

2020 Preliminary Budget Summary

Compensation

Salaries and wages were increased 1.9% as a cost-of-living adjustment.

Proposed salaries of elected officials:

Town Supervisor	\$19,312
Town Councilperson	\$2,387
Town Clerk	\$34,442
Highway Superintendent	\$65,960
Town Justices	\$13,857

The hourly wage rate for part-time employees was adjusted to \$15.66/hr, reflecting the 2019 Tompkins County Living Wage of \$15.37/hr with a 1.9% cost-of-living adjustment for next year.

Capital Improvements and Long-term Fiscal Planning

Old Town Hall - following past practice, \$30,000 was budgeted for the Town Hall Capital Reserve for improvements to the Old Town Hall. With the geothermal installation completed and operational, we will now be improving the building "envelope" and addressing needed

Highway Barn - Also following past practice, \$65,000 was budgeted for the Town Highway Barn Reserve Fund for a new highway garage now being planned.

Highway Equipment - We budgeted \$300,000 for a needed snow plow truck.

Caroline Fire Protection

The contract for fire protection services from Speedsville Volunteer Fire Co. decreased 3.6% from 2019. The contract for the Brooktondale Fire District increased 5.0%. The total Caroline Fire Protection District budget decreased by 1.7%.

Personnel

We have recently hired a part-time Bookkeeper and Assistant to the Supervisor. With this addition, we removed the previous Assistant to the Supervisor line. We also budgeted two other part-time positions, a Deputy Clerk and an Assistant to the Highway Superintendent.

Budget Comments

The tax levy for town tax items (General Fund, Highway Fund, Caroline Fire Protection, and Street-lights) increased over 2019 by 1.89%, \$974 below the Tax Cap.

- For General and Highway Funds combined, the Preliminary Budget uses \$81,000 of 2019 Unexpended Funds to reduce the levy amount. With an increase in Total Assessed Value of Caroline properties of 6%, the combined tax rate for General and Highway Funds declined by 0.72%.
- We budgeted additional Employee Health Insurance funds for a new personnel policy to offer individual coverage for part-time employees.

We are budgeting and planning for future capital expenses, with attention to maintaining a responsible amount of reserves. With this Preliminary Budget I project a Fund Balance for General and Highway Funds combined of about 39% of 2020 budgeted expenses. This gives us capital reserves for Town Hall and Highway Garage improvements, as well as a buffer for unforeseen events.