

**Village of Walden  
Board of Trustees  
Public Hearing for the 2013-2014 Budget  
April 17, 2013**

Mayor Maher called the organizational meeting of the Village of Walden Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 pm.

On roll call the following were:

Present:	Mayor	Brian Maher
	Deputy Mayor	Sue Rumbold
	Trustees	Edmond Leonard
		Bernard Bowen
		Gerald Mishk
		Sean Hoffman
		Willie Carley

Not Present:

Also Present:	John Revella, Village Manager
	Tara Bliss, Village Clerk
	Peter Sullivan, Village Treasurer

**Discussion Item – Public Comment Portion of Regular Meetings**

Mayor Maher asked for the benefit of the public an overview of the budget prior to opening the Public Hearing.

Manager Revella stated that right now, what's in front of us we are at a 1.4% tax levy increase with the budget you have here tonight. This includes a full time Village Clerk, adding an education line for Clerk, getting a new welding tool at DPW garage, reducing gas, lube, and oil line in the general fund, National Night out is in the budget both as a line item as expense and included in the Police budget. There are contractual increases for Recreation administrative personal services for a clothing allowance for union members as outlined in the new contract. There is a security camera for Bradley Park. The beach personal services were adjusted \$500 based on actual need. Water fund was adjusted to match estimates for equipment because of the issues we are having with the sewer press. Library nothing to discuss about that as the public already voted on that.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold made a motion to open the Public Hearing for the 2013-2014 Budget. Seconded by Trustee Hoffman. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Hearing opened.

Gerry Jacobowitz, Jacobowitz & Gubits, stated that usually people come to tell you what is wrong and you hear all the complaints. I understand that the increase is 1.4% and in the face that all the other experiences the communities are having around you are doing well and this is appreciated by the tax payers. A lot of stuff you get handed you have to deal with it but a few things you do control and you have done the best you can to control that. The other part is the revenue stream, if you get more revenue it makes everything work a lot easier. His background and experience are all opportunities to increase revenue. He is hoping we will work together to accomplish that. Thank you for your hard work and for

helping to keep the Village competitive and helping to provide the services that the Village needs.

Becky Pearson, 167 Walnut Street, also wanted to thank you for the work you have done. She has been to most of the meetings and just needs clarification on some items that she may have missed. Olley park pavilion was that finalized?

Manager Revella answered yes it's to be extended.

Becky asked how much.

Mayor Maher explained there were a few options and we only approved one to extend the current pavilion.

Manager Revella stated there are 3 park projects; there is one for \$25,000 towards Martin Bedesky Park which we already have \$15,000-\$18,000 which is from NYSEG but that money is for just the playground. There is another \$18,000 for Wooster Grove Train Station gutters to be repaired keeping with the historic look. And the other is for \$42,000 for the extension of the pavilion at Olley Park, 20 ft by 60 ft additional to what is there.

Becky asked about the Ulster Avenue discussion, she heard there was \$840,000 from the state but is the Village contributing to that project as well?

Manager Revella replied that right now it is just to replace hydrants on the road and the water service which is in the water fund to be able to do the drainage work with DPW checking the basins.

Becky asked about the Treasurers line and what the overtime is for.

Manager Revella stated that when the staff has to stay late (Vicki and Lauren) if they work overtime as they are hourly employees.

Becky asked about the Clerk as it was mentioned to go full time, but was that settled including compensation? She knows it was discussed but heard no conclusion.

Mayor Maher stated that there was a number that was ended on but if it's final is not concluded yet. That number was \$39,000 at the end on that session.

Becky asked about fixing the Bradley Assembly Room.

Manager Revella stated that we already have money for that.

Becky asked about the boarder that needs painting.

Manager Revella stated that we started getting estimates. Some of this would be in this year as we were going to do the rail but to replicate it is very costly, \$96,000. The metal is expensive but not in this budget and no we can't just paint it due to the rust. We discussed painting outside of the building but it's not in the budget right now. We are doing the drainage first.

Becky said she knows there was good and bad discussion about Nation Night Out. Is there money in the budget for fireworks in December if you do Nation Night Out this summer?

Manager Revella replied yes.

Becky suggested maybe you switch from December fireworks to NNO, just a thought. The camera in Bradley Park she understands but will the Police Department be manning those cameras?

Manager Revella stated the Dispatch office will be watching them since we spent \$8,900 repairing fence parts. There will be one camera centrally located doing 360 degree view and then there will be fixed cameras on the building which will see very far, including 3 different cameras. There will be separate lens for night time since we have been having issues at that Park. Hopefully will be as successful as the ones as Wooster.

Becky said she knows that we have someone who does parking tickets. There was no on that discussion and in years before it was always going to be reviewed. Not sure if on Main Street we are still having an issue or not? Do we need to have that person?

