

DRAFT  
Village of Lansing

MINUTES of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lansing held on Monday, April 1, 2013, in the Village Office.

PRESENT: Mayor Donald Hartill; Trustees Lynn Leopold, Julie Baker, Patricia O'Rourke and John O'Neill; Clerk/Treasurer Jodi Dake; Attorney David Dubow; Planning Board Member Mario Tomei.

Mayor Hartill called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm and opened the public comment period. There were no comments.

Motion-To Close the Public Comment Period

Trustee Baker moved to close the public comment period. Trustee O'Neill seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Aye  
Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye

Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

The next item on the agenda was the Budget Public Hearing

Motion-To Open the Budget Public Hearing

Trustee Leopold moved to open the public hearing. Trustee O'Rourke seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Aye  
Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye

Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

A member of the public asked about itemizing youth programs. Hartill stated that the breakdown of this line item is for both the Recreation Partnership and Youth Commission programs. Pat O'Rourke has been monitoring things this year. There was uncertainty in the past but there has been much more open response to how these funds are being used. Pat stated that the Youth Board itemized everything and it is an ongoing monitoring process.

Hartill stated that he never bothered to read the information on the tax cap. Jodi did however find that the 2% increase is on the property tax amount and not on the property tax. The total assessment value for the Village has increased this year with BJ's being constructed. Hartill stated that Jodi keeps him honest. The proposed budget presented to the Trustees is a 7% increase to the property tax (A1001). To satisfy the tax cap limit we need to lower the tax rate. Unless the public objects the Mayor proposed that the actual tax rate be lowered from \$1.01 to \$.95 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The Mayor went on to explain that property tax is about a 1/3

of the Village's income. Our goal is to keep the total costs in control. The bid opening for the new village office is April 10<sup>th</sup> and we have adequate funds in reserve to cover the cost of the new building. In terms of other parts of the budget, we will be doing our usual road maintenance of approximately \$400,000. We maintain 4 miles of road by resurfacing or repairing base if needed. We try to resurface about 2 miles of road each year. This year we will do some preventative maintenance on N. Triphammer Rd. We are budgeting for 1 piece of equipment -- a loader, for salt loading and other uses. Our back hoe reach is not adequate. The loader is rather expensive but we plan to keep this piece of equipment for a long time. This budget gives the employees a 4% increase in salary, which is a little above average in the region. The Board feels this is justified due to the fact that the Village works with a small staff that works extremely hard. For health insurance, the Village is not in the Tompkins County Consortium because we have a better deal with BCBS.

The water and sewer funds are pass-through costs plus a maintenance cost. Bolton Point has increased its water rate from \$3.15 to \$4.00/1,000 gallons. For a long while SCLIWC was spending down their reserves and now the reserves are too small to sustain the lower rate. There is a water pipe that runs under Rt. 13 which the Commission also needs to go under with a pipe, so the cost in the budget is if we did the project alone, but trying to drill one large hole for both the Commission and Village will then save both entities money. The sewer rates reflect the current understanding, but the Village of Cayuga Heights is still working on their budget. If the cost increases we will have to increase our surcharge. The Mayor does not anticipate any major changes next year. The Mayor will be going to the NYCOM conference to argue against the tax cap next month.

In addition to the Property Tax Cap, the Constitutional Tax Limit Form is completed every year before the Budget can be approved and our percentage of tax limit exhausted is only 5%.

The Proposed Budget that was presented at the last meeting for this public hearing will now need further adjustments to meet the Tax Cap requirements set by the State Comptroller's Office. Back in 2012, the State Legislature enacted legislation that established a Property Tax Cap, which only allows for a 2% increase in the amount of property tax collected, not a 2% increase in the tax rate. The only way around this is to pass a law each year to override the Property Tax Cap. The Attorney, Mayor and Clerk have discussed the two following options of either passing a local law to allow the override of the tax levy limit established in general municipal law 3-C and keep the tax rate at \$1.01/1,000 of assessed value as previously proposed or lower the tax rate to \$.95/1,000 and take the extra \$28,587 out of the General Capital Reserve Fund which has sufficient funds.

To override the Tax Cap we would have to set a public hearing tonight for a Proposed Local Law to allow the override of the Tax Levy Limit for April 15<sup>th</sup>, advertise it in the paper and approve it before passing the budget on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

The other option, which seems to be the simplest, is to pass a resolution to change the following three line items and approve the Budget tonight.

