

**INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF PIERMONT**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES METING**  
**April 15, 2008**

Present: Mayor Christopher Sanders, Deputy Mayor Fred Devan, Trustees Joan Gussow, Audie Moran, Mark Blomquist, Denise Ehrhart-Village Clerk-Treasurer

Absent: Walter Sevastian, Esq.-Village Attorney

Mayor Sanders called the meeting to order and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustee Gussow made a motion to open the Public Hearing on the Tentative 2009 Fiscal budget. The motion was seconded by Trustee Devan. Upon vote the Public Hearing was opened.

Trustee Devan gave a brief overview of the tentative budget.

Based on the current budget numbers the tax rate would result in a 4.87% increase for Homestead and 10.49% increase for Non-homestead.

Highlights include:

8.5% increase in Revenues other than property taxes, some Revenues will be decreasing. The Board will continue to review County Revenue – Mortgage Tax.

6.23% increase in expenditures

Cost of living increases for employees

Increased hours for the Building Department

Retirement is another question since it could go up significantly

Further information – Storm/Snow is not increasing by 197% - two line items were combined.

Public Comment:

Margaret Grace – Federal money is spent in ways she don't know but feels that she gets more from the money she pays in Village Taxes than anything else. Ms. Grace had one concern – the lawsuit on the Landing is a huge amount of money and she would like to know how that trickles down to the tax payer. Trustee Devan replied that Tax Certioraris are not covered by insurance and the Village would need to bond to pay any settlement. Ms. Grace also mentioned that Piermont provides services for fire and rescue in the area and rescues in the Hudson River. She asked if the Village gets any reimbursement to cover this expense.

The Mayor explained that Piermont does not receive assistance from the State or Thruway Authority. He stated that Piermont has a great rescue crew and “owns” the River rescues. Trustee Devan added that we do get revenue from Grandview for Fire Protection in the amount of just over \$45,000.

Debt represents 7% of the budget with Tax Certiorari debt being 1%. According to Law the Village can have total debt equaling \$28,485,000.

The tentative budget numbers break down as follows:

Administration – 8% increase  
Benefits – 5.28% increase  
Tax certioraris- down 6.8%  
Miscellaneous Debt - 3.3% increase  
Fire Department 3.9% increase  
DPW 5.38% increase  
Police Department 6.86% increase  
Parks & Recreation 5.17% decrease

Bob Samuels is concerned that since revenues are going down this is the wrong time to increase the Building Inspectors hours.

Pat Esgate – proposed, draconian Steep Slope legislation will discourage people from building in Piermont – the Village cannot cut out development and continue to raise taxes.

The Mayor advised that proposed legislation does not affect this budget.

Trustee Devan stated that the Building Inspector will need more hours since the Diplomat will require much of his time as it is renovated.

Bob Samuels commented that those buildings were in deplorable condition.

Richard Stark asked what the average assessed value of a house in Piermont is and the Mayor responded \$700,000 with taxes of \$3,560.44 or an increase of \$165 from last year. Mr. Stark then asked what the cost of hospitalization for each employee was. Trustee Devan advised it was \$7,000/year for single coverage and \$14,000/year for family coverage.

Mike Miller - 65-68% of salaries is benefits. The Mayor advised that for those working for municipalities the pay was historically low and the benefits are high. Currently, salaries are improving but benefits stay the same.

Mr. Miller mentioned the possibility of Piermont picking up garbage for the Village of Grandview who pay \$210 per house while Piermont pays \$30/house. The Mayor stated that Grandview has side door pick up with small pick up carts and Piermont does not use this kind of equipment.

A resident asked if Piermont could combine services with Orangetown. Mayor Sanders advised that one of our largest expenses in the Village is the Police Department at 27%. The Village had briefly studied combining services with Orangetown and it would not save any money.

The Village is having an energy audit done in an attempt to save money and also looking into all available grants.

Mike Miller – compared the full service Village of Piermont to the non-full service Village of Nyack using Town services and discovered that Piermont is paying twice what Nyack pays – we cannot continue to raise taxes 5% or more every year at twice the rate of inflation.

Bob Samuels commented that the Village of Nyack receives huge revenues from parking, their Mayor and Board have very high salaries and their equipment, roads and sidewalks are falling apart.

Al Bartley – to what Mike Miller was saying – we haven't spent much on the infrastructure over the years and Piermont can't afford to make some of the necessary repairs. If Piermont continues to not do what previous Administrations didn't do, costs will continue to increase significantly.

Mayor Sanders advised that the Village is trying to repair the infrastructure a little at a time.

Richie Stark – the Mayor stated a cost of living increase and Mr. Stark asked what that was. Cost of Living is 4%, salary increases are proposed at 3.5%.

Roberta Ebert asked if the Board has received any suggestions to reduce costs that they have rejected. Mayor Sanders said he didn't recall any such proposal.

