

Present: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Andolina, Crooker, Hamilton, Karns, Riesman, Szekely, Attorney  
Gutenberg, Police Chief Boyce, Treasurer Silber, Clerk Mills  
Absent: Superintendent Cross, Asst Superintendent Frisbie, Fire Superintendent Tamborelle

Mayor Supron called the special budget meeting open at 7:04PM

Treasurer Silber discussed various line item changes within the tentative budget:

Recommendations:

A2665.000	Sale of Equipment	\$7500	
A1990.400	Special Contingency	\$112,324	
A3120.110	Police – Sworn	\$585,190	
A8160.200	Refuse – Equipment	\$22,000	(this is to correct a typo)
A9030.800	Emp Benefit – FICA	\$102,706	
Capital Fund to do Court renovations		\$75,000	(\$30,000 grant received)
From Surplus A Fund		\$360,000	
Transfer from General		\$75,000	(was \$15,000 for Court renovations)
Vlg Hall Cap Exp		\$60,000	(was \$0 – Court renovations)

Discussion: Treasurer Silber and Trustee Andolina went over the tentative budget in detail. The end result was a clear understanding that the majority of the budget (63%) addresses salary and benefits of the total operating general budget. Health insurance is more than half of benefits, and pension costs, which are increasing rapidly, are about one quarter of the benefits total. There are very few areas in the operating fund budgets where adjustments can be made. One suggestion was that the Police vehicles be kept longer. Cutting each department's budget in order to reduce tax increases would mean cutting public services.

Treasurer Silber pointed out that if you cut items from the budget for which State aid is received, the reduction is only 50% because matching funds are not received. Furthermore, the Village runs the risk of being eliminated from the State allocation.

Discussion continued with regard to moving employees to the Tompkins County Health Care Consortium plan as soon as possible; doing so by January 2012 will assure the earliest coverage. Moving the police sooner would be better; any questions of comparability may have to go to arbitration which will take time.

Public services in the Village could be reduced, such as brush removal, bulky trash pick up, sidewalk plowing. Eliminating such services will cause hardships, especially for elderly persons.

Future hires of Village employees and benefits are another area to look at. Retirement pension benefits are shifting from defined benefit payouts to defined contributions, such as 401K plans, in the private sector. Health insurance plans have increased employee cost sharing. The Village plan has a low deductible and no employee participation. The majority of the employees are included in a unionized contract and negotiating will not be an easy sell. Non-bargaining employee compensation and benefits are areas where the Village can set examples by making changes.

The tentative budget necessitates a 5% tax increase and the use of \$360,000 in surplus funds to meet projected expenses. The bulk of the budget increase is non-discretionary. Thus, a budget reduction means a reduction in services. Staffing costs mean raising taxes.

More information is needed regarding the legal requirements of union contract negotiation. The fundamental question is how to keep the Village solvent; continuing use of surplus is not an option.

A hard look at efficiency and working with fewer resources is necessary, including trimming services. What services are optional, what can be reduced or eliminated? The Department Heads should be asked to propose adjustments. Replacing equipment and vehicles on a rotating basis is standard practice. The longer you keep vehicles, the higher the maintenance costs.

The increase in the tax rate is 5.84%. For the owner of a single family home in the Village the average tax increase will be about \$97.00. The tentative budget revenue totals \$3,475,000, appropriated surplus totals \$360,000, contingency \$112,324, capital transfer \$75,000, operations from surplus \$172, 676.

Summary: we are faced with a need to raise taxes this year and begin now to strategize for next year's budget.

**Motion: Trustee Andolina**  
**Second: Trustee Karns**

**Resolution #6870** to approve the tentative budget and incorporated salary schedule for the Fiscal Year beginning June 1, 2011 as amended.

Discussion included enumerating the changes made in the tentative budget figures:

A2665.000 Sales of Equipment increase to \$7,500;  
A1990.400 Contingency increase to \$112,324;  
A3120.110 Police Personnel Sworn decrease to \$585,190;  
A8160.200 Refuse equipment increase to \$22,000;  
A9030.800 FICA decrease to \$102,706;  
A9554.900 Transfer to Capital increase to \$75,000 (Court project);  
H5021.000 transfer from General increase to \$60,000 (Court project);  
H1620.200 Village Hall Capital Expense increase to \$60,000.

