



Village of North Syracuse
Regular Board Meeting
April 12, 2012 at 6:29 PM
North Syracuse Community Center
700 South Bay Road, North Syracuse, NY 13212

Mayor Mark Atkinson called the meeting to order at 6:29 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Atkinson open the Public Hearing stating that this Public Hearing was being held by the Board of Trustees of the Village of North Syracuse to discuss the tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2012 – 2013 for the Village of North Syracuse. Mayor Atkinson stated he will read a statement that he has prepared, then have Dianne come up and explain in a little more detail on the budget; and then open it up for the public to comment.

Mayor Atkinson read the following statement:

This budget started the first day this administration took office this past July. The changes this administration made were a continuation of the cost savings efforts of the previous Mayor Diane Browning. Changes were made that included consolidating positions, converting some full-time positions to part-time and changing contracts for professional services to realize savings. All in all, Village operational spending is down almost a half a million dollars.

Although our spending is down, the cost of business continues to rise at an alarming rate. The average Village in New York has experienced a 2,000 % increase in pension costs. The cost of providing health insurance to employees has drastically increased. Everyone is familiar with the increasing energy costs.

Our goal is always to provide the same high quality services while not raising taxes. We were close. The 1.4% (approximate) increase will allow us to not only continue the same high level services but add new ones. With this budget - our spending does not exceed our revenues.

It will also provide some funding from our fund balance to address safety concerns, energy reduction initiatives, Village marketing initiatives, building maintenance and new services.

The Village administration parking lot has been neglected for a considerable amount of time. It has been patched several times and is now a safety hazard. The money allocated (\$35K) will probably not replace the whole lot but should provide enough funding to mitigate the hazard to an acceptable level.

The Village administration building wastes a tremendous amount of energy. We have made some head way tightening the building up. I have allocated \$10K additional funds to finish replacing the old doors that do not function with energy efficient windows.

I have proposed \$15K to assist in Village recognition and marketing. There are 60,000 cars that travel on Main Street every day. I would like to replace/modify the existing signage at each entryway to the Village on Main St. Also, our business district on Gateway Park Drive is one of our best kept secrets



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in the Village. There is no signage for this area and it is not visible from any direction. We currently realize approximately \$70K a year in taxes from existing businesses. There is a tremendous amount of real estate for sale back there that could produce tax dollars for our Village.

The most utilized facility in our Village is the Community Center. For several years, we have put off some wall maintenance. I have allocated \$7,800 to accomplish this overdue maintenance action.

One project we have had on the table for a while is a Frisbee Golf Course in Heritage Park. I have set aside \$5,200 for this. We will also be rolling out an E-Waste pick-up and a new heavy waste pick-up schedule. These will be great services added to our lengthy list of services we provide to our Village.

These projects will be funded from our fund balance. Our fund balance, after these deductions, is still right in the middle of the recommended range by NYCOM – NY Conference of Mayors.

Within what we control, the Village of North Syracuse is fiscally healthy. The Mayor requested Dianne to continue with details of the budget.

Dianne began with a powerpoint presentation that defined some specific numbers. Dianne explained that Cicero is on a full valuation of their property, and Town of Clay remains on an assessed value with an equalization rate. Each Village resident is looking at approximately a 1.4% tax increase – the same if you reside in Town of Cicero or Town of Clay. Dianne specifically went through each area, main categories of the budget, and outlined the budget for this year verses last year. General Government Support is down, Public Safety has increased. Transportation is down approx. \$34,000. Parks and Recreation is up approx \$11,000, although \$13,000 of this is for the Frisbee Golf and Comm Center Improvements. Employee Benefits is down slightly due to a composite rate vs. actual rate and employee contributions. Debt Service is up due to a new dump truck and a new police car that will require lease payments. The sewer fund is up approx. \$4,000 due to a sewer camera.