Manager Revella stated they are still writing a lot of tickets.

Becky asked about the uniforms and the PBA donation that was given. Sue asked a good question with no answer. If you replace all at once what happens when you have to replace them again in a lump sum.

Manager Revella stated that the response from the Chief was that certain officers wear the uniforms more quickly so it won't be all at the same time. It's contractual, so they turn it in and get a new one.

Becky just didn't want to see another \$40,000 bill all at once. Uniforms are great and she likes them. The Amphitheater, there was no discussion are we moving forward with it?

Manager Revella stated that we left it off if we can get grant funding for it we would do it.

Mayor Maher stated it wasn't in the budget but was part of the Parks Comprehensive Plan.

Becky said there was discussion about the electric for the concession stand. Talked about for years making people pay fees to use the building etc. and she would love to hear more discussion on that.

Manager Revella stated the Board did approve all fees except for Bradley Park.

Becky feels that we have ball games that don't even belong to the Village. Not doing anything with Bradley and we should be.

Manager Revella stated that the Recreation Coordinator is looking to bring forward fee structure for that park shortly.

Becky stated this is missed revenue with services. Crossing guards which was a big stickler for her at one time because our school taxes don't cover it. A lot of communities don't have crossing guards they just have cross walks but we do and not sure how necessary all of them are. Just a thought for a way to cut costs as well. You might want to look at this. She did approach the school district about it at one time because 1% is collected and why not give to the Village to pay for the crossing guards. The school district can't give us money but they do give it to the Town so that money is there.

Manager Revella stated that the cost is about \$47,000 for the year with benefits etc.

Becky stated it was just another way of potential cost savings. DPW Supervisor has been talked about for years or a Working Leader position to free up John for things he would like and needs to do.

Manager Revella stated that they did start funding a Working Leader position which is a \$5,000 differential in this budget and in the new contract. We are doing it, not a discussion. How it's going to work out internally and externally that is up for discussion.

Becky asked about fluoride.

Manager Revella stated that it is still in there going forward if we had to it's in there. We knew the building was going to be finished this year so it's in there now. Whether they put it in the water we will have to wait for the Town Hall meeting.

Trustee Leonard made a motion to close the Public Hearing for the 2013-2014 Budget. Seconded by Trustee Mishk. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Public Hearing Closed.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold stated that we have the differential in for the Working Leader if we decide to go internally but is there anything in there if we do an external candidate?

Manager Revella replied no.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold asked if they should put something in there just in case. We can always move it. If we end up getting someone externally it would be a salary with benefits etc.

Trustee Bowen asked if he was looking to promote within.

Manager Revella stated that he would like to but if not possible they would have to go outside.

Trustee Bowen asked if there was funding any place else we could use.

Manager Revella stated we could always use the surplus if we had to.

Peter stated we are using \$174,000 to make this rate stay low.

Mayor Maher stated we are hoping to use internal but if we had to not if we wanted to use it. Does the board feel strongly to put that in there?

Manager Revella stated that if you get off the list you are going to get \$80,000 plus or \$100,000 with family coverage etc.

Trustee Carley asked for clarification on the negative to using the surplus opposed to going outside

Manager Revella stated it would go up to a 2.4% tax increase it would be above the tax cap otherwise we make it 4 months that number goes down it depends on how the board proceeds.

Trustee Mishk asked if you take someone from within do you have to replace them with someone new.

Manager Revella stated no; we won't have to do that as it would just be a different duty not another body. No not this route. If this didn't work out then he would

Trustee Bowen clarified that he was saying he could do the same work with bodies he has and giving someone a leadership role.

Manager Revella stated yes that's correct.

Trustee Carley was not at last board meeting and they talked about the raises for the Board members which was not passed and he'd like to revisit it. The Board does the work that warrants the increase and it's not a major increase not a burden on the public. Over a period of time as a general he thinks the board warrants that increase. This is not based on his individual need but collectively if we do a good job it's a way to recognize that work.

Mayor Maher stated that was something that we need to think of for future boards. Personally he would be ok with not having an increase but not the same issue with all the board members. If its still \$250 it's a total of \$1,750 half of a percentage point. He supports it.

Trustee Hoffman stated that based on his calculations it breaks down to \$20 per pay period and he'd rather see that money spent on our employees.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold explained the historic reasons for the Trustees stipend. When we initially increased it we took away that the Trustees got health insurance. When we removed it they upped the trustee fee with the theory we were removing health insurance and they could use that money to go out and purchase insurance for themselves and now to cover herself as an example over \$800 per month is her coverage for single coverage. Including this increase it doesn't even come close to paying for it that was the reason behind the increase in the stipend to begin with.

Mayor Maher explained the total would be \$1,750 added to the budget and it's been 4 years since an increase happened and he's thinking about future Boards.