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**

**Motion: Trustee Andolina**  
**Second: Trustee Hamilton**

**Resolution #6871** to establish a real property tax rate of \$5.84/M for a total levy of \$2,240,083.

Discussion: none

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**

**Motion: Trustee Andolina**

**Second: Trustee Karns**

**Resolution #6872** to establish that the Water Surcharge rate effective June 1, 2011 shall be 100%

Discussion: none

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina  
no nays or abstains Motion passed**

Ongoing Discussion on taxes:

While the Village tax is increasing to \$5.84/M, the County tax rate as of Jan 1, 2011 is \$6.48 per thousand, the Town of Ithaca tax rate as of Jan 1, 2011 is \$1.68 per thousand, and the fire tax rate for the Town of Ithaca is \$3.57 per thousand.

The Village has had the second lowest tax rate increases among local municipalities throughout the last decade. There have been structural shifts, changes in the types of services, changes in compensated structures and major changes in health costs; that has accounted for the increase in costs. Our rate of increase was mitigated by the development of Kendal because they are the largest Village taxpayer.

Road repair has changed. In prior years the budget carried \$100,000 – now the budget is \$200,000. A dramatic difference has been achieved in road repair by budgeting this figure, resurfacing one mile of Village road per annum and applying for and receiving State Highway Improvement funds (CHIPS). This means that road maintenance now conforms to a fixed schedule of paving with ongoing potholes repair as needed. There will be pressure this year due to increasing fuel cost and price of asphalt falling in line with the price of oil. Fuel delivery charges are incurred for stone and road salt delivery. The Village does not maintain the roads at Kendal, nor pick up trash there.

New Business

Chief Boyce would like the authorization to submit a grant for “Bunny Money” – a buckle up/seat belt use program that also targets aggressive driving and is intended to maximize child passenger safety. Securing such funding would provide funding for an officer on the road and target these items as a traffic enforcement tool at the expense of the State. Surcharges on the fines then accrue to the State to recoup the cost.

**Motion: Trustee Andolina**

**Second: Trustee Szekely**

**Resolution #6873** to authorize the Police Chief to submit the grant application to the State of New York.

Discussion: This grant provides \$3500 in monies. No matching funds. Good way to put an officer out in the public view.

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina  
no nays or abstains Motion passed**

**Motion: Trustee Hamilton**

**Second: Trustee Andolina**

**Resolution #6874** to authorize the Police Chief to hire Valerie Caward as a substitute crossing guard.

Discussion: The Police Chief has had the person approved through Civil Service and done a background check. There is no additional added expense. She will substitute when one of the other three crossing guards is unable.

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**

**Motion: Trustee Riesman**

**Second: Trustee Andolina**

**Resolution #6875** to authorize the Mayor to sign the license agreement with The Heights Café permitting road signs directing traffic to the restaurant to be located in the Village ROW.

Discussion: The cost of these signs will be the responsibility of The Heights Café owners.

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**

Other New Business

Trustee Szekely advised the Board to read the articles in the NYCOM bulletin about the Mayoral task force on state mandates and property tax relief.

Trustee Riesman spoke about the advisability of adopting a policy requiring the members appointed to the Village Planning Board and Zoning Board attend a minimally fixed percentage of meetings, possibly the members of Village advisory boards as well. To function with voting a quorum is necessary. NYCOM was contacted and indicated that this would be a good idea. The importance of meeting attendance needs to be stressed to prospective board members. It was asked – what happens if you do not attend these meetings? Do you get removed from the particular Board the person is serving on? Once answers to these questions are forthcoming, additions will be needed in the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals and Advisory Boards “job descriptions”. Attorney Gutenberger will provide a proposed local law for the next meeting.

There was an inquiry by someone (believed to be) within a unit of Cooperative Extension unit to put a link on the Village web site for a youth program. Given our current transition in computer support, the request was tabled for the time being.

Chief Boyce pointed out that the stop signs at the intersection of The Parkway and Northway are temporary for 120 days and will need to be evaluated and voted on within that period or removed. A public hearing is needed prior to approval and then, depending on the outcome, either the installation of permanent stop signs or removal of the temporary signs. May 9<sup>th</sup>, the next meeting, would be a good time to set up a resolution for public hearing. Attorney Gutenberger will research and prepare a proposed local law making the temporary signs permanent.

**Motion: Trustee Szekely**  
**Second: Trustee Hamilton**

**Resolution #6876** to enter into executive session for personnel issues and potential litigation issues at 8:30PM.

Discussion: none

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**

**Motion: Trustee Szekely**  
**Second: Trustee Hamilton**

**Resolution #6877** to exit out of executive session with no voting occurring at 9:14PM.

Discussion: none

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**

**Motion: Trustee Riesman**  
**Second: Trustee Andolina**

**Resolution #6878** to Adjourn meeting at 9:15PM.

Discussion: none

**Aye Votes: Mayor Supron, Trustees: Riesman, Szekely, Hamilton, Karns, Crooker, Andolina**  
**no nays or abstains Motion passed**