The Mayor opened this up to the public and requested if anyone would like to speak – any questions or comments. No one came forward. The Mayor asked if anyone wanted to speak in favor of this budget. The Mayor asked if anyone wanted to speak against this budget. The Mayor opened this up to the Trustees. Trustee Butterfield feels that this is an excellent budget and every year the Village faces struggles across the Board and mandates are what drives our budget. The state tells us what we have to do without telling us how they can help us. He said that we are running as lean as we possibly can and we are doing the best that we can. Dep. Mayor Henry spoke of this being one of the best budgets that was put together, with the Departments' really pulling together and cutting back. Mayor Atkinson spoke that the process was a little different this year, each Department was tasked to put their budget together as they had in the past but were capped within a budgetary number – and then additional cuts were made from there. Trustee Ferguson said that he felt this was a good budget and it was well done. Clerk Treasurer confirmed to Trustee Ferguson the way the sales tax was reflected as revenue on the



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budget; whereas it is being transitioned into a grant “form” now – whereas we submit and receive approval for these sales tax monies that use to automatically be given to us. Dianne continued to say that we have to apply for the grant – basically requesting these monies and upon approval they disburse these monies to us. She explained over 3 years the grant request will be larger (that needs approval) before we receive our monies. Trustee Linnertz inquired on the amount for the legal professional services, this year vs. last year. Trustee Linnertz also spoke of not being in favor of the elected officials receiving any raise – including the Village Justice when everyone is asking to cut back and does not feel that this is appropriate at this time. Trustee Linnertz did not feel that the Police Vehicle Maintenance should not be increased by 20% - most concerning that the police fleet is being replaced by 2 new police cars. The Mayor spoke that he discussed with the Police Chief and they still felt this was a good number based upon his department being over budget this year. Trustee Linnertz spoke of 4 police cars in the total fleet and with 2 being replaced that the budget is inflated but if it is not used and saved, he is agreeable with this. Trustee Linnertz spoke that he is not in favor of the discretionary spending -- signs of \$15K, Frisbee Golf \$5K and he disagreed with the safety hazard of the Village parking lot, understands it is not in the best shape, but strongly feels that without this discretionary spending we could be at a “zero” percent tax increase. Mayor Atkinson spoke he strongly feels that this is a safety hazard especially the handicap parking area - the wheelchairs on this pavement. He continued to say that it is a liability and as the Mayor of North Syracuse, he will not accept this liability.

Darlene Piper of 106 ½ Northfield Drive was concerned with the Frisbee Golf in the budget and who will be monitoring it. The Mayor said this will be monitored just as all the other equipment is monitored in the Village. She inquired about the trees budget. Gary W. spoke of the public ash bore trees, they need to be removed and they have already identified them. Darlene spoke of the trees on the new sidewalk on Chestnut near Heritage Park have been destroyed. Darlene questioned the \$1,000 for new trees. The Mayor spoke of \$1,000 for trees, whereas this is not an exorbitant amount of money, considering we are a Tree City Village. Gary explained they buy small trees and plant them at Heritage to further their growth, to save money for the Village rather than buying bigger trees.

Trustee Ferguson requested clarification on the budget model that reflected a new Rescue 3 under the Fire Dept. but on this Tentative Model it is a Rescue 5 – clarification if this was replacing or if it was a brand new vehicle. It was confirmed that this replaces an existing vehicle.

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 7:01 PM.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Mark Atkinson, Deputy Mayor Chuck Henry, Trustee Gary Butterfield, Trustee Fred Ferguson and Trustee Paul Linnertz were present.

PERSONNEL PRESENT: Clerk-Treasurer Dianne Kufel, Codes Enforcement Officer Pam DiCarlo, DPW Sup't. Gary Wilmer, Village Engineer Brian Bouchard, Village Attorney Scott Chatfield.



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RESOLUTION # 054-12

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Ferguson made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 22, 2012 Board Meeting. Trustee Linnertz seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION # 055-12

GENERAL FUND ABSTRACT APPROVAL

Trustee Butterfield made a motion to approve the General Fund Abstract #22 in the amount of \$97,282.53 covering Voucher #1144 to Voucher #1224; the motion was seconded by Trustee Ferguson. Trustee Ferguson requested clarification on the Code 4 Voucher on a pump for the hertz tool whereas Trustee Linnertz explained. The motion was carried unanimously with exception to Trustee Linnertz, he abstained from voting.

