

DATE OF MEETING: March 31, 2008

PLACE OF MEETING: Village Hall, Pawling, New York

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Robert Liffland  
Trustee Tracy Durkin  
Trustee Wayne Osborn  
Trustee Robert Murphy

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to close the regular session and go into the Public Hearing on the Tentative Budget for the fiscal year 2008-2009. **SECONDED** by Trustee Osborn. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

Mayor Liffland turned the meeting over to the Budget Officer Robert Murphy.

Trustee Murphy said the Tentative Budget for fiscal year 2008-2009 totaled \$1,235,746.00. He said the money needed to balance the budget through taxes was \$915,317.00 and money received from various revenues was \$320,429.00 which translated to a tax increase of 7.58%.

He said the revenue based on the Tentative Budget declined by about 11% from last year. He said the overall budget only increased by 1.7% but because of revenue shortfalls and new expenditures the Tentative Budget calls for a 7.58% tax increase.

Trustee Murphy stated he would go through the revenue first then the appropriations (see attached).

The major changes were:

- 7% decline in the Sales Tax line – so less sales tax anticipated for the upcoming year
- No estimated transfer from the Fund Balance
- No police fees which had a huge impact on the revenue source – the town opted out of the contract for 1/8<sup>th</sup> coverage from the Sheriff's Department
- Planning Board fees were lower than anticipated and the line was cut to \$10,000.00
- Interest and Earnings line went down due to lower interest rates
- Mortgage Tax was lowered because of the slow down in the housing industry and the real estate market
- Multi Modal grant was removed because the village did not anticipate any money from that source
- The FEMA line was reimbursement for work done due to the heavy rainfalls

Trustee Murphy said the assessed valuation dropped by about \$400,000.00 and was essentially the tax base. He said when the tax base shrinks there is a smaller pool to draw money from so everybody has to pay more. He said over the past years the assessed valuation typically increased by \$1M to \$1.5M which generated more money to

pay for services. Trustee Murphy said he did not think it would turn around any time soon. He said the Tentative Budget assumed a 4% salary increase except for the Board, the Justice and the Planning and ZBA members. He said the Tentative Budget also assumed keeping police coverage at the same amount and the Board was looking to hear from the public on what they wanted to do with that line item.

The major changes for the appropriations lines were:

- The buildings line item was lowered however Trustee Murphy asked the Board to increase it by \$10,000.00 due to needed roof repair and a new boiler
- Computers and Technology was lowered by \$5,000.00 because there are no anticipated large purchases
- Personal Services – Crossing Guard was lowered due to the elimination of a position
- Personal Services – Street Maintenance was increased to cover the 4% salary increase and overtime costs
- Contractual Expenses – Street Maintenance was reduced to offset the tax increase and the village receives enough money from CHIPs to do paving
- Contractual Expenses – Sidewalks was eliminated because the village was 99% done with sidewalk work and there was no grant money in the pipeline for sidewalk work. Trustee Murphy explained the work that needs to be done is minor and the Board anticipates finishing it sometime this budget year. He said to keep the increase down to a minimum he recommended zeroing the line out.
- Contractual Expenses – Street Cleaning was lowered because he felt comfortable with the services not being affected with less money
- Community Beautification was lowered by \$5,000.00 because any donation to the Chamber of Commerce would be cut out – the remaining \$5,000.00 was slated for pruning of the Memorial Avenue trees
- Drainage represents the MS4 program and had a huge affect on the budget because it is an unfunded mandate from the Federal Government. He said the Board had been expending money on the program for the past two years but did not have an appropriation line which drained the savings account. Trustee Murphy spoke with the engineer who gave a budget estimate of \$40,000.00 (some of which would be absorbed into the Highway Department's salary lines).

Trustee Murphy opened the topic up to the public.

Ms. Colette Zito, a resident of Tyrell Road, asked what expenses fell under the Other Economic Development line. Trustee Murphy said it was used for organizations that come before the Board asking for money to promote economic development. Trustee Murphy said it could be lowered by \$1,000.00 however it would not have a large impact on the taxes. Ms. Zito said perhaps chipping a little bit from each line would add up at the end. Trustee Murphy said he wanted to put together a realistic budget without cutting services.

Mr. Mike Gilles, a resident of Oak Shadow Lane, asked how the garbage was billed. He suggested that the village should try to collectively reduce the amount of items that are thrown away. The Board said recycling was encouraged which reduced the amount of trash.

Ms. Christine Walters, a resident of Rhone Ridge Drive, asked what the recycling costs were versus the regular refuse costs. The Board said the recycling costs were minimal within the Garbage Budget.

Mr. Harvey Mankofsky asked questions regarding the election process and if the Board was going to give the elections to the County Board of Elections. Trustee Murphy said he left the election line item in because even if it went to the County at some point it might not be during the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Mankofsky asked if the Trustees were trying to combine maintenance facilities with the town and school district. Mayor Liffland said the Board was pursuing a Shared Municipal Services Grant.