The Board was asked if they have moved to have the employees pay a percentage of the benefit costs. The Mayor responded that the Village can make that agreement with new employees but current employees would look for other compensation in place of benefits. The Board has already consulted with an Employee Rights Attorney.

John McAvoy said that the telephone lines throughout the budget total \$18,000 and asked if that is equipment rental or something else. He was told that this covers all office phones and cell phones. Mr. McAvoy also asked what the Rental of Real Property revenue line includes. Mayor Sanders replied that it includes the Community Playgroup lease, pavilion rentals, etc. The Board has discussed the waiver of so many fees for charitable organizations that it is now considering creating a flat fee of \$100 for these groups.

Bob Samuels asked what percentage of the budget is discretionary and what part is not. Discretionary would include items like increasing someone's hours; debt service and telephone, etc would be nondiscretionary. Out of this \$4.7 million dollar budget, \$2 million is salaries and ½ of that is Police.

Al Bartley added that in 2003 diesel was \$.99/gallon and today it is \$3.99/gallon. Some cost increases cannot be avoided.

Richie Stark said he has a better understanding of the expenditures that are out of the Board's control and added that he wouldn't want to be in the Board's position trying to please everyone. However, hospitalization is going up 10% and that increases the cost of each employee.

Mike Miller said insurance appears flat and the Landing got a decrease. The Village Clerk advised that the majority of the Village insurance was reduced slightly. However, the Law Enforcement liability went up enough to reflect no change to the total.

On Thursday, April 17, 2008 the Board will hold an additional workshop on this budget.

Trustee Devan made a motion to continue the Public Hearing on the 2009 Tentative Budget on Tuesday, April 29, 2008 at 8:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow. Upon vote the motion carried.

The attached Resolution regarding a grant application with reference to Municipal Waste Reduction and/or Recycling Project was moved by Trustee Devan and seconded by Trustee Gussow. Upon vote the motion carried.

Bridge Street drainage system – the Village would like to install a new vault in the road way with a tide flex flap to stop flooding. The company currently doing the work for the County quoted a price of \$37,325.00. Our Engineer is working with the County to reduce this which they did by only \$7,000 to \$30,000. This is still under negotiation with the Village Engineer and the County. The Mayor asked the Board to consider approval of a price for the materials of up to \$10,000 so the work can move ahead to be ready for this process. The Village may use the DPW for the labor.

Trustee Devan made a motion to approve an expense of up to \$10,000 for materials necessary for this installation. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow. Upon vote the motion carried.

The discussion of Building Department Permit and Inspection fees was tabled.

RESOLUTION NO. 415-08 VILLAGE OF PIERMONT  
TITLE: Adoption of Current Homestead Base Proportions and adjusted Base Proportions

RESOLVED, that the Certificate of Current Homestead Base Proportions and Adjusted Base Proportions (forms RP 67-1 and 6703) are being made part of these minutes and pursuant to Article 19, Section 1093 of the Real Property Tax Law for the Levy of Taxes on the 2008 Assessment Roll, are hereby adopted and the Village Clerk is authorized to affix the Village Certification.

The resolution was moved by Trustee Joan Gussow and seconded by Trustee Fred Devan. Upon vote the resolution carried unanimously.

The Board has requested that the amendments to Zoning Code 210-2 Definitions to all interested Agencies.

Trustee Gussow moved a resolution to create a fee of \$150 for the rental of the Pavilion by charitable non-profits. The motion was seconded by Trustee Devan. Upon vote the motion carried.

The New York Cycle club has requested to hold its “Escape New York” ride through Piermont on September 20, 2008. This will consist of 350 bicycles riding through the village between the hours of 10 and 12:30 p.m.. The Mayor will talk to the Attorney regarding the expense this poses for the Village and will readdress the request at a later date.

Trustee Moran made a motion to approve the minutes of March 25 and April 1, 2008. The motion was seconded by Trustee Blomquist. Upon vote the minutes were approved.

Trustee Devan made a motion to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$88,217.54. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow. Upon vote the Warrant was approved.

Mayor Sanders would like to have Department Liaisons begin initialing time sheets in all department prior to payrolls.

Trustee Moran spoke with Mike Miller about the repairs to the Seawall. They have paid \$1,706 in Building Permit fees that their engineer said were unnecessary. Mr. Miller has requested that the \$1,706 be refunded.

Trustee Moran made a motion to return these fees dependant on how much the Village will be billed by Brooker Engineering.

The status of the bike racks at Bunburys was discussed and will be reviewed with the owners at a later date.

Al Bartley reported that on April 16, 2008 Hudson Terrace will be closed for striping between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

At the April 29, 2008 meeting the Board will authorize the Mayor to sign a Letter of Authorization with reference to an energy study in the Village.

The playground equipment will be installed in Kane Park next week.

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Gussow and seconded by Trustee Moran. Upon vote the meeting adjourned.