

From the Mayor's Desk...April 3, 2017

Budget, budget, budget

The thawing of snow, the singing of birds, baseball is back and the Village budget is presented. Ah, Spring! While the other items will happen without us, I would ask you to turn your attention to the Village Budget.

On March 20th, we released the tentative budget and tonight we will be having a public hearing on the budget, and likely approving it. As we have not received much feedback from the public regarding the budget, I urge you to send an email or attend tonight's meeting with questions or concerns: 7pm at Village Hall. Some budget highlights:

The budget once again is in compliance with the New York State Property Levy Cap, with a tax levy increase of 2.50%. Due to the Town of Greenburgh property revaluation, your actual increase may vary materially from the 2.50% increase – in either direction. The Village is collecting 2.50% more in tax revenue this year – how it is divided among residents is determined by the Greenburgh tax assessment. However, for illustrative purposes, for a home valued at the median price of \$633,900 in Irvington (latest census data), Village taxes would increase by \$ 121.00.

The Village Budget has a 2.35% increase and represents additional spending of approximately \$400,000 in total, with increased health care costs for Village employees and retirees accounting for \$190,000 and an increase in NYS Retirement contributions of \$180,000. So, excluding costs related to healthcare and retirement, almost every department submitted a flat to down budget.

Some areas where we found savings included ~\$60,000 in savings due to police department retirements, a decrease in debt service of \$30,000 and an appropriation of surplus from completed Capital Projects of \$100,000. Lastly, the Recreation Department believes that can increase revenue related to programming by \$35,000.

The budget process has focused on maintaining the current level of services to the public while investing in infrastructure, buildings and parks. It has been a particular challenge to comply with the historically low Tax Levy Cap while still budgeting for necessary costs. With the cooperation of our Department Heads, I feel that this tentative budget, once again, is fiscally responsible and sustainable on a long-term basis. I would like to thank Clerk/Treasurer Brenda Jeselnik for all of her help preparing this budget and monitoring fiscal operations day to day and to our Department Heads for their support and mindfulness in running their respective Departments.

Fireworks Canceled

When the Fundraising and Community Events group (or FACE for short) was founded, one of its main focuses was helping to defray the costs of the annual Independence Day fireworks displays in Matthiessen Park. FACE has informed that Board of Trustees that, unfortunately, they were not able to raise enough money from last year's events to provide the necessary funding for this year's fireworks display. The

Board of Trustees did not think that we could justify spending \$25,000 for a 15 minute fireworks display. This was not a decision that either FACE or the Board of Trustees took lightly as we know what a special day July 4th is in Irvington. However, unless a group steps up to raise money, there will not be any fireworks in Irvington this July 4th.

If someone (or a group) would like to try to raise money to restore the fireworks, I would be more than happy to work with you. Unfortunately, we do not have a lot of time due to scheduling overtime and the fireworks company. So, please contact me as soon as possible if you would like to try and restore the fireworks.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Smith, Mayor
Village of Irvington, NY
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