

VILLAGE OF CHATHAM BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
TRACY MEMORIAL HALL, 77 MAIN STREET, CHATHAM NY  
THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2013, 7:30 PM EDT

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Tom Curran called the meeting to order. Village Clerk Kathy Burke called the roll. Present: Mayor Curran, Trustee Lenore Packet, Trustee Jay Rippel, Trustee Adrienne Morrell, Trustee Mike Wollowitz and Treasurer Barbara Henry.

**Public Comment Period #1:**

Wayne Coe thanked the Board for all of the hard work put into preparing the budget. Very nice that tax rate has been reduced. Suggested to the Board that they become aware of consolidation issue and devaluation of Chatham Middle School as it affects property taxes in the Village. Said get educated and get involved. Stated that the School Board isn't taking much public comment on this issue, but it should. Closing Chatham Middle school will create a giant eye sore on Woodbridge Avenue. Thinks it is a terrible plan to close that building, not the elementary school building. He is doing what he can to sway people in the community. Urges all Trustees to talk to school board members about this issue.

**OLD BUSINESS - BUDGET**

Mayor Curran stated that he would like to have the budget approved tonight. Narratives will be approved at a later time. Stated that the narrative is useful in interpreting the budget, but is not necessary. Fund balances also need approval. There have been a number of workshops meetings about the budget and many comments received from the public. There have been lots of changes to his tentative budget, many conversations about the proposed reduction in the Police Department and money added to some areas. Changes were discussed.

Mayor Curran asked for a resolution to adopt budget. Trustee Packet and Trustee Rippel would like more discussion first. Trustee Rippel stated that the narrative does not match the numbers presented, fund balances don't match, water/sewer lines weren't available until last week, and water/sewer salary is off.

Trustee Packet stated that some numbers were off because they were coded wrong. Stated that accountants are aware of the discrepancies.

Trustee Rippel questions whether all of the numbers are correct. Questions how this budget could be approved when it includes numbers that are incorrect. Stated that nothing has been done to aid corrections.

Treasurer Henry stated that year-to-date numbers are included in the budget.

Trustee Packet stated that the numbers are not just made up.

Trustee Rippel is not convinced that the numbers are correct. Asked why the Board is receiving fund balances for the first time tonight. All information has not been correct or presented to the Board before this meeting tonight.

Mayor Curran stated that the information was sent out to all Board members via e-mail over the past weekend. The only feedback he received was from Treasurer Henry and Trustee Wollowitz.

Trustee Rippel stated that he saw conversation, not any changes in the document.

Trustee Packet stated that most items were agreed on in workshops, and Sickler & Torcia is working on corrections that need to be made.

Trustee Rippel questioned if Sickler & Torcia are worth the money they are being paid by the Village.

Trustee Packet stated that the Board is working with the information we have.

Trustee Rippel is concerned. Stated that putting garbage in to the budget, only gets garbage back out.

Mayor Curran state dthat the budget is like a road map to be followed. The A-Fund budget is very good. F- and G-Fund budgets need work by Sickler & Torcia. That work will not be completed before the budget needs to be adopted.

Trustee Morrell stated that overall numbers are consistent from year to year. They are never very far off.

Treasurer Henry stated that Department heads provided projected year numbers.

Mayor Curran understand Trustee Rippels concerns. Sickler & Torcia will be working on everything. Thinks A-Fund budget as presented is good.

Trustee Rippel stated that he is not convinced. This budget doesn't not match the NYCOM format for budgets.

Trustee Packet stated that last year's budget was set up this way as well. Stated that fund balances were listed separately, just like they are this year.

Trustee Packet asked Mayor Curran if he had anything else to change. Mayor Curran answered that all changes have been included and noted.

Resolution #205 to approve written proposed budget including fund balances as will be included.

*Resolution made by Trustee Packet, seconded by Trustee Morrell.*

Discussion of resolution:

Mayor Curran asked if the budget can be voted as a whole, or does each section need to be voted on individually. Trustee Wollowitz stated that as the resolution stands it would be for all. Trustee Morrell stated that there is no need to break it up into separate resolutions.

Trustee Wollowitz would like to address Trustee Rippels concersn. He agrees that it's unfortunate to have to vote on this budget while there are discrepancies. Some numbers may not be trustful. He is surprised that

accountants have not given more answers to the problems that have been presented. The only choice at this point is to vote to accept the best budget we have, or if no vote is taken then the tentative budget is automatically approved.

Mayor Curran stated that F- and G-Funds can be voted on separately. Trustee Morell stated there is no need to vote on them separately. Trustee Wollowitz stated that would be unnecessary, but thinks that Trustee Rippel raised legitimate and serious issues.

