

Hoosick Falls & Surrounding Areas News

HOOSICK FALLS

Village Budget Proposes A 1% Tax Increase

by Doug La Rocque

A public hearing on the proposed 2021-22 Village Budget opened the Tuesday, April 20 meeting of the Hoosick Falls Village Board. As it now stands, that \$3.8 million spending plan carries a 1.01% increase in the tax levy. In simpler terms perhaps, the owner of property assessed at \$100,000 would pay an additional \$10.15 in taxes. If your property has a higher assessment, the figure would be more. If lower, the additional tax amount is less.

American Rescue Plan Monies

According to Mayor Rob Allen, the Village will receive \$183,000 sometime this summer, and an additional \$183,000 next summer. How to best spend that money was a question he posed to the board and the public. Marianne Zwicklbauer of Hoosick Rising has some suggestions, such as a map kiosk at the small pull off on Route 22, just beyond the Route 7 intersection. She also suggested updating the village's Christmas decorations, which she said are showing their age. She also mentioned historic signage at certain locations.

CiviCure also made a pitch for some money, noting it had recently finished the new roof for the Wood Building, which has placed them in debt.

There was the suggestion some money be used to replace a police vehicle and/or Highway Department equipment. The reasoning here is there would be no need for additional debt, and perhaps the cost savings could be used to reduce the Village's current debt load.

In the end, the Trustees decided they were not yet ready to vote on the budget proposal, and scheduled a special meeting for Thursday, April 29 at 6 pm over a Zoom platform. At that time the Board will discuss what they feel are the most important items and then vote on the spending plan.

More Dollars For The Landfill

The Trustees approved a resolution to bond for up to \$161,000 for improvements to the leachate collection and pumping system at the Village Landfill. The most current work at the site discovered a previously undetected sewer line problem, which will require replacement.

The leachate collection system installation is part of a NYS Department of Environmental Conservation order, following the landfill having been declared a hazardous waste site.

Memorial Day Parade Is Back On

During the Mayoral Announcements portion of the meeting, it was disclosed the American Legion has decided to once again cancel the annual parade due to COVID-19, but that the typical memorial ceremonies would go forth. Trustees were disappointed with the news and hoped to work with the Legion for some middle ground as Mayor Allen put it. Later in the meeting, Trustee Kevin O'Malley received a communication from the Legion; the parade is back on. Details will be worked out and announced shortly.

PFOS Score

Mayor Allen reported that recent testing at the water plant shows a very small presence of PFOS in a sample

taken of the finished water (water that has completely gone through the filtering process), something that has not been seen before. Thinking perhaps this was an anomaly, it was retested and no PFOS was found. The reasoning by the Water Department is the first sampling was somehow contaminated.

As far as that report from New York State on the Proposed Remedial Action Plan for a possible alternative drinking water source, Mayor Allen says it is due very soon. When released, there will be a 45 day comment period before the state makes a final decision.

Building Concerns

Codes Enforcement Officer Mark Surdam had some concerns of note. The Village owns the structure at 62 Mechanic Street, and has put it up for sale before, with no takers. CEO Surdam indicated there were several conditions attached to the original request for bids that he feels discouraged any buyers. He would like to see it put back on the market, this time without the conditions attached.

The structure at 115 Main Street has part of its foundation compromised, and Mr. Surdam would like to have it torn down. Problem is, the Village does not own it, Rensselaer County does following a foreclosure. Village Attorney Andy Gilchrist said he is working with the county about a demolition, but in the meantime, the Village cannot touch it. Mr. Surdam said he can wait a short while, because while compromised, he doesn't feel the building is in imminent danger of collapse. He also mentioned he would like to start demolition proceedings for a structure at 114 Church Street as well.

Need To Deal With A Squatter

It was brought to Mr. Surdam's attention that a vehicle is being parked in a garage on property on Hall Street, purchased by the village as part of the Woods Brook buyout program. The car was not there when the Village closed on the property. It was determined they have a "car squatter" in town. Mr. Surdam said he will deal with the squatter, or at least its owner, post haste.

Culvert Concerns

The Eastwick Press has recently reported on the latest developments concerning that culvert under the Pan Am Railways tracks near Railroad and Carey Avenues in the Village. Pan Am has responded that its inspections show the movement of the tracks is within limits, and that culvert is large enough to handle the current water runoff. The newest member of the Village Board, Bob Decker, disagrees and is urging County Legislators Bruce Patire and Jeff Wysocki, as well as town and village officials, to contact the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), who apparently would have final say about the issue. He feels once contacted, it would inspect the site, and order repairs if it felt they were needed. Pan Am sent a letter to the FRA outlining its findings, a copy of which went to the County Legislators.

The Trustees also accepted a resolution authorizing a temporary easement for access to the Woods Brook Stream Improvement Project. This is also for culvert work.

Other News And Notes

Hydrant flushing will take place on May 17 for wards 2 and 3, and May 18 for wards 1 and 4. Street cleaning will occur in May as well. The even side of village streets will be cleaned on May 10, with the odd side swept on May 11. More information will be released about parking restrictions.

The new parking signs in the Village owned Church Street lot seem to be confusing people.

The Village recently passed a local law concerning parking at Village owned properties. Trustees discussed removing the signage, which limits where overnight parking is allowed, except closest to the building that houses the Tri-State Area Federal Credit Union and Thorpe's Pharmacy.

The Village is issuing bonds for curbside solid waste collection. The current agreement with County Waste ends on May 31. The Village is still in the process of reviewing two local laws, one dealing with the keeping of chickens in the Village, the second establishing rules and regulations for the removal of snow from sidewalks.

Because of COVID-19 precautions, the water and sewer plants have only one person on site per day. The Trustees discussed returning these two sites to normal operations. Mayor Allen was directed to talk with the appropriate department heads about the possibility and report back to the board.

Village Clean-Up Day is Saturday, April 24. Volunteers are asked to meet in the park at 8:30 am with masks and tools. Saturday is also Drug Take Back Day from 10 am to 2 pm at the Police Station.

The North Hoosick Fire Department Chicken Bar-B-Que

The North Hoosick Fire Department will sponsor its famous Chicken Bar-B-Que on Saturday, May 8 from 5 to 6 pm at the fire station on NYS Route 22. Tickets are now available from any North Hoosick firefighter. All tickets are \$13. Tickets can be reserved by contacting Chief Alan Bornt at 518-378-4538, or by messenger. Only take outs are available.

White Creek Chicken Barbecue

The annual spring chicken barbecue will be held at Jermain Community Hall in White Creek on May 1 but it will be different than usual. This will be a drive-through take-out only barbecue. It will feature our usual spring menu including pie and the price will be \$12. We would appreciate reservations and they can be made by calling 518-686-9307 or emailing mrobi47966@aol.com. Pick up time is 4 to 6 pm. If you have any questions, please call the above number.



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