

A Public Hearing on the Budget was held on Monday, April 11, 2011 at the Municipal Building, 1 Van Wyck Street, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

The following officials were present:

Mayor Wiegman  
Treasurer Bullock  
Manager Zambrano

Trustee Murtaugh  
Trustee Schmidt  
Trustee Gallelli  
Trustee Raskob

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Wiegman called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm. everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010-2011.  
Village Manager Zambrano stated that the tentative budget was filed according to New York State Law and that the budget as presented to the Village Board has a proposed 6.74% percent increase. He recounted the procedures prior to his presenting the budget; there have been a number of work sessions already and another will follow this meeting.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE BUDGET:

Treasurer Bullock gave a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed 2011-12 budget. She presented the Board with corresponding hand-outs

3. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC COMMENT:

a) Brian Aspinwall, 24 Park Trail asked what the items are in the capital fund. Ms. Bullock asked if he had a question about a specific item. Mr. Aspinwall replied that he was looking at the fire dept equipment. Ms. Bullock replied that some of the funds are for the chief's car and assorted items. Trustee Murtaugh added that capital projects are long term projects and the chief's car is a big item, but we will have it for 10 years. Mr. Aspinwall stated that he understands because it is a capital item, it doesn't mean it will be funded but could come out of the reserve fund. Village Manager Zambrano replied that recommendations are made for items that have long life; we do long term bonds and those with a 5-7 year life we do short term finance or take out of reserves. Trustee Murtaugh stated that an item may not be funded at all if we decide it should be put off; all items are still under discussion. Trustee Gallelli stated that if this capital budget is to be approved, the bonding will occur next year and will not be in the 2011-12 budgets. Mayor Wiegman added that we do retire prior debt which makes room for new payment obligations.

b) Bob Wintermeier, 43 Radnor Ave., stated that it was mentioned tonight that for every 4 million dollars we borrow, we end up with \$73,000 that we pay off. Mayor Wiegman corrected that if we borrow 1 million for 20 years at 4%, approximately \$73,000 is the principal interest payment. Mr. Wintermeier referred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> page, it shows an appropriated fund balance of \$500,000 and an appropriated retirement reserve of \$150,000 in order to reduce the taxpayers tax for 2011-12; he thinks the \$150,000 was only done last year. Mayor Wiegman stated that this has been done frequently in the last several years. Mr. Wintermeier stated that last year the

amount taken out of the fund balance ran \$400,000 to \$500,000 and normally it has been around \$250,000. Mayor Wiegman replied that the amount taken out during 2001-2005 was smaller, but the total budget was 30% smaller as well. Mr. Wintermeier stated that the Moody's rating shows debt service shows around 17 million dollars and asked what our total debt is. Village Manager Zambrano replied that it is around 22 million dollars for 2011-12. Mr. Wintermeier asked if some of the money we are trying to obtain is to reduce or refinance some of the loans. Treasurer Bullock replied that this has been done already.