Mr. Fred Feindel, a resident of Coulter Avenue, said the sales tax is shared through the County and encouraging more retail businesses in village would lead to the collection of more taxes. Trustee Murphy said he thought the taxes were pooled at the County level and then divided up. Mr. Feindel said the village seemed to have very little control.

Mr. Earl Slocum, a resident of East Main Street, said he was totally opposed to the elections moving to November because it would be one more thing the village lost.

Ms. Janet Couch, a resident of Lakeside Drive, asked Mr. Slocum why he was against the election being moved to the County. Mr. Slocum said the village had given up too much already and would lose its independence. Ms. Verna Carey asked how many villages have elections in November. Trustee Murphy said there were not many.

Mayor Liffland stated the only other place the Board could cut would be on the Highway Department – by taking one employee away or having one part-time employee since they were not handling water any more.

Trustee Murphy said it would be a savings, but even though they were not doing a lot of water they hadn't been for a couple of years and the department was still stretched too far. Mayor Liffland said he was throwing the idea out for discussion. Trustee Murphy said people are typically laid off because work is slow and if anything the highway department's work has increased. Trustee Durkin said the crew was small and with vacations it stressed them even more. She said one of the biggest reasons for a village government was for all the service the village provides and more and more of the money the village has to spend goes to programs that the public does not see. Trustee Durkin said the Street Department was a municipal service that people do see and do benefit from. She said she saw the Mayor's point but would hesitate to cut a man.

Ms. Zito suggested using flexible hours for a part-timer. Mayor Liffland said it would cut benefits. Trustee Durkin said it was not that the work was flexible and that the street Department was working at 100%. Trustee Osborn said it takes all the guys to do garbage. He said there are 5 guys on the crew and 5 vehicles for snow removal. Trustee Osborn stated that part-timers cannot work overtime.

Mr. Slocum stated he agreed with Trustee Murphy, Trustee Durkin and Trustee Osborn. He said it would be a disaster to cut anyone from the Highway Department. Mr. Gilles agreed with Mr. Slocum.

Trustee Murphy went over the Police Coverage Chart (see attached).

Mayor Liffland stated he was in favor of increasing the police line to \$300,000 however he wanted to get input from the public.

Mr. Gilles asked if there was an increase in crime. Mayor Liffland said there was. Mr. Gilles asked if there were statistics available. Mayor Liffland said there were from the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Slocum said the village was not the crime ridden community that everybody thought. He said he found the extra \$100,000 to be a lot – his own tax bill would go up \$174 a year with the 19% increase.

Ms. Elly Viola, a resident of Townsend Boulevard, asked a few questions regarding the chart.

Ms. Zito said with the recent rise in crime was there any state law that mandated that as a community falls under an umbrella of a couple of escalated crimes that at no additional cost that the municipality would start to receive state police coverage at no additional cost. Mayor Liffland said it was done in zones. Ms. Zito said even though there was an increase in crimes. Mayor Liffland said not that he knew of. Ms. Zito asked if the village could go to neighboring communities to share costs and services or was the village prohibited by law from doing that. Trustee Durkin said the car would still be in another community and the purpose of buying the service of dedicated patrols in the village was to have the car at the ready. There was discussion on the zones for the patrol cars.

Mr. Gilles asked what the concerns were and what did the Board hear from the officers. Mayor Liffland said he thought they had an obligation as elected officials to promote the safety and welfare of the community. Mr. Gilles asked what concerns the officers were sharing. Mayor Liffland answered that crime had increased. Mr. Gilles asked if they thought increasing patrols would decrease the crime rate. Mayor Liffland said yes because statistics show that presence alone deters crime. Mr. Feindel challenged the Mayor and said the FBI did studies that showed the presence of police did not deter certain crimes. Trustee Murphy said it was psychological and that people would feel safer with more patrols. Trustee Durkin said patrols do deter crimes of opportunity however if someone is determined to commit a crime they would get around patrols. She said the public had to make itself more aware.

Trustee Durkin said the village was already receiving 1/8<sup>th</sup> more coverage because the patrols no longer went into the town. She said she recognized that the Board should spend a little more, however the Board might want to build the line up in increments. She suggested going to \$250,000 this year and add a little more next year.

Mayor Liffland said everyone was there to work together and he appreciated everyone being at the meeting.

Mr. Feindel said he understood the village patrol would have to go to an accident on Route 22 and leave the village using the village's money.

Ms. Carey commended the Board on their work. She said she felt the Sheriff's Department was behind the village and was happy with the police coverage as is. Ms. Carey said neighborhood watches would be a good thing.

Ms. Couch said she never felt any anxiety living in the village and was secure with the patrol at \$200,000. She said an 11.76% increase for an additional 5 hours of coverage does not reconcile itself. Ms. Couch said people must be aware.

Mr. Gilles commented the Board was talking about prevention versus apprehension. He suggested committing financially to create watches.

Mayor Liffland said the cost for the police patrol also included administrative fees and he was trying to have the fees removed to free up more money for patrols.

Trustee Murphy stated the line item had not been increased in years.