RESOLUTION #056-12

SEWER FUND ABSTRACT APPROVAL

Trustee Linnertz made a motion to approve the Sewer Fund Abstract #22 in the amount of \$63.00 covering Voucher #18. Trustee Butterfield seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION # 057-12

BUDGET TRANSFER

Trustee Ferguson made a motion to approve the transfer of \$3,900 from Account A1620.1 (Village Hall Pers. Services) to A1620.444 (Buildings-HVAC Htg. Repairs). The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Henry. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #058-12

BUDGET TRANSFER

Trustee Linnertz made a motion to approve the transfer of \$437 from Account A2615P (DWI Allocation Police Revenue) to A3120.469 (Police Training). The motion was seconded by Trustee Ferguson. The motion was carried unanimously.

CITIZENS' VOICE: No one responded.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Mayor spoke of the resolution to approve the adoption of the Local Law #2 – 2% Tax Cap Override. The Mayor continued to say that we previously had our Public Hearing at our last meeting. He continued to explain the complicating elements of the “new” formula including PILOT agreements, NYS Retirement, to determine the threshold for the 2% tax cap. The Mayor stated that we are not going to pass this 2% tax cap, we are at 1.4%, purely precautionary. Trustee Ferguson made a motion



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to approve the adoption of this Local Law #2. Deputy Mayor Henry seconded the motion. Trustee Linnertz stated that he is not in favor of a tax increase but in order to protect the Village for the potential future harm he understands this. Trustee Ferguson inquired if we had to cite this Law in our override report to the state. Dianne stated that they ask if we are passing this law, yes or no, only. The motion was carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Mayor spoke of the acceptance of a resignation letter from the Firehouse caretaker, and good luck on his new venture.

RESOLUTION #059-12 **ACCEPT ELECTED/APPOINTED OFFICERS FIRE DEPT.**

Trustee Ferguson made a motion accepting the following elected and appointed officers to the Fire Dept.:

Patrick J. Brennan	Chief of Fire
Timothy R. Ellis	Deputy Chief
Christopher Strong	Assistant Chief
John Hogan	Fire Warden
Captain:	John Hogan
Captain:	Joseph DiFabio
Lieutenant:	Jos Asztalos
Lieutenant:	Bob Liberatore
Lieutenant:	Michael Redhead

The motion was seconded by Trustee Linnertz. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #060-12 **VILLAGE WIDE GARAGE SALE MAY 19TH AND MAY 20TH**

Mayor Atkinson explained that every year the Village sets a date for a Village wide garage sale that enables residents to forego registering for a garage sale permit. The Mayor stated the date will be on May 19th and May 20th. We will be putting out a few press releases and we will put this on our website, as well. Trustee Butterfield made a motion to designate May 19th and May 20th as the annual Village wide garage sale dates. The motion was seconded by Trustee Ferguson. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #061-12 **VILLAGE WIDE 2012 BRUSH PICK UP SCHEDULE**

Trustee Ferguson made a motion approving the 2012 brush schedule. The motion was seconded by



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Trustee Linnertz. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #062-12 **ABJ FIRE PROTECTION CO. 01/01/12 - 12/31/12 COMM CTR.**

Trustee Ferguson made a motion to sign an agreement that the Mayor feels is best see fit whether it be monthly or annual. The motion was seconded by Trustee Butterfield. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #063-12 **SET DATE FOR ANNUAL VLG BOARD MTG MONDAY JULY 2ND**

Trustee Linnertz made a motion setting the date for the Annual Village Board Meeting for Monday, July 2nd at 5:00 PM. The motion was seconded Trustee Ferguson. The motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION #064-12 **ADOPT THE VILLAGE 2012-2013 TENTATIVE BUDGET**

Trustee Linnertz stated that he will be voting against the budget for two reasons. The first being that he is not in favor of the discretionary spending; and secondly, the increase to Mr. Chatfield's payment was never discussed with himself, or perhaps the other members of the Board. Trustee Linnertz spoke of not necessarily having a problem with it although as part of a procedure, as the executive branch the legislative branch has a checks and balance process, he is not voting in favor of this. Mayor Atkinson said that he did send the budget out, and he did speak at the last meeting, if anyone had any questions or concerns to contact him. Mayor Atkinson spoke of how some people did get raises and some did not get raises; as the CEO of this Village, this is the way he is doing this. Deputy Mayor Henry made a motion to adopt the 2012-2013 tentative budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Trustee Ferguson, with Mayor Atkinson and Trustee Butterfield voting the same. Trustee Linnertz voted against the proposed budget.