Trustee Carley explained that respectfully it's not about being in an impoverished state, you do the work so it's the principal behind it. We do warrant the increase and it's not a major increase so if you are either way then vote yes. He would suggest more than \$20 but he will leave it there. Not sure of the number that was brought to the Board in the initial

conversation and he knows personally that he has been working hard and some may be in disagreement but this is what we do for the value for the Village.

Mayor Maher stated it was a tough issue to bring up but he will be the first to say yes to the increase of \$250 per Trustee including the Mayor. \$1,750 total to add to the budget.

Trustee Mishk stated that comparatively we are way under compared to other municipalities.

Mayor Maher brought up what Becky had stated that the figures you are looking at are for a 5 member board vs. our 7 member. And we don't have health insurance that's accounted in there also in other municipalities.

There were 6 members in favor 1 opposed (Trustee Hoffman) the amount will be added to the Budget.

Mayor Maher stated he had one more issue that he wants to look at the original salary line for the Clerk and we're talking about the amount not the individual so we don't have to go into executive. The original line was first at \$42,416 and at the beginning of our budget sessions we wanted to look at where we were at the end before we can see if we have some wiggle room to make a change there. He feels that it jumped down more than it should have been to \$39,000. he didn't say anything when they initially changed it because he wanted to review where we were with the budget at the end but he feels it would be more fair at \$40,500.

Trustee Leonard stated the previous Clerk was at over \$60,000 after 30 years.

Trustee Carley asked if that number was based on the hourly rate.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold stated it was just a number we had to plug something in. We never discussed what it was going to be. So it's not like it went from x to down we never set anything to begin with. We just pulled the number out of the air.

Manager Revella stated the number is a lower average for Clerks in the County. The number came from when Lori had talked about trying to get a raise. He was trying to get the low average of the County rate and this number is lower than average.

Mayor Maher commented that what he was saying was that the number was not out of thin air and in fact is a number that is lower than average Clerks. He's not suggesting we put it back to the \$42,416 but at \$40,500. That's all he's asking the board to consider.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold thinks it should stay where it is. It's an entry level position which is why we left the amount arbitrary because in her mind it would have been a discussion for the candidate if we had someone who had been a Clerk for 5-10 years which is why we left it to discuss so we could play around with the number as we saw fit.

Mayor Maher is not disagreeing with her he's just saying his idea of a fair number is \$40,500 and hers is \$39,000. Does anyone else agree with him or leave at \$39,000?

Trustee Mishk stated he always felt it was a low number for any employee.

Trustee Bowen asked what the average number was. Regardless of experience what is the number?

Manager Revella stated that Chester was \$47K and Goshen was \$58K which is comparable positions. Harriman is smaller municipality and is at \$29K. Highland Falls is \$68K, Warwick is \$44.4K but that's not a full time Clerk.

Mayor Maher stated that some of those Clerks have been there 20 years so it's really hard to look at the numbers. He looked at the specifics and started from there is where he came up with it. It's not a huge difference it's \$1,500.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold stated that we also have another line Deputy Treasurer that's at \$35,498 and she has a lot of responsibility and works a lot of hours.

Mayor Maher stated yes, and she got a raise.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold stated there has to be an entry level and we have a Deputy Treasurer who has all kinds of responsibility, does all our billing, field's calls, and she's at \$35K.

Mayor Maher said he disagreed because the hours for a Clerk are more as there are things they have to do on their own time and that position is not eligible for overtime. But the Deputy Treasurer is.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold commented that the candidates knew that. We didn't hide that they had to do hours and meetings.

Mayor Maher said he didn't think we were redefining what it is that any candidate would have thought the job was, what we are talking about is a fair starting salary. He believes its \$40,500 you believe its \$39,000.

Trustee Hoffman asked if we can move what we just approved for the Trustees and give to the Clerk. Rather than spend on the Trustees rather see it go to the Clerk.

Mayor Maher said he had no problem with that if that's the way the Board wants to go, he'd like to see them do both.

Trustee Hoffman commented if we only have \$1,500 then he'd like to give it to the Clerk.

Deputy Mayor Rumbold stated she already voiced her opinion and doesn't care.

(Mayor Maher giggled and Deputy Mayor Rumbold left the meeting.)

Trustee Mishk said to put it to \$40,500.

Trustee Carley could go either way.

Trustee Bowen said he was fine with it.

Trustee Leonard said he was fine with it.

Mayor Maher stated the \$1,500 would be added to the Clerk's salary based on that vote. We will wait to adopt until the next Board meeting which will allow us to be more accurate as these few changes will now change the overall numbers on the document in front of us.

**Motion to Adjourn**

Trustee Bowen motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Leonard. All ayes. Meeting adjourned.