

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Oxford was held on February 27, 2024 at the Village Hall - 20 LaFayette Park, Oxford, NY 13830. Audit Committee met at 7:00 P.M. and Regular Board meeting started at 7:30 P.M.

Present were: Mayor Terry Stark (via zoom), Trustee Dale Leach, Trustee Richard Rice, Trustee Dustin Hendricks, Trustee Richard Marks, OIC Adam Francis, WWTP Operator Brenton Rideout, DPW Superintendent Bill Kelsey, Fire Chief Ron Martin, EMS Captain Mark Forrest, Clerk-Treasurer Shelly Marks.

Absent: Zoning Officer/Dog Warden Roger Barrows

The Village Trustees (Audit Committee) reviewed each of the invoices in the abstract for February 2024.

Mayor Terry Stark called the Regular meeting to order at 8:06 p.m. Fire Chief Ron Martin addressed the board before the meeting was called to order as the abstracts were reviewed quicker than anticipated and there was no one present from the public.

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was given.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

None

ABSTRACT:

Trustee Leach seconded by Trustee Marks made a motion to approve Abstract #009 as presented. All voted aye and motion was carried.

General Fund	\$34,652.71
EMS Fund	\$ -0-
Water Fund	\$ 8,879.77
Sewer Fund	\$14,802.18
Water Project	<u>\$ -0-</u>
	\$58,334.66

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Trustee Rice moved and Trustee Hendricks seconded a motion to approve the January 30, 2024 Meeting Minutes. All voted aye and motion was carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Trustee Hendricks moved and Trustee Rice seconded the motion to approve the January Treasurer's Reports.

JUSTICE REPORT:

Trustee Leach moved and Trustee Marks seconded the motion to approve the January Justice Report from Judge Ross. All approved.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Officer Francis addressed the board. February was a short month with no major issues. Body cameras have been fixed. Windows will no longer support their two main computers. They will need two new computers for \$3,000 to transfer all the information.

OFD REPORT:

Chief Martin addressed the board. The department has been quite busy this month. On February 3rd they were called for mutual aid for a house fire which ended in two deaths and several calls in between-barn fire in Greene, house fire on 3642 County Road 32 with entrapment. The house was 70% involved when they got the call. A gentleman was pulled out but all the doors were left open which resulted in the fire spreading more quickly. There was a minor injury with a fire fighter and a driver had someone pull out in front of him and his truck has been totaled. This goes against the Oxford Fire Department insurance. On Sunday night,

there was a grass and brush fire at the end of their district. Another grass and brush with 13 acres and another barn fire today. There were also 19 calls/536 hours. Last month he talked about NFPA/OSHA. Chief Martin attended a webinar on this latest information. He talked about what the requirements would be for these new regulations if/when they take effect. Medical requirements were also discussed that they want to put in place with these new regulations. DECON facilities must be addressed, smoke and CO detectors. PPE storage has to be away from public areas. PPE is replaced after 10 years no matter how often it is used. 22 NFPA standards, 14 parts of additional standards. PESH inspectors or a jury of people would have to make sure these items are followed. May 6th submitted in writing for injuries, death citations from PESH, public relations or opens the doors for lawsuits. Mayor Stark asked Chief Martin if any of the firefighters had any recommendations on what the village should do for this. Talk to neighboring fire districts or municipal wide to find out what they are doing with all of these new regulations. Smaller districts will be forced to shut their doors because they cannot implement these changes due to the price involved with the recommendations. Reach out to federal representatives with these questions and concerns. This includes the paid fire departments as well.

Lots of research to try to understand this with our own organization. The entire system when responding to fires will be changed. New reporting system for every call that they go on. Interior person needs a second means of communication for firefighter accountability. Now set up incident command, document, time stamp all operations of a fire. Built into the fire report with a complete synopsis of the event.

EMS REPORT:

Mark Forrest was present. New budget has been built into the Fire contract. Mayor Stark talked about the staffing and the current level. Normally need 1,000 calls to make a squad complete. Services went to county-based service. 220 calls that produced enough money to keep us afloat. Staff 8 hours a day cannot do 24/7. 75% of the calls are being responded to now. If we could get this up to around 90% between 8-8, we could be sure the EMS survives. We currently have enough money to survive two fiscal years before the money is depleted.

