

TOWN OF MENASHA
PUBLIC HEARING OF THE PROPOSED 2008 BUDGET
Municipal Complex - Assembly Room - Tuesday, November 27, 2007

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Town Chairman Arden Tews called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Residents Present: Annette Look, Eileen Tews, Arden Tews, Pat Dobberke, Ralph Grundy, Joe Nemecek, Debbie Swiertz, Barb Knaack, Dale Knaack, Jeff Sturgell, Randy Gallow, Jeff Roth, Mike Lynch, Jay Schroeder, Ray Kurtz, Paul Eisen, Barbara Hanson, Rick Timm, Patti Haase, Allen Haase, Dale McNamee, Dale Youngquist, Rachel Youngquist, Bill Krull, Keith Kiesow, Martha Andrew, Clarence Peterson, Maureen Gebhard, James Gebhard, Willis Timm, Melvin Schultz, Pam Mueller, Randy Mueller, Kate McQuillan, Rod McCants, Judith Youngquist, Guy Hegg, Tom Vandeyacht

Non-Residents Present: Karen Tweedie, Michael King, Chuck Koehler, Steve Laabs, Susan Phillips, Michael Kading, Richard Eiberger, Tim Plagenz, Joan Burrill, Myra Piergrossi, George Dearborn

2. INTRODUCTION OF TOWN BOARD MEMBERS AND TOWN STAFF

Chairman Tews introduced the Town of Menasha elected officials followed by the Town staff.

3. REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED 2008 BUDGETS OF THE TOWN OF MENASHA AND UTILITY DISTRICT

Chairman Tews presented a PowerPoint overview of the proposed Town of Menasha and Utility District budgets in depth. (See attached).

Resident Jay Schroeder, N. Lake Street, asked various questions regarding: State budget limits on revenue in relation to the Town's levy; Water utility funding depreciation; CB Park cleanup funds; Paid-on-call firefighters and annual cost of living raises; Justification of drilling an additional well at American Dr.; Regularly scheduled drug testing for firefighters; Felt topics on pay/salary disputes be presented at this meeting; Wants budget workshops televised- feels they are most important.

Resident Martha Andrew, Pages Point, questioned the salt and chips increase of approximately 50%. In the 2008 Highway General Fund (PowerPoint slide), she also asked what the specific items were that were considered "Other", and Finance Director Piergrossi read the items. Ms. Andrew felt it beneficial that for clarity, these items should be itemized in the next budget.

Resident Guy Hegg, Dunning Street, asked the difference between assessed value (per community, an actual as seen on your tax bill) and equalized value (your true value as seen across the state), and Assessor Eiberger explained this as well as our apportionment, the levy between the school districts and the County. Mr. Hegg's other questions and concerns were answered regarding not funding the Fund Balance; cost for the completion of the American Drive trail; the State set levy limit as it affects the Town's levy limits; questioned the Capital Project Town cost of \$1.5 million for stormwater in the budget.

At this point in the meeting, Chairman Tews requested that Administrator Sturgell give the stormwater presentation (rather than later) due to the question raised and the answers it would provide. The topic will be discussed again at the Special Town Meeting of the Electors.

The PowerPoint presentation covered items such as the removal of total suspended solids as required by the DNR; Town reduction of TSS - 40% by 2013; various ways of removal to include a 'high efficiency' street sweeper, ditches, swales/filter patches and the most cost efficient method, wet ponds. Administrator Sturgell gave pond examples and stated the cost for the total stormwater management project as mandated by the Dept. of Natural Resources would be around \$6.5-\$8 million over the next five years to reach the Town's goal.

Resident Jay Schroeder asked whether the Town has done anything to reach the current goal of 18.9% removal of TSS. Administrator Sturgell answered that the fact we are a Town, and the way Towns are developed with ditches/ponds etc. has helped reach this goal and added that purchase of the high-efficiency street sweeper would be even more beneficial. Administrator Sturgell explained the need for acquiring land to construct 8 to 12 wet ponds, and it must be above and beyond what the Town already has for ponds. He further stated \$1.5 million dollars has been proposed in the 2008 budget for stormwater purposes.

