

2025 Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ballston Spa., NY held on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024.

Present: Mayor Rossi, Trustee Price-Bush, Trustee Baskin, Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, Trustee Raymond, Village Treasurer Melissa McCann.

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Pledge to the Flag
- 3) Executive Session

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez , seconded by Trustee Price-Bush to enter Executive Session.

#### Motion Passed

The Village Board returned from Executive Session at 7:28 pm. With no action being taken.

#### 4) Budget Workshop:

Mayor Rossi opened the floor to the Trustees to discuss the 2025 Budget.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez started with her issues. One, with the Village Committee on the Arts and their funding from Saratoga Arts. Trustee VanDeinse-Perez clarified that the Committee is looking to subsidize their award from Saratoga Arts. Second, that they are willing to forgo their second set of banners to help defray costs.

Discussion took place about the clarification of the budget request from the Committee on the Arts.

The Conversation moved to the Historic District Commission and their request for \$1500.00. \$1000.00 at first and \$500.00 in addition. It's for District signage.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez suggested increasing the Farmers Market funding to \$1000.00 for Marketing.

Trustee Baskin questioned \$9000.00 for the Library. Mayor Rossi explained that the Library didn't ask for any funds. Trustee Baskin was shocked. Trustee Baskin was uncomfortable with the lack of requests from the Library.

Trustee Raymond questioned the \$360,000 in the budget since the actual amount of the sale is \$435,000.00. Mayor Rossi and Treasurer McCann explained the \$75000.00 that does not need to be highlighted in the 2025 budget,

Trustee Raymond asked about the expenses of adding two additional full-time police officers. Mayor Rossi explained that with the retirement of two full-time police officers the costs will offset. The Village is trying to rectify the issues now and into the future while ensuring public safety and officer safety.

Trustee Baskin asked about the water rate increase and the future of the water numbers in the budget.

Mayor Rossi read from his notes in response to Liz Kormos's budget opinion paper on the Tentative Budget. "The \$75,000 increase in revenue EXPECTATIONS is because the projection of the second half of FY24 water payments suggests the 5% increase helped jump revenues a little more than expected. The only thing reflected currently in the Budget is the 3.25% increase, NOT 8%, which was only recently endorsed by the Revenue Advisory Committee. A change to the Tentative Budget before approval of the Final Budget will likely add the additional water revenue for an 8% increase, and a matching entry to show the move of that money directly to the system-wide water infrastructure reserve account scheduled to be proposed Monday. This has no overall effect on anything already budgeted."

Trustee Raymond questions the way in which the Village will pay for the Water Tower. Mayor Rossi explained; the Village bond payments may be due right away or not. The likelihood is that the Village is going to bond for more than John Street Tower to have money for the other 2 towers, but that means the Village would have money to pay out loan for the first payment it became due in fiscal year 25. So, it's a capital project.

Mayor Rossi went into an explanation of how that would work.

Mayor Rossi explained with respect to USDA equipment, we probably will not get the last PCI equipment in time for first came to be due in 2025 fiscal year because the first payment is due 6 months after closing blown and it's an interest-only payment for that first payment.

Trustee Raymond asked about the 9% increase in expenditures and the 7% increase in revenues and asked about the 2% gap. Mayor Rossi replied by quoting himself again; "It is clearly stated in the Tentative Budget transmittal memorandum that over \$520,000 of the expenditures are carry-over expenditures with money being rolled over from FY24 to FY25 in the General Fund. That means that only \$62,874.37 is excess spending, which is equivalent to about a 1% increase in budgeted expenditures between FY24 and FY25. You also seem to forget that over \$300,000 was allocated to come out of the Fund Balance in FY24 for special projects. None of that \$300,000 was allocated out of the Fund Balance. The allocation out of Fund Balance for FY25 is based on rolled-over money, meaning we did a good job in FY24 avoiding the unnecessary use of pre-existing Fund Balance money."

Trustee Baskin inquired into the rollover of the \$9000.00 for the Bird House program. Mayor Rossi explained that the \$9000.00 would be put towards the replacement program for the Bird House program.

A spirited discussion ensued over whether to have a replacement program at all.

Trustee Baskin asked about the sewer repair in Wiswall. Mayor Rossi answered that that project was being lumped into a Capital Project.

A conversation was had as to what was being done to make that fix.

Trustee Baskin asked about the increase in Sewer. Mayor Rossi read his quote from the Liz Kormos Budget memo addressing this issue: “Unfortunately, sewer revenues fell a little short of expectations last year. The amount reflected as budgeted for FY25 is 5% greater than the PROJECTED FY24 total. In a similar manner, the 3% excess sewer revenue for an 8% total increase will be placed in a Sewer contingency line until the Board decides what to do with the excess (reserve account, etc.).”

Trustee Raymond questioned the EML Budget. Mayor Rossi explained that the only thing they are asking is for the parking lot to be resurfaced.

Trustee Raymond questioned the bids that came in for the Union sidewalk issue.

A conversation ensued.

Trustee Raymond requested that the Trustees get the bidding paperwork.

The conversation continued about thickness.

Trustee Baskin stated the Fire Department was way over budget. Mayor Rossi disagreed.

The conversation about the Fire Department budget continued.

Trustee Baskin asked about the Family Fun Day budget. He stated he does not feel they need any more money than they got last year.

Mayor Rossi explained that he did not give Family Fun Day everything they requested but did increase their budget.

Trustee Raymond stated that he does not feel they need as much money as they are asking for since they are a 1-day event.

Trustee Baskin questioned the money for a Lawyer in Zoning.

Mayor Rossi explained that the Village has a Law Firm to handle local laws.

Trustee Baskin questioned matching grant funds.

Mayor Rossi explained that there is money in the Budget for matching grant funds.

A conversation ensued about the matching grants in and around the Village.

The concrete is 8 inches.

Trustee Baskin asked about stormwater.

Mayor Rossi stated the Village is beginning to work on the processes to address stormwater.

Trustee Baskin asked about the \$1000.00 for the Historic District.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez questioned the timing of the late budget request.

A conversation was had with a member of the Historic District Commission regarding their needs.

Trustee Baskin began a discussion about the Board of Trustees getting a 2% raise.

A discussion was had over the appropriateness of giving raises to the Board of Trustees.

Mayor Rossi asked if there were any closing thoughts:

Trustee Baskin stated he believes that the Task Force should be a full Village Committee.

Trustee Raymond agreed.

Mayor Rossi quoted his response to the Kormos budget opinion by stating that there are several portions of Celebrations that are NOT under the Task Force.

Trustee Baskin again asked again for them to be a full fledged Village committee.

A resident explained why the Task Force increased their budget request.

A conversation ensued over why the Arts Committee didn't take on the Replacement project.

Trustee Baskin stated he doesn't want to be "surprised" by the replacement project.

An argument began about the committee policy.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez tried to assuage the argument by stating Ray Otten, as their spokesperson, has been trying to keep the Board as informed as he can.

Trustee Raymond stated he thinks the Task Force should be a Village committee.

More argument was had over the subject.

Mayor Rossi stated there would be no additional meeting during the week.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Raymond to cancel the workshop Thursday, April 4th, special meeting.

Motion Passed

Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Raymond to adjourn at 9:13pm.

Motion Passed

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Moskowitz

Village Administrator