

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD  
PUBLIC HEARING**

**October 27, 2015**

A public hearing regarding the adoption of the preliminary budget of the Town for Kirkwood for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2016 including general town funds, highway funds, fire protection district funds and light district funds was held on October 27, 2015 at 6:18 PM at the Joseph A. Griffin Town Hall with Supervisor Gordon Kniffen presiding.

Present: Supervisor Gordon Kniffen  
Councilman Robert Weingartner  
Councilman Lewis Grubham  
Councilwoman Linda Yonchuk  
Councilman William Diffendorf, Jr.

Also Present: Oliver Blaise III, Deputy Town Attorney  
Gayle Diffendorf, Town Clerk  
Raymond Coolbaugh, Commissioner of Public Works

Supervisor Kniffen verified that he had affidavits of posting and publication in the Press & Sun Bulletin and The Country Courier.

Supervisor Kniffen explained there is a total spending increase of 3.9% in the 2016 budget and the amount of tax to be raised will increase 2.9%. The impact on the average taxpayer based on an assessment of \$75,000 will be \$2.78 a year or \$ .05 per week.

He stated the tax cap passed by the New York State Legislature will be met once again for the third year. The amount to be raised by taxes must stay at 2% or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. If the town does this rebate checks will be issued to taxpayers, with school tax rebates coming soon. A number of municipalities in Broome County, including Kirkwood, came up with an efficiency plan which is in addition to the tax cap. This will save another 1% so another rebate will be received in January.

Supervisor Kniffen added that although the amount to be raised by taxes will increase 2.9% the water and sewer budget, which has yet to be completed, will be rolled into that, so the total budget increase will be below 2% and the tax cap will be met.

Supervisor Kniffen stated this is the 14<sup>th</sup> year the Town Board has taken no salary increase.

Supervisor Kniffen said although some municipalities are not happy with the tax cap, this Board looks at it as a challenge and they take it seriously. One of the ways to keep meeting the cap is to cut services. He noted that they did this in the past by cutting hours in the Code Department and they discontinued brush pickup. They will not always meet the cap because if they continue to meet the cap and cut services, they won't be saving for the future. An example of this is by setting money aside for future highway projects. They feel this is good business and good planning for the people.

Supervisor Kniffen opened the hearing to public comments. Hearing none Supervisor Kniffen ordered the hearing closed at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle M. Diffendorf  
Town Clerk