WASTEWATER PLANT:

WWTP Operator Brenton reported to the board. Slack Chemical performed tests on our sludge to be sure we are using the right polymer. This should be done every few years. He has also been calling companies to update the SDS sheets. These need to be done for everything we have around the plant (oil, chemicals, sprays, etc.) Our DEC inspection went well and we are "killing it" and to keep it up. Penn Power is coming Thursday to inspect and check all three of our emergency generators. He has been helping with the lead and copper inventory and this has taken up quite a bit of his time this month. He changed the oil and did a bunch of maintenance on the bar screen that was needed. Trustee Leach asked that we make some budget modifications but not to change any of the budget figures.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:

DPW Superintendent Kelsey addressed the board. He wants to hire another laborer on May 1st. Trustee Hendricks moved and Trustee Marks seconded a motion to approve the hiring of Robert Kappauf. All in favor, approved. Mayor Stark will prepare an offer letter to let DPW Superintendent Kelsey review it. Trustee Marks asked if we could find out if he could start in April on a part time basis to help out. Bill Kelsey will talk to Robert about this possibility. The lead and copper inventory has taken up a lot of time. They are knocking on doors and handing out slips if no one answers the door. We have 577 service connections in the village. He is getting quotes for paving roads and SPW Kelsey will report to the board for the budget figures. The sweeper has been run since the weather has been nice to try to get some outdoor items completed.

We talked last week about the trees at Boname, they only took one tree, and everything is gone. They were going to leave the trunk and cut it into pieces. Smaller tree on the other side is also gone.

Altec sent someone out to evaluate our truck. They have two gas models in stock (used). These are 10' shorter than ours and not grounded so he did not get more information. He will get comparable models so we can compare prices.

He will call Cooks as they still have not showed up to finish up from last year's trees getting cut. Jerry Prince will meet with DPW Superintendent and get prices within a couple weeks for the street work.

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Roger Barrows was not present.

BUDGET REVIEW

The mayor discussed the General Fund Budget he provided to the Board on February 25th via email. As presented, the overall Tax Levy would increase 2% from the current year \$736,000 to \$750,500 and be compliant with the Village FY 2025 Tax Cap Levy allowance of 2%. However, the actual tax rate based upon the Village Tax Roles as March 1, 2023 would reduce the current tax rate of \$26.99 to \$26.85 per thousand taxable assessed property in FY 2025. This results as the overall Tax Assessment roles increased from \$27,269,192 to \$27,955,956 (+2.5%) primarily due to the addition of Stewarts Shops and new residential construction. These additions to the tax rolls would add about \$15,000 in tax revenue from these properties without adding any additional tax to all other village taxpayers as the tax rate would actually drop by about 2%.

The mayor also indicated that to keep the tax levy increase at or below 2% was a challenge this year and he may have overestimated revenue and underestimated expenses. This was due to several unknown variables regarding revenue streams and/or inflationary impact on expenses related to OFD capital plan, EMS viability, unsigned Fire contract, Insurance rates, DPW road projects, and equipment purchases.

The mayor indicated that The Village could increase the confidence level in the proposed budget to +90% but it would be necessary to increase the tax levy by 4.0% versus 2%. This would require the Village to pass a local law to exceed the Tax Levy cap. However, due to the overall increase in taxable property as noted above, this would result in a 1.5% tax rate increase to \$27.36 from the current \$26.99. He also indicated that about 23% of Villages across the state exceeded tax levy cap in 2021.

When asked what he would personally recommend during Board discussion, he indicated it would be wise to proceed with the local law option to exceed the Tax Levy Cap for FY 2025 as he had provided to the Board in his memo of February 25th.

No action was taken on these proposals and the mayor will schedule a meeting for final tentative budget review at a special meeting on March 12th, which will provide adequate time to publish notice of a Public Hearing on all Village Budgets on March 26th.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Kale Webb's (owner of 62 Albany Street) sister wants to take over the property at 62 Albany Street and get it cleaned up. His sister called Mayor Stark regarding this. Mayor Stark called Gene Rood but Gene has not called back yet. We need to issue a demolition permit at this property. Mayor Stark asked Roger Barrows to contact Tefft or Davis about cleaning up the garbage that is obvious as a first step then we will bill them for that. Trustee Leach asked about a grant for blighted houses he thought he saw. These must be for properties that are in the same area but not for individual houses so we are not eligible for this grant.

Delegate funds from unallocated fund balance toward the demolition – all trustees are in favor of this allocation. Trustee Hendricks moved and Trustee Leach seconded a motion to set up a fund dedicated to homes that need to be demolished. All approved, carried. Mayor Stark will respond to Lance and Amy Thorne and do demolition process to the board for the timing to schedule public hearings. He may contact DPW Superintendent Kelsey to get an estimate to update the Jablonski property and 62 Albany Street and remove all debris and take to the landfill.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS:

Trustee Rice said that the generator at the fire station is three times what they need. The contractor's got their numbers from him. Mayor Stark has not heard from Sean Foran regarding the roof rebid in February or the issue with generator. Only a 45k generator will be needed not a 90k.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Terry Stark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelly W. Marks
Clerk-Treasurer