ATTORNEY REPORT: Attorney Chatfield reminded the Board of the situation regarding the easement issue on 111 Tallwood Court. He told the Board that he received a proposal to release a portion of the easement with the map. Attorney Chatfield further discussed this with Codes, DPW and Engineering; and responded that we did not want to release quite that much – approx. 2.6 feet less. He continued to say that if they modify their plan it will be satisfactory, reminding them that they need to work with the Codes Department on the approval of the construction.

ENGINEERING REPORT: No Report

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:



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Police Department: Chief Connelly spoke of Earth Day Event to be held on April 21st whereas it was previously discussed that the “Bikes for Trash” would be the theme. Chief Connelly spoke of himself and Officer Florian gathering all the bikes and checking the condition of them, it appears there will be 22 bikes that are refurbished and ready for this event.

Highway Department: No Report

Codes Department: Codes Enf. Officer Pam DiCarlo spoke of 111 Tallowood Court and explained that there is a long list of requirements on the approval of the construction. She continued to say that they have a lot of work to do for the Village.

Clerk-Treasurer: Dianne Kufel explained that she was pleased with the budget process and is quite pleased that it is behind us. She continued to explain that there are a few new requirements with this budget process particular to the 2% tax cap adherence. She is hopeful to have all of the documentation put together and bounded copies available soon for all the Board and Departments relatively soon prior to the new budget year.

DEPUTY MAYOR/TRUSTEES REPORTS:

Trustee Fergerson – reminded all of Arbor Day on Friday, April 27th at 11:00 AM at Heritage Park. He also mentioned that both Fred and Pat will be out of Town on May 4th thru May 7th. He reminded all of the Public Safety Committee meeting on Monday, June 4th at 5:00 PM at Fire Station 1 and also reminded everyone of the Canteen Open House on Sunday, April 22nd at 3:00 PM.

Trustee Linnertz – wanted to congratulate all the new elected officials of the Fire Dept.

Trustee Butterfield – spoke of the Sign Committee’s next meeting is Monday, April 16th at 4:00 PM. This committee is looking into the sign ordinance and trying to simplify it and make it easier to comply with. This is the purpose of it.

Deputy Mayor Henry – mentioned the wonderful attendance at the Bunny Breakfast held on April 1st, at the VFW Post in North Syracuse; reflecting back on his making the pancakes and the Mayor cooking scrambled eggs. He also noted that he will be on vacation, in Florida, and will not be attending the next Village Board meeting.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

The Mayor spoke of a new tax break available most recently as of April 1st. “Just in time for Spring, New Yorkers are getting a much-needed tax break. As of April 1st, we’ll no longer have to pay the



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four percent state portion of the sales tax clothing and footwear purchases up to \$110 per item. This will save consumers an estimated \$210 million over the year". This is a nice little break. Mayor Atkinson also reminded all of the North Syracuse Chamber of Commerce Spring Hygiene Drive – supporting our local pantries. Items can be dropped off at Syracuse Realty, 106 North Main Street. Items such as shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, toothbrushes and feminine products. All items are requested by May 23, 2012. The Mayor spoke of the success of the Easter Bunny Breakfast that will benefit the Family Festival – provide for free activities, such as face paintings, etc. The Mayor expressed his thanks to all the staff and treasurer for their assistance with this budget process. He mentioned the cuts, reduced spending and the lost of revenue...all of that and we were able to provide an upcoming budget of approximately \$10 of an increase per household.

Trustee Butterfield made a motion to adjourn at 7:12 PM. Mayor Atkinson seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne M. Kufel
Village Clerk-Treasurer