

Minutes - Special Board Meeting Village of Greenwich
March 28, 2023

The Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Greenwich was held March 28, 2023 in the Board Room at 6 Academy St. Present were Mayor Fuller, Trustees Brown, Robinson, Panza, Vandewater, as well as Sergeant Danko, Trustee-elect Grimmke and Treasurer Prime. Mayor Fuller opened the meeting at 6:31 pm.

1. The Issue of continuing the Village Court was discussed. The Village Court must stay operational until the end of the current Justice term, which in this case is April 1, 2024. A list of possible Associate Judges, which can be appointed by the Village was compiled. An Associate Village Justice could reside anywhere within Washington County. Alternately, an Associate Justice could be appointed from OCA. Putting that discussion aside for the time being; a conversation of pros and cons of keeping the court open vs closing it took place. A lower volume of tickets and the reasons behind that was explained by Sergeant Danko. The court has lost money since the outbreak of Covid and has not recovered. If the Village Court was dissolved, the cases would be heard at the Town Court. The fines for Local Village Laws would come back to the Village. Work would have to be done to define these local violations more precisely.
2. **2023/2024 Budget.** Treasurer Prime lead the discussion. The total tax levy increase is 3.27% which is under the tax cap. The tax rate per 1000 decreased in Greenwich. If your assessed value didn't change, your tax bill will go down. If your assessed value increased, your taxes will too. No change in assessment; taxes will go down. Big spending items this year were; energy and fuel, the non-retirement of an employee, grants applications and attorney fees. The reserve funds will be invested, as the Gannon Fund is now. If garbage sticker price gets raised to \$3.00 it will change the tax levy by \$4,000.
3. **Water and sewer;** the increase to the water rates in January 2021 of \$30 was half of the projected increase needed for the improvements to the water system. These goals were projected by B&L when planning the water and sewer projects. Trustee-elect Grimmke noted that the highest users get a discount as their consumption goes up. If the prices were scaled to increase as consumption increased, the Village would see more income while discouraging high use. This will be looked into and will be discussed in April. The water increase could be partially implemented now or delayed but the sewer increase probably needs to be implemented as soon as possible. Trustee Vandewater pointed out the grinder pump contract can be renegotiated in 2024. This will be an opportunity to work on school water / sewer maintenance issues. A discussion was had on tying sewer charges to water usage. The school and laundromat sewer bills are already calculated based on water consumption. The sewer bills will need to be raised by \$50 per billing to ultimately pay for the wastewater project. The Board discussed raising the sewer charges of big users and other ways of lessening the impact of higher bills on the average user.
Motion to change the water/sewer billing cycle to March 1, July 1 and Nov 1 effective immediately made by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Vandewater and carried by all.
Motion to increase sewer charge by \$10.00 per billing cycle effective July 1 made by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Robinson and carried by all.
Water rate increase tabled.

4. Treasurer Prime presents the tentative budget to the Board making the changes of moving an erroneous phone cost of \$1000 to the grants line and calculating the just-past increase of \$10 for sewer rents. This Tentative Budget will be open for inspection at the Clerk's Office until the Public Hearing on April 10, 2023.

Mayor Fuller formally accepted Judge Clothier's resignation letter effective end of April 2023.

Resolution No9 of 2023 -Authorize the abolishment of the Village Court and the Office of Village Justice effective March 31, 2024 subject to Permissive Referendum. Public Hearing Made on a motion by Trustee Panza, seconded by Trustee Brown.

Trustee Vandewater has started the process of including the bridge lights in the maintenance agreement with NYPA.

8:50pm Motion to adjourn made by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Robinson and carried by all.

Respectfully submitted

Jane Dowling – Village Clerk