Trustee Rippel stated that he hopes that next year's budget has more due diligence. Would like to see fund balances included. State that it would also be nice to have in each department, instead of just totals. Asked if year-to-date totals are accurate. State that coding errors do not help.

Trustee Packet stated that all of the individual things have bogged down the process. Going forward, she would like to work with a better program. She hopes that Sickler Torcia will know more next year and have all of the problems completely worked out.

Trustee Rippel said he hopes to have some answers after a month.

Trustee Packet stated that all Trustees have worked hard and done due diligence as best as they can. There were many discussions. The numbers are close and there are no obvious huge discrepancies. There were no large changes in any area.

Mayor Curran stated that Treasurer Henry will have a better understanding after she has been here for a full year. Would like to incorporate NYCOM changes in next year's budget.

Treasurer Henry stated that a variance can be included in the year-to-date vs. the actual spent. This would help to determine if the Village is on track.

Trustee Wollowitz asked when discrepancies between budget and actual expenses would be determined. Treasurer Henry answered they would be determined by May 31, 2013.

Trustee Wollowitz suggested setting an official date to check budget and make changes as needed. Would suggest in about six (6) months.

Treasurer Henry stated that all funds start at a zero balance on June 1, 2013. She and the accountants will check everything each month after that.

Trustee Wollowitz would like to see changes made in the spread sheets. Asked if any columns can be consolidated. Mayor Curran, Trustee Morrell and Trustee Packet agree.

Trustee Morrell asked if the Village elections can be changed to the fall instead of during budget time. Stated that it is hard on new Trustees to deal with the budget right away.

Treasurer Henry stated that an audit will be done soon. Stated that everything needs to be fixed before the audit happens. Trustee Rippel asked who requested the audit. Treasurer Henry answered that the accountants requested that an audit be performed, then the results will be submitted to the State Comptrollers office.

Trustee Wollowitz asked all Trustees if they are agreed on last minutes changes. Trustee Packet stated that nothing has been changed at the last minute and that everyone seems comfortable with the changes being made to the Police Department.

Mayor Curran stated that the tax rate per 1,000 has dropped – there will be a 3.6% reduction in taxes.

Trustee Morrell asked if there would be two (2) resolutions: one for the budget and one for the tax rate. Mayor Curran answered no, because the tax rate is just informational.

Resolution #205 to approve written proposed budget including fund balances as will be included.

Total General Fund adopted budget is \$1,141,780.

Total anticipated revenues not from taxes is \$481,066

Tax levy is \$660,714

Tax rate is \$5.6390 per thousand

Sewer fund revenues are \$262,000

Sewer fund expenditures are \$301,187

Water fund revenues are \$269.621

Water fund expenditures are \$276,509

It is recognized that the water and sewer budgets are not balanced but they will be amended with the recalculation of new water and sewer rates.

*Resolution made by Trustee Packet, seconded by Trustee Morrell.*

*Finding of fact:*

*Trustee Morrell: AYE. This has been a difficult process with restrictions of tax caps and the economy. Have done the best job available.*

*Trustee Rippel: NO. From the beginning, the numbers have not been complete, and still aren't. This is not the best budget that can be given to Village residents.*

*Trustee Packet: AYE.*

*Trustee Wollowitz: AYE.*

*Mayor Curran: AYE. Thankful for all of the work put in by everyone.*

*Pleased to have a 3.6% tax reduction. Good to have money put into improvements around the Village.*

**Public Comment Period #2: no comments.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Trustee Wollowitz showed a temporary Village website he designed. Would suggest posting minutes, budget info and comments from the Mayor on this site until the new site is up and running. ( [www.chathaminfo.blogspot.com](http://www.chathaminfo.blogspot.com) )

Trustee Packet if anyone would be able to get on the site. Trustee Wollowitz answered yes.

Mayor Curran stated that it could be confusing when the permanent site is back up and running.

Trustee Wollowitz thinks six (6) months is too long to wait for the permanent site. Treasurer Henry stated that the new site would be up in a matter of weeks, not months. Trustee Wollowitz said he would do this temporary site if it is needed, if it looks like the new site is taking too long. Treasurer Henry stated

that it might be good to have in the interim for any documents that are requested.

Trustee Rippel asked if Trustee Wollowitz would dismantle this site when the new site is complete. Trustee Wollowitz answered yes, and stated that it is just a blog.

*Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:48 pm made by Trustee Morrell, seconded by Trustee Packet. Approved by all.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Burke  
Village Clerk