#### General Revenue

- A1001 In the Proposed Budget the amount we had planned to collect was \$463,198-this is at a \$1.01/ \$1,000 of assessed value. The Mayor stated that when figuring the tax cap, the 2% increase that is allowed is on the total property tax amount not on the tax rate. Therefore, to meet the tax cap requirements the Mayor proposed that the tax rate be lowered to \$.95/\$1,000 of assessed value and the Our adjusted taxable value of \$458,612,224, the total to be collected would be \$435,554
- A1081 \$15,864-was figured using \$1.01/1,000 of assessed value so the adjusted value at \$.95/1,000 of assessed value would be \$14,922
- A2850 To offset this decrease in the tax rate, more money will be transferred from the General Capital Reserve. This increased this amount from \$156,047 to \$184,634. We have a healthy reserve so this has little effect on the Village.

There were no further comments from the public regarding the budget.

Motion-To Close the Budget Public Hearing

Trustee O'Rourke moved to close the public hearing. Trustee Leopold seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Aye  
Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye

Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

Dubow stated that procedurally the Board could not change the budget until after the public hearing because it was set as a tentative budget. We now have an opportunity to amend it and adopt the final budget tonight. Many municipalities pass a Local Law to override the tax cap as a precautionary measure. The Mayor entertained a motion to modify the tentative budget.

Resolution#5941-To Modify the Following Three Amounts in the Proposed Budget to Be: A1001-\$435,554  
A1081-\$14,922  
A2850-\$184,634

Trustee Baker moved this resolution. Trustee Leopold seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Aye  
Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye

Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

With this modified the budget rate is \$.95/1,000 of assessed value.

Resolution #5942-To Adopt the Modified 2013-14 Proposed Budget with the Adjustments From Resolution #5841 as the Official Budget for 2013-14

Trustee O'Rourke moved this resolution. Trustee Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Aye  
Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye

Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

The Mayor stated that the Village is in very good financial shape.

The amount of Real Property Tax that will be raised is \$435,554 and \$14,922 In Lieu of Taxes. Last year the amount raised in Real Property Tax was \$431,227. An amount of \$2,211,586 in appropriations is proposed for the General Fund. Last year appropriations were \$2,446,197. A special assessment of \$.04 per \$1,000 of assessed value and \$11.78 per unit is tentatively proposed for the Sewer Collector debt payment. These numbers may be adjusted slightly as the final numbers are being worked out with the Cherry Rd./Warren Rd. Sewer District. Copies of the budget will be available in the Village Office.

The next item on the agenda was to approve the minutes from March 14, 2013

Motion- To Approve the Minutes from March 14, 2013

Trustee Leopold moved to approve the minutes. Trustee O'Neill seconded the motion. A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Abstain  
Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye

Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

The next item on the agenda was to develop questions for the joint meeting that will be held with the Town of Lansing on April 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. The Mayor asked the Board what they would like to discuss at that joint meeting. One question to ask the Town Board is to pay attention to their zoning plans to be consistent with ours. Another may be the question of sewer development. We have participated in the Warren Road sewer extension. We have improved our infrastructure to accommodate this area, but do they plan on expanding that area. The Board would like to know how they see development of the southern end of the Town adjacent to the Village. Are their share services that would make sense? Because we get very few services from the Town, could we adjust what we pay or get enhanced services?

Lynn Leopold stated that the Town is looking at their Comprehensive Plan and the issue of greenways. We should look at both Greenway Plans and see how the two can be compatible.

The Mayor stated that the Town Highway Superintendent will be at the meeting and he thinks that John Courtney should also be there. Mayor Hartill feels that counsel for both municipalities

should also be present. We are also inviting Planning Board members to attend the meeting. Hartill feels it should be an interesting discussion.

Mario Tomei asked if some of this discussion can be related to the Comprehensive Plan. The Mayor stated that we still have to develop our questions. Tompkins County Planning has lots of census data and they have already done a lot of the work. In California they have a user friendly overlay for GIS information. We may also have this option soon. We still have to come to grips with the Comprehensive Plan. We have just finished budget and now it is time to focus on this. Jodi has found a RTF file of the Greenway Plan so that will also help. This can be combined with the Town's plan for greenways. Greenway development is at some level a part of the Comprehensive Plan. We need to update the Greenway Plan along with the Comprehensive Plan. Dan Veanor asked if we are coordinating more effectively because Jon Kanter is working with the Town of Lansing as well as being a member of the Village Planning Board. The Mayor feels that the hardest thing is developing questions for the survey and getting business input. It was asked if the Town and Village are going to do a survey together. Don stated that we will discuss this at the joint meeting. He feels that there is no need for a separate survey. SRI has given the Town a proposal to do a survey of 30 questions for \$8000 or 50 questions for \$10,000. The question is: What are adequate questions.