c) Ginny Calcutti, 19 Hunter Place, stated that she saw information in the paper about the compensation for the mayor and trustees and asked how that works. Mayor Wiegman replied that there is a budget item for compensation for mayor and trustees and that amount has not changed for about 8 or 9 years. Ms. Calcutti asked if they get any benefits from the Village like health insurance. Mayor Wiegman replied that they are eligible for the retirement plan, but no pension retirement benefits or health care benefits. Village Manager Zambrano added that the Board is not entitled to benefits because they are part time; they can opt to pay into it but would have to pay full costs. Ms. Calcutti stated that she would like to raise the compensation for the mayor and trustees. Trustee Gallelli stated that a sitting board cannot raise their own salaries; they can pass a resolution that would have affect for future boards. Village Manager Zambrano added that if the board wants to change salaries, a law must be written and the law changed and it must be for a future boards. Ms. Calcutti stated that she saw that the Village is asking for bids for welding for DPW and for someone to trim and remove trees; she is concerned why we are not doing this ourselves. Village Manager Zambrano responded that any time we are spending a certain amount of money, it must go out to bid, it does not mean we will be using this money, but we needed to do the appropriate publishing to be ahead of the game so when these expenses come up, we will be ready; the Village does some tree work and this RFP is for an as-needed basis. Trustee Murtaugh added that the tree surgeons have a level of expertise that we do not have, the day to day operations of the Village go on if it is in the budget or not, but there is a need to be prepared. Trustee Schmidt stated that a lot of the tree trimming is done in house, but we cannot keep up with everything; if there is a storm, we would have to call in someone; we've been doing this outside contracting for several years. DPW Superintendent Gennarelli stated that the two contracts out there now are rebids; the existing contracts were bid 4 years ago and are due to be rebid; we have been doing this quite a long time; the welding is for work we cannot do in house as is the tree removals. Ms. Calcutti questioned what constitutes the senior citizens budget of \$86,000. Trustee Gallelli replied that it is for salaries, activities, trips (transportation), and they do meet once a week. Ms. Calcutti questioned the increases in the Fire Dept. budget which is a \$40,000 increase from last year and includes buildings and grounds maintenance. Village Manager Zambrano replied that some of the fire buildings need maintenance. Mayor Wiegman added that currently there is a door that needs to be substantially repaired and some other maintenance as needed. Trustee Schmidt added that some of it is for contractors, such as lighting, air conditioning, elevators, if our staff does work on that facility, it has to be billed to that department and we have do have three firehouses. Ms. Calcutti asked about the animal control contractual expense. Village Manager Zambrano replied that this is for SPCA and it is an ongoing contract. Ms. Calcutti questions the \$6,000 for the Registrar of Vital Statistics and is if that isn't a part of the Village Clerk's duties. Mayor Wiegman replied that we must maintain

this on a separate line. Village Manager Zambrano added that there are also other expenses for when an activity occurs such as copying and paperwork which needs to be done as needed.

c) Ray Fortini, 21 Wolf Road, asked if there is anything in this budget that will set us up to fix the brown water and if anything is going to be done for the future. Village Manager Zambrano replied that the Capital budget has some things proposed such as a general village-wide system map of the infrastructure; Cook Lane and Wolf Road should have some engineering done to see if we can hook up to the main water lines on Albany Post Road. Mr. Fortini asked what the time frame is. Trustee Murtaugh replied that it should be in 2013-2014 and \$1 million is estimated; the Truesdale area is on the same time table. Mr. Fortini asked if the additives were done, would that resolve particles that are in the water. Mayor Wiegman replied that he defers that question to Water Dept.; the staff has proposed a computer model of our water system to try out sizes of pipes, etc., theoretically, before it was put in the ground and that would benefit all the water projects; however, that is a 6 figure project. Mr. Fortini asked if there are any health issues we need to worry about and is the water tested. Village Manager Zambrano replied that the water is tested throughout the village; we collect it and send it to an independent lab. Mr. Fortini asked if Wolf Rd & Cook Lane water could be tested. Trustee Murtaugh added that 2013-14 sounds like a long way off, but it is not an insignificant item.

d) Brian Aspinwall asked what the process for approving something is. Trustee Gallelli replied that they usually make a presentation and back it up with good reasons why it would be cost effective, the life time, will it save us money and how to create efficiencies in the department before we accept a recommendation. Trustee Murtaugh added that most of the department lines have gone flat or gone down, the budget as a whole is not being driven up by departments, but state requirements for funding; every department head has worked hard to keep their budget flat or reduce it; some employees have not received a raise in two years; most of increases are things we cannot easily control; the needs and the must haves are going into this budget. Mayor Wiegman added that we do have an internal staff process to prepare the next years budget; we have a mid-year review; the staff's proposed budget has never been the same as the final budget; they go through line by line; priorities are what the Board lays out and the staff has to execute. Village Manager Zambrano added that for appropriations of capital investments in the budget, the Board passes a resolution, it is published and those requests are subject to permissive referendum; the public has the ability to say this is not what they want; we have not brought anything to board that was not necessary; 99% is for required infrastructure repairs. Trustee Schmidt stated that a lot of this is for catch-up for equipment which is old such as pipes that are rusting, technology has changed and we are now struck doing major projects. He questioned if there is something we can do on Wolf Road now that we have the fire hydrant.

