

## Sloatsburg Village Board

### Public Hearing Sloatsburg Tentative Budget – November 10, 2008

The Public Hearing on the 2009 Tentative Budget was called to order at 7:10 PM by the Honorable Carl S. Wright, Mayor in the Conference Room of the Sloatsburg Municipal Building, 96 Orange Turnpike, Sloatsburg, New York.

Trustees Present - J. Mark Reimer  
Barbara Berntsen  
John Bonkoski  
Brian Nugent

Village Clerk & Treasurer – Thomas F. Bollatto, Jr. – Present

Interested Citizens Attending: Steve Straubinger, Lynn DelDuca, John Kwasnicki, Laurie Smyla, Raymond Clark, Lenore Clark, Marino Fontana, David Veraja

Pledge to Flag – J. Mark Reimer

Mayor Wright extended congratulations to Tom McCarren for his induction into the Suffern High School Hall of Fame. He also extended congratulations to Thomas Albrecht on his achievements with the Suffern High School Volleyball Team.

Mayor Wright then provided comments regarding a building permit issued to Mr. Ray Clark. Mayor Wright recommended, and the Clark's agreed, that they pay the \$400.00 fee and the Board will issue a refund. He indicated that no one is at fault. Mayor Wright also recommended the same action for Mr. and Mrs. Chris DiBernardi in the amount of \$570.00.

Mayor Wright then read the following opening statement:

“I wish to express sincere thanks and appreciation to the Village Clerk, the Deputy Village Clerk, the auditors and the Village staff for their involvement in assembling the information necessary to present next year's budget. Their competency, dedication and integrity enable us all to have a financial document free from political considerations.

In this critical financial time, strong dynamic and extraordinary action must be taken to protect and assist the taxpayer during this crisis. When projected revenues began to decline, a 6% reduction in spending was implemented. The Village of Sloatsburg has received accolades for its fast and appropriate response to the financial situation of the past several months by the Moody Investment Service.

*“The Village quickly enacted 6% spending reduction in order to offset the revenue loss. Given the Village's responsive fiscal management, Moody's expects that officials will continue to act quickly to any challenges . . .”*

Because revenues are declining and costs are increasing, it necessitates budget reductions. The 2009 Tentative Budget calls for the following:

- Reduction in spending of \$280,022 – 10% decrease
- Reduction in Debt Principle of \$301,925 – 45% decrease
- Reduction in Debt Interest of \$28,847.00 – 21% decrease

These actions have been necessitated because of the following decrease in revenue:

- Sales tax – 18%
- Interest – 40%
- Mortgage Tax – 29%
- Building Department – 54%

When it appeared there was a possibility that 90 homes would be built on Liberty Rock, the Building Department was expanded to meet the challenge of that development. This property is now parkland and with the falling market people are not renegotiating their mortgages nor building houses. Therefore, it is appropriate and necessary that the funding for this department be reduced accordingly.

The Village is also facing increased costs in a number of areas. Because of these factors, it is prudent that the financial well being of all of our residents be protected. By reducing spending and our bonded indebtedness, the tentative proposed tax rate increase for 2009 is 2.3%. In the coming weeks we will all increase our efforts to reduce it further. Two years ago we were successful in cutting the rate and will make every effort to do so again.”

Mayor Wright noted the public announcement appeared in the newspaper. He proceeded to review the itemized 2009 Tentative Budget and reviewed individual budget lines per departments.

John Kwasnicki asked about the \$61,000.00 line under Miscellaneous. Thomas Bollatto responded that \$60,000.00 comes from the agreement from Tuxedo Reserve and \$1,000.00 comes from different sources that are not classified. John Kwasnicki commented that Tuxedo Reserve should have a line item and referred to the agreement. He then submitted a portion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement dated November 2008 regarding the issue of the \$60,000 payment to Sloatsburg.

Marino Fontana asked for clarification regarding the appropriated surplus. Mayor Wright responded with the State Law requirements.

Laurie Smyla asked what part of the budget pays for various events and parties throughout the year. Mayor Wright responded that some money comes from donations and some from the contract, which is permitted by law. Mrs. Smyla then asked about the light at the intersection of Eagle Valley Road and Route 17. Mayor Wright responded that the cost of the light is approximately \$360,000.00 which has come from **borrowing and** grants through Senator Morahan’s office and will be installed shortly.

Marino Fontana asked about serial bonds. Thomas Bollatto responded that they consolidated all of the short term bonds into one issue and were able to reduce the principle payment for the first year; they also paid off the parking lot bond with CHIPS Capital Funds.

John Kwasnicki then provided his comments about Liberty Rock.

Mayor Wright asked for any other comments or questions about the budget. The Public Hearing will remain open on the Tentative Budget and continue at the next regular Village Board meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

Marino Fontana asked if changes will be submitted and the budget adopted on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Wright indicated they are hoping for no tax increase.

*On a motion by Trustee Nugent, seconded by Trustee Reimer to adjourn the Public Hearing on 2009 Tentative Budget to November 18, 2008. All in favor, motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas F. Bollatto, Jr.  
Village Clerk & Treasurer

TFB:ds