

**Village of Buchanan
Mayor & Board of Trustees
Special Meeting and Budget Hearing
April 3, 2024**

PRESENT: (This meeting was held live and via Zoom)

Mayor Theresa Knickerbocker
Trustees Awilda Baez, Anthony Capicotti, Daniel Stewart, Robert Wheeler
Village Administrator Marcus Serrano
Village Clerk, Treasurer Cynthia Kempter
Deputy Village Clerk Sharon Murphy
Deputy Treasurer, Keith Douglas

ABSENT:

Village Attorney Stephanie Porteus

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Knickerbocker called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Consider a Motion to Open Public Hearing on 2024-2025 Tentative Budget.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Stewart, with all in favor.

Village Administrator Serrano stated that at the last meeting he gave a detailed budget presentation and a budget message. All the information is on the website. The tax increase for next year is anticipated to be 5.34%. This is an increase for the average taxpayer of \$146.88 or \$12.24 cents per month. The major increase in appropriations was police salaries, staff increases, expenses, medical insurance and debt service. The revenue impact was mainly the reduction in the cessation fund. Contingency was reduced by \$100,000.

Mayor Knickerbocker questioned a few items. Trustee Stewart stated he would like to get creative as to where we can cut costs. Trustee Capicotti mentioned the engineering costs. He questioned if we could keep some of the work in-house. Steve Laker, 181 Cortlandt Street, asked questions about the legal line, auditors' line, treasurer part-time line, sale of real property, central garage, and Lents Cove line. Mr. Laker spoke about the Police Department needing another officer.

Michael Wenz, 202 First Street, made public comment about the Police Department needing another officer. Mayor Knickerbocker asked Village Administrator Serrano what the figure would be if we added another officer. Village Administrator Serrano replied it would be \$229,000 for the complete package. Mr. Laker stated that if you take the budget line item for the Police Department and divide it by 6 you get \$180,000 which includes the overtime. While you can't reduce the overtime 100%, but if you reduce it by half you are talking about \$130,000 increase to the police budget. Mayor Knickerbocker would like the board to discuss any stats that are available for the police department before a decision is made. Trustee Capicotti agreed that we are not ready to make that decision but that the Board needs to look into it. We need to look into every aspect. We did look into part-time. We need to have the Chief speak and give us what he thinks is necessary. That is a priority. Trustee Stewart agrees that we are not in a position to decide right now. Eileen Absenger, 138 Tate Avenue, asked what a contractual expense meant in the budget. She asked if there were any departments that would need to increase when the developments are built.

A Motion to adjourn the Budget Hearing until April 23, 2024 was made by Mayor Knickerbocker and seconded by Trustee Wheeler, with all in favor.

b. Consider a Motion to Call for a Public Hearing on May 7, 2024 Regarding the Outside Sewer Use Fee.

A motion to approve this as presented was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Stewart with all in favor.

c. Consider a Motion to Call for a Public Hearing on May 7, 2024 Regarding Updating Attachment 5 in Chapter 211 Zoning, Schedule B, Stormwater Control Facility Maintenance Agreement.

A motion to approve this as presented was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Wheeler with all in favor.

d. Consider a Motion to Approve the Following Salaries for Certain Camp and Pool Staff.

Camp Director	\$875.00 per week
Art Director	\$16.00 per hour
Pool Director	\$24.00 per hour
WSI	\$26.00 per hour

A motion to approve this as presented was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Capicotti with all in favor.

- e. Consider a Motion to Approve an Increase in Salary for Seasonal Highway Help to \$17.00 per hour.

A motion to approve this as presented was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Stewart with all in favor.

Trustee Capicotti questioned if they could make it \$18.00 per hour in order to be competitive.

A motion to rescind the original motion of \$17.00 per hour for Seasonal Highway Help was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Wheeler with all in favor.

A Motion to Approve an Increase in Salary for Seasonal Highway Help to \$18.00 per hour was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Baez with all in favor.

- f. Consider a Motion Authorizing the Engineer to Prepare Specifications and to Advertise for Bids for Sludge Removal.

On a question, Trustee Capicotti asked if Todd Travis would be able to prepare these specifications. Village Administrator Serrano will look into this. Mayor Knickerbocker said to leave this as is and change it at the next meeting if necessary.

A motion to approve this as presented was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Stewart with all in favor.

- g. Consider a Motion to Agree to Split the Cost with the Town of Cortlandt Regarding Crosswalks on Bannon Avenue/Kings Ferry Road and Tate Avenue/Kings Ferry Road.

Mayor Knickerbocker stated that they have met with the Town and the Town could like to split the cost. Village Administrator Serrano stated that the survey was complete and the Town wants to go out to bid. There are no tentative numbers. Trustee Capicotti questioned if they put together an itemized spreadsheet on the cost. Village Administrator stated that he has not seen the plan specifications or cost estimate. He will follow up. Mayor Knickerbocker stated they are not ready to vote on this.

- h. Consider a Motion Approving the Professional Services of LaBella Associates to Perform Inspections on Developments Within the Village of Buchanan.

Mayor Knickerbocker stated that the Board has decided to hire this firm for the AMS and Village Square developments. Village Administrator Serrano stated

that the building permit fees more than pays for this with a substantial amount of money still coming to the Village and this protects the Village and make sure the job is done according to the code. We are waiting on a proposal for the additional scope of work. Steve Laker, 181 Cortlandt Street, stated that they need to provide their hourly rate.

A motion to approve this as presented was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Baez with all in favor.

3. COMMENTS:

Eileen Absenger, 138 Tate Avenue, commended the Board for a nice evening and stated that this has been one of the nicest board meetings in quite a while. She thought that since we will be getting more residents it would be nice to put together a directory for the services that are offered in the Tri-Village.

Trustee Capicotti stated that he and Mayor Knickerbocker ironed out some of their negativity and hoped they could put it all behind them. It was ugly and a lot of things were said. He is looking to make this Village as good as he can make it.

Mayor Knickerbocker said that her and Trustee Capicotti had a very constructive conversation last night and they both understand each other better. They have both agreed to work together. We all have different strengths to bring to the Board, they will communicate much better with each other and will do good things for the Village. She looks forward to working with everyone.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 7:56 P.M. a Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Stewart with all in favor.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:32 P.M. a Motion to exit executive session was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Capicotti with all in favor.

At 8:32 P.M. a Motion to adjourn this meeting was made by Mayor Knickerbocker, seconded by Trustee Wheeler with all in favor. No monies were expended.