e) Phyllis Morrow, 61 Nordica Drive, asked how to read this document especially #E6, the Treasurer's appropriations for personnel services; \$116,680 is 2 months shy of complete year. Village Manager Zambrano replied that it is for 7 months, June 1st thru May 31<sup>st</sup> for the current fiscal year. Ms. Morrow stated that it is not fair to compare the far right column with the adopted column. Trustee Murtaugh stated that many of the lines are working with information as recent as Friday afternoon. Trustee Schmidt stated that we need to look at the expended column as of Dec. to see if there is money available or if the line is nearly expended to get a good idea; however, when there is a lot of money available, it may be that the items were not purchased yet.

Mayor Wiegman added that the 4 digit numbers down the side are categories which are the same across all departments. Trustee Raskob added that last several meetings they have gone line by line; every department head has come with a realistic budget. Ms. Morrow asked why the police department appropriation for the boat costs another \$20,000 and we own it. Village Manager Zambrano replied that this is for police personnel and overtime. Ms. Morrow stated that the crossing guard costs are going up by \$5,000 and why \$4,000 in uniforms? Village Manager Zambrano replied that we have to provide auxiliary police uniforms and it includes crossing guards; we have seven auxiliary police and are in process of recruiting others. Trustee Murtaugh stated that the auxiliary police are volunteers. Ms. Morrow asked about the \$61,000 for Fire department uniforms. Trustee Raskob replied that this is not for uniforms, but turnout suits which is fire proof clothing. Trustee Murtaugh added that not everyone in the Fire Department gets one of these only certified firemen. Mayor Wiegman stated that the request was for 15 sets of the kit and we have many more than 15 volunteers; the fire department cannot get an old coat cleaned if it is over an "x" number of years. Trustee Murtaugh added that we grilled the fire department, the EMS and the Police Department asking why and they came back with well researched answers that satisfied us; we need to spend a little bit of money, a paid EMS or fire department far outweighs what is in the budget; they need the tools to work safely. Trustee Schmidt added that this line went up because they are now required to have a bail out system, a self-contained system, which added almost \$14,000 to that line. Ms. Morrow questioned the Parks & Recreation budget for \$77,000 under schedule 5 for a parks foreman. Village Manager Zambrano stated that he is a member of the teamsters and this is what the contract calls for. Ms. Morrow stated that she has been persistent about the pipes on Nordica Drive and she hasn't gotten an answer. Trustee Murtaugh replied that Nordica is included in the Truesdale area and he believes is included; he will verify, but is quite certain it also includes Cedar and the ends of the water system that does not flow through. Ms. Morrow stated that she was promised the Nordica Dr. pumping station would be dealt with on the second cycle. Ms. Morrow added that she thinks the Village experience with certain projects is to leap first and research afterward; there are ways to get assistance towards research before spending big money on some things and we should step back; there are some savings that can be done in the area of approach; she looks to the Board to be proactive and forthcoming and it is important for them to think how it is presented to the public such as the pros and cons and what it will cost.

f) Bob Wintermeier, in response to Trustee Murtaugh's comment on salary increases, stated that we have salaries for all salaried employees and he compared them to the governors in the US and it turns out 7 croton salaried employees make more than 15 US governors and 14 others make between \$70,000 and \$110 thousand dollars; the range of US governors is \$70,000 to \$180,000; he has been on a fixed income for 20 years, so he does not have the same empathy for those who have not had a raise for a few years. Mr. Wintermeier asked the Board to take a closer look at what we are paying for comp time for salaried employees; one person had 561 hours which breaks down to \$39,000 to \$45,000 and this was not for a full year; comp time is expensive.

g) Phyllis Morrow inquired if the auxiliary ambulance proposal to work with other municipals resulted in a savings. Mayor Wiegman replied that we do not have a resolution of that.

h) Ginny Calcutti stated that employees cannot put in for comp time if they are attending meetings according to the contract; the Board should take a look at this.

4. ADJOURNMENT:

Trustee Murtaugh made a motion to adjourn seconded by Trustee Raskob; approved with a vote of 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Phyllis A. Bradbury, Secretary