

A Public Hearing was held Monday, December 12, 2011, at 6:30pm at Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York

PRESENT: James Youmans, Supervisor
Dawn Rogers, Councilwoman
Thomas A. Boehm, Councilman
Richard N. Touchette, Councilman
Thomas E. Dolan, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk

Supervisor Youmans opened the Public Hearing and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Supervisor Youmans stated that the purpose of the Public Hearing was to hear comments on the proposed 2012 Sewer Rates and continued by asking that Town Clerk Millious read the Notice of Public Hearing that was published in the News Herald.

Town Clerk continued by reading the following:

**NOTICE
TOWN OF COEYMANS
TOWN BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING**

In compliance with Public Officer's Law, this will inform you that the Town Board of the Town of Coeymans has scheduled a Public Hearing for the purpose of hearing comments on the proposed Sewer Rates. The Public Hearing will be held at 6:30pm on December 12, 2011 at Coeymans Town Hall, 18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, NY.

**By Order of the Town Board
of the Town of Coeymans
Diane L. Millious
Town Clerk**

OPENING COMMENT

Supervisor Youmans stated that for those in attendance, and for those listening at home, the proposed Sewer Rates for 2012 are the same rates as 2011 with no increase and continued by reading the following:

- \$375/ per unit* per year residential & commercial – Coeymans Sewer District
- \$375/per unit* per year – Martins Hill Gray Water Sewer
- \$100/ per year – Vacant Lot (with access to sewer service)

*One unit is the equivalent of \$80,000 gallons of water or fraction thereof.

Supervisor Youmans stated that they bill twice a year and the payment will be \$187.50 twice a year, as it was in 2011.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Youmans invited the public to comment at this time and added that there was a sign-in sheet by the microphone and anyone wishing to speak needs to state their name and address.

Ms. Donna Pasquini stated that she lives in the Hamlet of Coeymans and added that not knowing until they arrive for the Public Hearing does not help know if the rates are up, down or the same. She continued by saying that a little of advance notice would be helpful in knowing what they were doing. She went on by saying that she had a letter from Mrs. Burton, who could not attend and continued by reading the following:

Dear Sirs,

I would not like the Sewer Rates to go up, as a senior person on Social Security with only a certain amount of money, you may price me out of my home. This goes for taxes on water also.

Ms. Pasquini continued by saying that her letter goes along with what she has been saying for a long time about people on Social Security and fixed incomes and when things like this go up, it does hurt the community. She concluded by saying that on behalf of Ms. Burton, she feels the same and is glad that the rates are not going up for next year and then thanked the Town Board.

Supervisor Youmans thanked Ms. Pasquini and then asked if there were any additional comments, hearing none he added that they will keep the Public Hearing open for a period of time in case someone shows up late and would like to comment. He continued by saying that he understands Ms. Burton's concerns with being a senior citizen on a fixed income and paying sewer and water bills and added that the system of charging per unit, he finds to be antiquated and hopes that the future Town Board will address that issue. He went on by saying that he believes the only fair way to charge for water and sewer would be to put a meter on every home and that way a senior citizen that lives by himself and drinks a gallon of water, and flushes the toilet four times a day does not pay the same as a family of eight with four bathrooms, which is how it is now. He concluded by saying that it is no one's fault and it is the system that was handed down from many, many Boards before them and it is what it is and hopefully sometime in the future, some change can come to that.

Councilman Dolan interjected that some of them do have meters, like himself but they are not read.

Supervisor Youmans added that he had a meter on his house when he lived in the Village and it also was never read and he does not know if it was even operable and in some cases the meters are already there.

Ms. Pasquini asked that the Town Board look closer at the way it is done because businesses like Yanni's, a restaurant and bar pays the same as she does in a home of two and continued by saying that she believes there is a lot of water used and flushing done compared to what she uses.

Supervisor Youmans stated that he would doubt very highly that they are paying the same as her and added that businesses are charged per unit and typically from what he has seen on the billings, is that it goes by how many bathrooms are on the premises. He added that he knows that there are two bathrooms for the restaurant and there are bathrooms in the marina area and if they look into it, he believes they would find that they are being charged for no fewer than four units. He continued by saying that she is right and a meter would certainly make it more fair.

Ms. Pasquini stated that at the last Public Hearing she believed that it was done so residential and commercial rates were the same.

Supervisor Youmans stated that they are per unit, and it depends on how many units they are being charged. He added that another for instance is that Cumberland Farms is charged two units and truth be told he believes that they use very little sewer but they are charged based on a long time ago someone saying that there is the gas station as well as the retail store and they should be charged for two units. He went on by saying that year to year he has looked them over with Mr. Conrad, who is very knowledgeable on that subject and there have been cases where some of the businesses have contacted them and said that they don't think that it is fair that they are being charged for two units when they are using very little and it has been looked at on a case by case basis.

Ms. Pasquini stated that she understands that and she looks at it as a business has revenue coming in where home owners have a fixed income.

Supervisor Youmans stated that he understands completely.

Ms. Pasquini stated that it is a big difference between a business like Gianni's compared to her home where there are two people living and she did not understand why when it was done last year.

Supervisor Youmans stated that it has always been done that way and it depends on how many units each business is being charged.

Ms. Pasquini inquired as to if they are being charged by bathrooms or by units.

Supervisor Youmans stated that it is units and added that he believes the way units were determined in some cases was by how many bathrooms they had and in other cases like Nolan's where he gets charged two units but only has one bathroom. He added that the way that it was explained to him is that there is the retail propane business with the trucks that deliver and then there is the storefront as well and all along he has been charged two units. He continued by saying that it has been done on a case by case basis, town-wide probably ever since the Town has been billing for sewer, which in his mind does not make a lot of sense and meters is the smarter way to go.

Ms. Pasquini stated that years ago some of them did have been meters and a lot of them were ripped down with snow and different things because they were so old. She added that she believes it would be the way to go because she knows residents that fill their pool and she does not have a pool.

Supervisor Youmans thanked Ms. Pasquini and continued by asking if anyone else wished to comment, hearing none he stated that they would hold the Public Hearing open for a period of time and if no one else wished to comment they would close the Hearing.

Supervisor Youmans stated that there were not any additional comments and continued by offering a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

On motion of Supervisor Youmans, seconded by Councilman Touchette, the Public Hearing was adjourned.

VOTE – AYES 5 – NAYS 0 – SO MOVED

Time: 6:50pm

Respectfully Submitted,

APPROVED:

Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk