

Expenses, Revenues and the Tax Levy

February Calendar

- 2 & 17** Village Bd. Mtg.
- 16** Presidents' Day
- 17** Grievance Day
- 10 & 24** Planning Bd. Mtg.
- 11** Zoning Bd. Of Appeals
- 4** Cons. Advisory Comm.
- 5** Bike/Ped Comm.
- 10** Rec. Advisory Comm.
- 18** Visual Environ. Bd.
- 25** Trails Comm.

- Tax Grievance Day 2
- EagleFest 2
- Eagle Scout Project 2
- Coalition Meeting 2
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In mid-March, the Village Manager will propose a Tentative Budget for the 2015/2016 fiscal year, beginning the budget process. Once the process is completed, following multiple work sessions on a department by department basis and public input, the final amount of the property tax levy comes down to one basic principle. The tax levy will be the amount of money needed for government operations that are not covered by Village revenues.

A large amount of the expenses of operating the Village are mandatory - i.e. required by New York State, the federal government, or agreements entered into by the Village. Beyond those, there are expenses associated with the provision of services. Examples of these include purchases of fuel, heating and lighting, road salt, repair parts, paper and postage, etc. While these expenses may be considered discretionary (not mandated by government or contracts), they are nevertheless required expenses. Additionally, debt service, which supports the provision of larger purchases and projects, must be paid.

NYS mandated expenses constitute a substantial amount of the Village budget, including required funding for pensions and health care. The Village must also have liability insurance, workers' compensation insurance and make contributions to the Fire Dept. Service Award program.

Salaries of personnel in the Village account for the largest amount of non-State mandated costs. The majority of this expense is contractual for union employees, either in the Teamsters union or the Police Association. Non-union salaries account for the remainder of the payroll expenses.

While the primary source of revenues to support Village operations comes from property taxes, Village taxpayers are fortunate that the Village-owned parking lot at the railroad station provides substantial revenue. This helps offset operating expenses and reduces the annual tax levy amount by approximately \$2 million.

In addition, revenues from Mortgage tax, sales tax, fines and fees help offset an additional portion of the expenses. As an example, the current year's budget, 2014/2015, called for \$18,214,803 in appropriations but the amount needed to be raised by property taxes was \$11,065,131. Revenues of \$7,149,672 account for the difference.

Many other revenues such as recreation program fees, zoning and planning applications, building permits, and court fines, help to offset the costs of the service provided.

In the coming month, in preparation for analyzing and approving a new budget for 2015/2016, the Village Board will be reviewing the mid-year results for the current year. By reviewing the mid-year results, the Board is better able to assess how current budget projections were met on both the expense and revenue sides which will be helpful in reviewing the next budget.

The preparation of the 2015/2016 proposed budget is well underway by the Village Treasurer, Village Manager and department heads. The Tentative Budget will be officially filed with the Village Clerk on Friday, March 20 and will be followed by multiple work sessions between the Board of Trustees and departments prior to adoption by the end of April. These are open to the public.



Tax Grievance Day

On Tuesday, February 17, the Board of Trustees will be meeting in their role as the Board of Assessment Review. In this role, they are required by law to meet annually to consider the applications of property owners who feel their Village residential property assessment is not correct. The Board will be meeting from 4 pm to 8 pm at the Municipal Building.

Those property owners whose residential assessment has changed will have received a letter to that effect from the Village Engineer's office. Usually, a change in assessment is the result of a property improvement. However, any property owner can "grieve" their property assessment.

To understand what your residential property assessment means in terms of market value, owners should divide their assessed value by the Equalization Rate (ER) yielding the market value. The ER is established by the NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services each year. As an example, an assessment of \$15,000 divided by this year's ER of .0433 yields a market value of \$346,420.32. Doing this calculation may help you decide whether to file a tax grievance to try to change your residential property assessment. Applications and information are available from the Village Assessor, Joe Sperber, in the Building Dept. office or by calling 271-4783.

Applications for a review of your tax assessment must be filed with the Village Assessor prior to 4 pm on February 17. Commercial properties follow a different procedure.

Croton Community Coalition Meeting

The Coalition, which works to educate the public about drug and alcohol abuse and reduce its occurrence, is

holding an evening meeting on Thursday, February 26 at the Croton Library,

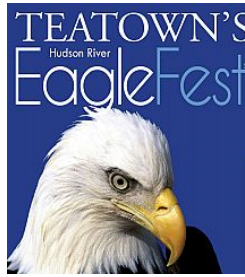
starting at 7 pm. Everyone is invited to attend to learn more about the goals and programs of the Coalition. The evening will include displays and informational materials the Coalition has developed for their programs.