Dubow indicated that Jon Kanter had indicated that the Town wants to move faster than the Village, so the two municipalities need to talk about coordinating. The informal proposal that came to the Village was that there would be 30 questions that are the same. O'Neill stated that Kanter said a phone survey is one part and the website is another. Dan Veanor commented that the phone part is the scientific part. Hartill has looked at studies by that agency and you can get any answer you want by the way the questions are worded. Leopold thinks doing something is going to get people to talk about what they care about. Mario Tomei stated that the Planning Board thinks a phone survey would be the most affective. Leopold stated that we also need to hear from the business community.

Mayors Hartill stated that he attended City Common Council meeting because he was interested in the water situation. The meeting was a joint meeting between the Board of Public Works and Common Council. Ithaca's water plant has to be fixed under a consent order. There has been a discussion between building a new plant or joining Bolton Point. An engineering group has been looking at the problem and the final scenario recommended \$37 million to reconstruct the City plant. The City water rate is currently \$6.00/1000gallon. They projected the rate to be \$7.99 or \$8.88 if they join Bolton Point. Hartill explained the engineering analysis done by Town. Don will go to the Common Council meeting again on Wednesday. The Mayor feels it's a lost opportunity because the City Public Works Department wants their own plant.

The Mayor stated that the Shops at Ithaca Mall land swap and sidewalks are still up in the air and the direction is a positive one that will work out in the long run. The Mayor stated that the real question is where the sidewalk actually goes. The housing portion of the Lansing Meadows PDA is hung up on a wetland issue. He thinks we will end up with 24 senior units. The firehouse will be opening in May.

Agway - True Value opened today. Party City opens this weekend. JoAnn Fabrics will also open

this month. Lynn stated that she would like to have Ed Marc come to a meeting to talk about the Solar leasing program and what they have done. It was suggested that we have him come the last May meeting. Mayor Hartill stated that he would not be at the April 15 or the May 6<sup>th</sup> meetings. Lynn will not be at the May 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting. Julie stated that she will be in Texas for her son's graduation and will miss the May 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> meetings.

Lynn stated that Jim Orcutt didn't make it to Public Comment period and she asked if he could be heard. Jim feels we have a serious deer problem. He previously sent letter to the Board. Jim stated that deer congregate in his yard. He has picked up over 100 pounds of deer droppings in his yard. Deer eat everything. He feels we have reversed the normal ecology. There were 18 deer in his yard the other night. He feels we are looking at a real ecological problem. Deer are also a health hazard. Jim would like the Village to institute a program with NYS. He feels it should start at the local level.

Leopold stated that the Village is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of having a quiet bow season. This year we took out 75 deer. Each year we have been increasing the number of properties that have bow hunting. This year there was a new DEC program to extend the deer hunting season. Lynn stated that Bernd is very eager to talk to Jim. They are impressed with the Village of Lansing bow hunt. There are people in the Village that hate hunting. Every year we have passed a law to have hunting in the Village. There are areas that are densely populated where you can't hunt. Unfortunately, we can't hunt the Sundowns area. Lynn feels that the next step is to get a nuisance permit which would allow hunting from August to April.

Orcutt proposed that we go back to a dart gun. The problem with that is that you cannot eat the meat because of the hormones. Lynn stated that this is a tricky situation and deer are a true hazard. Lynn would like for Jim to have this conversation with Bernd. Lynn added that DEC recognizes the problem.

The Mayor stated that with the combination of bow hunt and cars, we took out about 100 deer this year. He stated that sharp shooting would initially clean out the deer, but 2 years later they would come back even more. You need a steady program where you keep them from growing. Jim thinks we need to address this problem. Deer change their behavior and stay in areas where we can't get them. Hunting is a big money maker for the State.

Mayor Hartill stated that if we went forward with a program in an area that is densely populated you would have the same problem as the Village of Cayuga Heights. The real problem is how to do this in a way that is politically acceptable and effective. One of the survey questions to be discussed as part of the Comprehensive Plan should be "Do we have a deer problem and what would you do about it?". The Board thanked Jim for his research.

Motion- To Adjourn

Trustee Leopold moved for adjournment. Trustee O'Rourke seconded the motion.  
A vote was taken:

Mayor Donald Hartill-Aye  
Trustee John O'Neill-Aye  
Trustee Patricia O'Rourke-Aye

Trustee Lynn Leopold-Aye  
Trustee Julie Baker-Aye

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Jodi Dake  
Clerk/Treasurer