Ms. Carey said Trustee Murphy did a wonderful job on the budget.

Ms. Walters said everyone was in support of a watch but nobody does it. She stated she felt more comfort with increasing the coverage. She asked what the Sheriff's Department thought was sufficient coverage or if they could offer guidelines for what the village needed. Trustee Murphy said it was ultimately a local issue and would be a hard question for the Sheriff's Department to answer. Ms. Walters asked Trustee Murphy what his take was on the issue.

Trustee Murphy said he thought the \$100,000 was too much but it did need to be increased. He said he would not go higher than a \$50,000 increase.

Mr. Gilles asked if there were different officers everyday. Mayor Liffland responded it depended on the schedule and what officers signed up to work the village. He said they try to keep the same officers as much as possible. Mr. Gilles said it would be good to have consistent officers so they get to know the village and he asked if the village could ask for that. Mayor Liffland said that with the union it was not possible to request officers. Trustee Murphy explained the Board tried to make shorter shifts to attract the part timers. Mayor Liffland said he was looking into having the police station at the Village Hall become an assigned substation which would provide more police traffic in the village because officers would need to sign in and sign out at the substation.

There was more discussion about a neighborhood watch program.

Mr. Jim Greges, a resident of Fairway Drive and an employee of the Village Highway Department, stated he suggested against cutting a man from the Highway Department because they were stretched pretty thin. He said the Board needed to keep the younger guys so they would be able to take over for the older guys.

Mayor Liffland said he would compromise to make the police line \$250,000 and to leave the Highway Department as is because the people were not in favor of any cuts.

Trustee Durkin said her maximum figure would be \$250,000 or minimally \$225,000 for the police line because the Board would also be adding \$10,000 to the buildings line for the roof repairs.

Trustee Osborn said he was in favor of increasing the police line to \$250,000.

Trustee Murphy asked Ms. Zito for her thoughts since she would be the newest member of the Board.

Ms. Zito said the Board should definitely not touch the Highway. She said she agreed with the Board that the police line should not go higher than \$250,000 and that anywhere between \$225,000 and \$250,000 was sufficient. Ms. Zito said she liked what Trustee Durkin said about gradually increasing the police line and if the Board thought \$250,000 was the number she agreed. She stated what would compliment that would be preventive measures throughout the community.

Mr. Gilles commented that the salary increases of the police officers should be built into the budget every year. Trustee Murphy agreed.

Ms. Loretta Eastwood, a resident of Baxter Road, said the Board should raise the police line to \$250,000 because there was a rise in crime and the increase in patrols might bring the rate down. She said seeing the patrol car gave her a sense of safety.

Dr. Noel Ortega, a resident of Townsend Boulevard, asked how many officers the \$250,000 would get the village. Mayor Liffland said the Board would have to take the \$250,000 and try to split it up into 3 shifts and then see what coverage the village would get. Mayor Liffland said he would work with the Sheriff's Department when setting up the 3 shifts.

Mr. Slocum said the Board made a great compromise and he was happy they did not cut the Highway Department. He said all the Board members deserved a lot of credit and he thanked them.

Mr. Feindel said he was happy with the compromise.

Trustee Murphy asked if the Board was okay with raising the buildings line by \$10,000. Mayor Liffland said he felt the Board had an obligation to fix it.

**MOTION** by Trustee Osborn to close the Public Hearing and return to regular session. **SECONDED** by Trustee Durkin. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Murphy to raise the Building line by \$10,000 to make it \$50,000. **SECONDED** by Trustee Durkin. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Osborn to raise the Police line from \$200,000 to \$250,000. **SECONDED** by Trustee Murphy. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

The Board decided to vote on the budget on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Liffland reported that the boiler was leaking and needed to be replaced. He said two quotes were received:

Bottini Fuel	\$12,985.00
C&R Heating, Cooling & Plumbing	\$12,780.00.

There was discussion on the two boilers.

**MOTION** by Trustee Murphy to go with the proposal from C&R Heating for the boiler and automatic control in the amount of \$12,780.00. **SECONDED** by Trustee Durkin. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to approve the adjustment to Water Account #072A in the amount of \$58.22 due to a high computer estimate. **SECONDED** by Trustee Osborn. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to approve the Triathlon for May 31, 2008. **SECONDED** by Trustee Osborn. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Osborn to approve the minutes from December 17, 2007, December 26, 2007, January 7, 2008, January 10, 2008, January 28, 2008 and February 4, 2008. **SECONDED** by Trustee Durkin. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

#### **Public Comment**

Mr. Slocum said he still wanted the stop sign removed at Charles Colman and Willets.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 P.M. and go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel. **SECONDED** by Trustee Murphy. There was no discussion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to close Executive Session and return to regular session. **SECONDED** by Trustee Osborn. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to hire Rui Arraino as part-time Building Inspector at a rate of \$20.00 an hour. **SECONDED** by Trustee Osborn. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

**MOTION** by Trustee Durkin to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 P.M. **SECONDED** by Trustee Murphy. There was no discussion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

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Village Clerk

