonderoga's 3rd 2016 Budget Workshop held on
October 27, 2015 commencing at 10:00 a.m.**

deserve more than that 2% raise, they continue their education to better this Town and they do the best job that they can. Nobody ever doubts that nobody is not doing their jobs.

Discussion was held on hours worked at the office of the library.

Councilman Iuliano again stated that we are holding everybody to 2%, as soon as you raise one person more than 2%, you have everybody coming back to you and you have to justify that. If you are comfortable with that, then do it. It has happened before. It is hard to justify and where does it stop?

Councilwoman Van Wert asked that if their board is willing to come in and provide that extra money, how can we not let them give her the extra money?

Mrs. Thompson does feel that this is a slap in the face to all the other employees in this town.

Councilwoman Van Wert believes that there are very few people that work in this town that don't deserve more money.

Councilman Iuliano agrees and that being said - we have said we are only going to give 2% raises to everybody, but now we say except the person in the library - that except is really hard when it hits the street. Put it to a vote.

Councilwoman Van Wert asked why couldn't that board finance her increase? A stipend?

More discussion.

Supervisor Grinnell suggests leaving the budget as is and then if there is more money to be paid to the library person whether it be from the Friends of the Library or whomever then they do it. We don't want any part of it.

Town Board agrees - 2%.

Mrs. Vigliotti did mention that she clarified that the two additional library aids get 18 1/2 hours per week.

Supervisor Grinnell also mentioned that he would like to see time sheets, and he would like to see those time sheets reflect exactly what and where hours are worked.

Budget workshop - adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Tonya M. Thompson, Town Clerk