

PRESENT: Mayor Smith; Trustees Armstrong, Watson, Austin and Chaplin; Bethe Reynolds; Matthew Saari; Robert Gendron; Jane Gendron; Marjorie Mohn; Lucretia Ingerson; Dana Grant; Ryan St. Clair

Mayor Smith opened the public hearing on the tentative budget for 2018-2019. Mayor Smith reviewed the budget with the Board members. The total proposed appropriations would increase the tax rate by \$2.61/1000. Mayor Smith stated that the Board had two options. They could decrease line items in the proposed budget or use some of the fund balance to keep the tax rate the same as last year. The current Fund Balance is overstated due to past funding issues with the Water and Sewer funds that were not paid back to the General Fund. The decrease of \$352,000.00 to the Fund Balance will leave a balance of \$748,000.00. Trustees Watson and Austin want to use the Fund Balance to keep the tax rate the same. Trustee Armstrong wants to use the Fund Balance but cut expenses next year. Trustee Chaplin feels more cuts are still needed.

Dana Grant asked about sharing equipment with the Town of Whitehall such as an excavator to save money. Marjorie Mohn said that the Village and Town should purchase a new excavator together. Mayor Smith said that an excavator is an expensive equipment to let someone else borrow and the Town just purchased a new one. Bethe Reynolds asked about consolidating the Town and Village and then there wouldn't be a need to purchase new equipment that the Town already has. Mayor Smith will check with other municipalities that have consolidated to see if there are any benefits in doing so. He also stated that the budget includes the starting process of a comprehensive plan but not the completion of the plan. It does not include the feasibility of consolidating but the Board may ask the public if this should be looked into. Mayor Smith stated that public hearings would be held regarding the comprehensive plan.

Motion made by Trustee Austin, seconded by Trustee Armstrong to move funds from the Fund Balance to keep the tax rate the same as last year, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Trustee Armstrong would like to save money next year by having the Washington County Sheriff's Department cover the Village instead of the Whitehall Police Department. Mayor Smith stated that the Police Department cannot just be eliminated because the Village is bound by a contract with the Police Union for two more years according to Village Attorney Erika Sellar Ryan.

Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Austin to have no increase in Water rates for the 2018-2019 Budget, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Austin to have no increase in Sewer rates for the 2018-2019 Budget, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 5:23PM, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Stephanie A. LaChapelle  
Clerk-Treasurer