Resident Guy Hegg stated he was shocked at the decision to be voting for the \$1.5 million dollars at this meeting as it was the first he had heard about it. However, Community Development Director Dearborn clarified that various meetings have been held to include informational meetings as well as Planning Commission meetings, and newspaper articles appeared that explained the stormwater project. Administrator Sturgell expounded on the numbers needed to get the project rolling. He went on to explain to residents that the Town had only recently received the \$1 million dollar amount for land purchases ourselves, and reiterated that it is the State and Federal governments that have mandated stormwater management and all Towns must comply.

Resident Jay Schroeder felt the Town would lose the opportunity to begin utilizing land purchased for stormwater purposes for next year, if we did not vote yes tonight. Resident Guy Hegg felt he wanted a much larger discussion at a later date to include more townspeople whom he felt would otherwise lose their due process in voting this evening.

Resident Martha Andrew asked what amount of land would need to be acquired per pond and Administrator Sturgell stated it would be based on each individual site; commented that she hoped park areas would not be utilized; does not want to see price wars because the Town is purchasing the land; encouraged the Board to take their time and purchase strategically located ponds and in small increments which would be 'less painful' to the Town.

Resident Joe Nemecek, Susan Avenue, commented on: making use of some of the ponds located on developer-owned properties; discussed minimal value of dry ponds, pond management; further development to go to regional ponds and discussed. Director Dearborn reminded residents that we must go above and beyond what was already in place as of 2004 and the Town must move forward from that point per the DNR.

Resident Barb Knaack, Irish Road, asked whether grants were available to defer some of the costs for ponds. Director Dearborn stated there were grants in the amount of approximately \$200,000. and encouraged multiple participation amongst other municipalities which would help with obtaining the grants. She asked whether it would be more cost effective to delay the street projects and not complete the American Drive trail scheduled for 2008 and utilize these monies for the land purchase. She suggested selling Town-owned land; asked about issues of ponds lying in both an industrial and residential area; inquired as to whether General Fund monies could be used now in the interim to allow residents more time to gather information and discuss the land purchase further. However, Finance Director Piergrossi stated she wouldn't fiscally recommend this. Chairman Tews added that it would drain the Fund.

Resident Patti Haase, Shady Lane, agreed with lack of notification to residents on the stormwater project borrowing; wanted clarification that the \$1.5 million dollar amount in the borrowing for this year will be a comparable amount also over the next four years thereafter; agrees with a land purchase but at a good value; asked about the projected plan for the land just west of the complex; feels the Town should donate/give also. Supervisor Youngquist commented that when the stormwater utility would be established, it would probably assume the debt and repay the Town through fees rather than taxes. Chairman Tews stated everyone would be paying fees toward the stormwater utility, no one is exempt.

Resident Jay Schroeder wanted clarification on the street sweeper needed, and Administrator Sturgell explained the difference between a regular sweeper and the high efficiency sweeper required for the stormwater utility.

Resident Dale Knaack, Irish Road, suggested utilizing quarry mining pits; discussed seven acres of Town land and the prospect of selling it which was discussed several years ago.

Resident Joe Nemecek asked several questions on the budget presented: Computation of the sewer and water piping/cost reduction; Discussed Town projects and left over monies/impact on the Town's borrowing; Snow plowing of trails causing damage and requested this be removed from the budget; Notification/possibility of raising impact and/or any other general fees next year; Encouraged communication between the Town and other close municipalities, particularly between the Police and Fire Depts.; discussed the prospect of combining the departments and working together.

Resident Jay Schroeder wants to see the levy limit of 3.86% reduced to 3.155% and commented on board members listening to people's requests. Supervisor McNamee stated he made a similar request to reduce the budget and named various items he would have liked to see remain in, which he felt could lower the budget to approximately 2.95%. There was no further discussion on the topic.

Resident Guy Hegg asked about the borrowing for Capital projects; commented that he felt the joint Midway Road sidewalk project with the City of Menasha was unnecessary.

4. CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING

At 8:42 p.m., Chairman Tews closed the Public Hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen J. Tweedie, Town Clerk