The Coalition is made up of representatives from many sectors of the community and is supported by a 5-year federal grant, renewable each year for \$125,000. It received approval for its second 5-year program in the Fall of 2014. The Coalition provides support for events such as VassalloFest, the Candlelight Vigil, Game nights at PVC and CHHS, as well as special presentations for students and parents.



EagleFest Reminder!

Teatown Reservation's annual EagleFest event is returning to its headquarters at Croton Point Park on Saturday, Feb. 7 (rain date - Feb. 8) from 9 am to 4 pm.



Hourly shows at the Park in the Eagle Theater and Eaglet Stage will provide live birds and story telling for all ages.

Over 30 organizations will be present with additional demonstrations and information of interest for participants. Additionally, multiple viewing sites are located along the Hudson and Croton Rivers to the north and south of the Park. These may be reached by car or by reserving a seat on a 2 1/2 hour bus tour accompanied by an environmental educator. Croton's Echo Canoe Launch, south of the railroad station parking lot, is one of the viewing sites.

One General Admission ticket will provide entry to all of the shows and activities except the bus tours. Tickets are available online at www.teatown.org. Click on "Events". Adult tickets are \$13, youth 6-11 are \$8; 5 and under are free.

Eagle Scout Project Approved

Following a presentation by Terrence McGarty, a local Eagle Scout in Troop 28, the Board approved his concept to perform an Environmental Restoration of Mayo's Landing. Mayo's Landing is a conservation area on the Croton River entered from Nordica Dr. The area has suffered from severe erosion, invasive plants and litter which has seriously degraded its natural environment.

Mr. McGarty is proposing installment of log steps on the steep access hill to redirect water runoff and make it easier and safer for people to walk to and from the river. He will also remove brush and invasive plants and install a bench. Troop 28 would provide annual maintenance.

Mr. McGarty, a member of Troop 28 since 2010, is an Ass't. Senior Patrol Leader and Life Scout. He has completed all Eagle required merit badges and has been working with the Trails Committee.

Reminder!

**Village Offices will be closed Monday, Feb. 16,
for Presidents' Day**



School Break Recreation Programs

The Village Recreation Dept. is offering two fun programs during the Presidents' Week school break. Both programs will be run in the Municipal Building Community Room from 9 am to 3 pm.

Transforming Robots for youth in grades 2 to 6, is an opportunity to construct a wide variety of robots.



Students will learn S.T.E.M. in a fun, hands-on way. All participants will take home a Hexbug Transforming Robot. This program is a great way for students to have fun and create using their own imagination. The program is on Tuesday, February 17.

Taught by Super Science, the registration deadline is Feb. 10. Fees are: \$70/res and \$85/school district/nonres.

Crazy Chemworks is being offered on February 19 for youth in grades K to 4. Participants will observe as the instructor, Mad Science, combines elements to make them fizz, crackle and change color. This program will include awesome hands-on experiments and take home items. The registration deadline is Feb. 12. Fees are \$95/res and \$110/ school district/nonres.



Participants should bring a non-perishable lunch as children will not be permitted to leave during the day.

Village Accepts 1300 Albany Post Road

The Village Board unanimously accepted the bequest of property located at 1300 Albany Post Road at its January 20 meeting. Mrs. Laurel Gouveia bequeathed the 15+ acres along with \$1,000,000 for its care and upkeep. Mrs. Gouveia's will specifies that the property's principal use



be as a park and open to the public but doesn't preclude other uses as long as the park-like setting is maintained.

In the Fall of 2014 an ad-hoc committee was formed to look at potential long-term and short-term uses for the property. The initial report of the committee on short-term uses suggests both outdoor uses for the property including trails, picnicking, concerts and other gatherings and programs hosted by community groups. The report also suggested potential uses for both the former residence and the existing out buildings. It is expected that once the Title is transferred to the Village in the coming months, there will be opportunities for the public to visit the property and offer further suggestions for its use.

Moody's Gives Aa2 Rating to Village Bonds

The following is from the Moody's analysis of Croton's financial position:

"The Aa2 rating reflects the Village's well-managed financial operations with ample reserve levels. It also



incorporates the Village's wealthy, moderately sized economic base, stable

taxable values, and higher than average but manageable debt position.

Moody's anticipates that the Village's financial position will remain stable, given a history of conservative budgeting of revenues, the maintenance of strong reserve levels, and timely tax increases. Fiscal 2014 resulted in the village's fifth consecutive year of adding to fund balance. This increased the total General Fund balance to \$7.23 million, or a strong 40.6% of revenues from a recent fiscal 2009 low of \$5.7 million or 35.3% of revenues. Unaudited fiscal 2014 results show the Village ending with another surplus of approximately \$330,000 as a result of conservative revenue budgeting. Favorable operating results have primarily been driven by sales tax revenues outperforming the budget and favorable expenditure variances. General Fund revenues are primarily comprised of property taxes (60%), sales taxes (7%), and state aid (1%).

The Village also operates a 2,000-space parking lot supporting the Metro-North rail line that accounts for 17% of budgeted revenues and only 4% of expenditures. The net revenues of the parking operations help to contribute to stable General Fund operations. Favorably, the village typically budgets conservatively for parking permit fees, which is a major contributor to the positive budget variance the Village generates each year."

Acting Village Justice Lisa Wolland

Lisa Wolland was appointed by Mayor Wiegman as the Village's Acting Justice in early January. Anne Minihan, the previous Acting Justice, resigned at the end of December following her election in November as a County Court judge. The Acting Village Justice substitutes for the elected Village Justice, Sam Watkins, as needed, usually one court date a month, and also performs arraignments when the Justice is not available.

Ms. Wolland is a Village resident and a past Croton-Harmon School District Board member. The position is appointed annually and has a salary of \$9,488.

Ms. Wolland is currently a Principal Law Clerk for a Supreme Court Justice. She is an appellate practitioner with over 15 years of experience as a defense attorney, prosecutor and court attorney in the Second Department working on civil and criminal cases.

Got a Question?



My teenager is interested in summer employment. Does the Village hire any part-time employees for its summer programs and camps? Yes, the Croton Recreation Dept. does offer summer job opportunities as counselors at its Day Camp and Tiny Tots camp programs, lifeguarding at Silver Lake, Gate Attendants at Senasqua Park and Silver Lake Park and also in Park Maintenance. Now is the time to apply. Applications are being accepted through March 13, 2015. Applicants for paid positions must be at least 16 years old. Contact the Recreation Dept. at 271-3006 for an application or further info.

Snow Removal and Parking Reminder

With a snowy winter upon us, please remember that all sidewalks, adjoining or abutting a property, must be properly cleared of snow and ice within 18 hours of a snow event (exceptions are identified in Chapter 197, Section 15 of the Village Code). Cleared sidewalks help keep our residents safe. No snow or ice should be thrown into the street by either shovelers or plowing contractors. Parking on Village streets is not permitted when snow measures 2 inches or more. Seasonal parking permits with some restrictions are available in the Village Office for those without off-street parking spaces. Keeping your car off the street helps the DPW properly clear them.



February, 2015

**Published for the Residents of the
Village of Croton-on-Hudson**

Leo A. W. Wiegman, Mayor

Ann Gallelli, Trustee

Andrew Levitt, Trustee

Brian Pugh, Trustee

Maria Slippen, Trustee

Abraham J. Zambrano, Village Manager

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Anthony Carr Heads DPW

Anthony Carr has been hired as Commissioner of Croton's DPW and began work on January 12. Mr. Carr is a licensed Professional Engineer (P.E.) with a degree in Civil Engineering. He comes to the Village with 12 years of engineering experience in both the private and public sectors. His immediate past experience was as Village Engineer and Flood Plain Administrator in the Village of Mamaroneck.



Anthony graduated from Clarkson University in 2002. He currently serves in the United States Naval Reserve in the Civil Engineer Corps. The Village DPW regularly undertakes many projects

which require engineering expertise. As a licensed P.E., it is anticipated that Anthony will be able to design and sign some of the many projects which currently are proposed or underway. Welcome to Anthony Carr!

Nearby Mobile Shredder Locations

The County's Mobile Shredder will be at two nearby locations on two Saturdays in February from 10 am to 1 pm.

2/14 Briarcliff Youth Center, 5 Van Lu Van Rd.

2/28 Montrose, Hendrick Hudson Library, 185 Kings Ferry Road.

Up to 4 file-size boxes of personal papers/household are allowed.