

Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing – April 5, 2021

The following are updates from the Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing, held on April 5, 2021. If there are any concerns or a need for more information, please call (315-673-3112) or email (marboard@twcny.rr.com) the Village Office.

Annual Meeting - the Board held its Annual Meeting on April 5, 2021, for the purpose of making appointments, designating official newspapers and official depositories, establishing regular meeting dates of the Board and other matters to come before the Board.

Appointment of Deputy Mayor – the first appointment was that of Trustee Timothy P. Manahan to serve as Deputy Mayor of the Village of Marcellus. In the absence or inability of the Mayor to serve, the Deputy Mayor is vested with all of the powers of the Mayor.

Set Date & Time of Regular Board Meetings – the date and time of the regular Board Meeting was set for the 4th Monday of each month, at 7:00 p.m., in the Village Hall and for Board Workshop Meetings to be held on the Thursday or on the Friday prior to the Regular Board Meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Village Hall. The Workshop Meetings may be canceled or changed at any time by the Mayor, with appropriate notification to the media and other members of the Board of Trustees

Set Date & Time of Special Board Meetings – the Board approved a motion to allow the Mayor to call Special Board Meetings when necessary, at a time and date to be decided, and to authorize the Village Clerk to notify each of the Trustees (as soon as reasonably possible) as to the date, time and place of Special Board Meetings. The Village Clerk will also post the appropriate Public Notice and notify the media as to the time, place and reason for the Special Board Meeting

Establish Rules of Procedure – the Board agreed to conduct Village Board Meetings pursuant to Rules of Procedure that have been in effect in previous years, a copy of which is on file, for inspection, in the Village Office.

Official Banks – the Board approved a motion to adopt a resolution designating Solvay Bank Corp as the depository for regular accounts, and as the depository for capital and investments, and that all monies received by the Village Treasurer, Village Clerk, and Receiver of Taxes be deposited in said depository.

Official Newspapers – The Eagle Observer and The Post Standard were approved as the official newspapers for publication of official Village notices.

Attorney Resolution – the Board approved a resolution appointing Jeffrey D. Brown as Village Attorney, a public officer of the Village, a copy of which is on file in the Village Office.

Standard Workday Resolution – Standard Work Day – the Board approved a resolution that will establish a standard workday of seven (7) hours for appointed officials in the positions of Clerk, Treasurer and Attorney and an eight (8) hour standard workday for the Code Enforcement Officer. The standard workday

resolution for Clerk and Treasurer as well as Attorney and Code Enforcement Officer expired on 3/31/19 and should be renewed when their terms of office are renewed.

Appointment of Village Employees – Four-Year Appointment – there are no 4-year appointments this year, the Village Clerk and the Village Treasurer, having already been appointed to terms that do not expire until March 31, 2022.

Appointment of Village Employees with Board approval, the Mayor appointed the following Village Employees, all of which are one-year appointments, from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

Custodian, Part Time	Katherine Welsh
Department of Public Works, Full-Time	Greg Crysler, James LaRose, John Holmes, Mallory Reedy
Department of Public Works, Part-Time	Katherine Welsh
Chief of Police, Part Time	Bernard Podsiedlik
Police Sergeants, Part Time	Rich Curran, Keith Gates
Patrol Officer, Part Time	Matt Hayes, Jeffrey Fortino, Raymond Herrick, Chris Rowe, Shannon Ray, Edward Bragg, Leonard Richer, Patrick DiCastro
SROs/ Special Patrol Officers	Sean Clere, Peter Heise, James O’Brien, Darren McLaughlin, James Hiltbrand
Police Clerk, Part Time	Brenda Giacchi
School Crossing Guard	Katherine Welsh
CEO/Fire Inspector	William Reagan
Deputy CEO/Fire Inspector	David Weber
Dog Control Officer	James LaRose

Review of and Approval of Salaries and Benefits – the Board approved a motion to continue to provide to Village employees, the same benefits (holidays, vacation days, sick leave, bereavement leave, extenuating circumstances, health benefits, retiree health care coverage, clothing and equipment allotment) that have been in effect for the previous year, accompanied by a 3% salary increase for most employees, except for the Mayor and Trustees, whose salaries have not been raised since 1992. A copy of employee salaries and employee benefits is on file for inspection in the Village Office.

Execute Bond for Village Employees – a motion to notify the public that the Village, having secured property and liability insurance coverage, has executed surety bonds for all Village employees in the amount of \$50,000 and in the amount of \$100,000 for the Village Treasurer and Village Clerk and that the expense of this undertaking has been a charge to the Village was also approved by the Board.

Appointment Village Committees – additional one-year appointments were made, including:

Chair of Senior Housing Committee – was tabled until a later date to be determined
Marcellus Betterment Association – an extension of the Marcellus Betterment Association

Appointment of Village Engineers – with Board approval, the Mayor made a motion to utilize the services of and solicit competitive bids, when appropriate or deemed necessary by the Village Board, from several engineering firms including MRB Group, TDK Engineering and Barton & Loguidice.

Appointment of Village Historian – the Mayor also made a motion to appoint Peg Nolan as Village Historian for a period of one year, 4/1/21 to 3/31/22.

Appointments to Planning Board – the Board approved the following appointments by the Mayor:

a. Re-appoint Gabriel Lutwin to another full 5-year term as a member of the Village Planning Board – from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026.

b. Planning Board Member Edward Carlson recently submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning Board because he and his family are moving out of town. Ed’s term does not end until 2023. To complete the remaining years of Ed’s term, Jill Bristol, presently an alternate on the Board, was appointed to fulfill Ed’s term, from 4/01/21 to 3/31/23.

c. For a variety of reasons, it sometimes proves difficult to maintain a quorum on the Planning Board. A request has been made by several Planning Board members that an alternate member be appointed to serve on the Planning Board and the Village Code allows such an appointment to be made, for a term not to exceed two years. When so designated, the alternate member shall possess all the powers and responsibilities of such member of the Planning Board. A motion was approved to appoint Hugh J. White to a 2-year term as an alternate member of the Village Planning Board – from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023

Appointments to Zoning Board of Appeals – the Board approved the following appointments by the Mayor:

a. Re-appoint Maribeth Rayfield to another full 5-year term as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals – from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026

b. Because Tim Sweet has recently submitted as letter of resignation from the Planning Board because he and his family are moving out of town, a motion was approved to appoint Chad Clark to complete Tim’s term on the Zoning Board of Appeals, from 4/1/21 to 3/31/25.

c. Because Tim Sweet was also Chair of the ZBA, a new Chair needed to be appointed. A motion was approved to appoint ZBA Member, Jeff Averill, as Chair of the ZBA.

Annual Contracts – with the Marcellus Historical Society, and the Marcellus Health/Loan Closet were approved, similar to those that have been in effect for the previous year and the Board agreed to table the SRO Agreements with the Marcellus School District, the Lyncourt Union Free School District and the Onondaga Central School District until such time as the Chief of Police has been able to negotiate successfully the terms of a new contract with each of the school districts mentioned.

Annual Resolutions – the Board approved the following resolutions:

Authorize Mayor To Sign Checks – in the absence or inability of the Treasurer or Trustee

Advanced Approval of Claims – for public utility services, postage, freight and express charges

Set Mileage Allotment – and reimbursement at the rate of .56 cents per mile

Authorize Organizational Meetings – a motion to authorize municipal officials and employees to attend schools, conferences and seminars conducted for the benefit of the local government, a copy of which is on file in the Village Office was approved.

Review and Approval of Procurement Policy – having reviewed the procurement policy adopted in 1993 and that updated in 2002, and again in April 2018, the Board agreed to continue that policy governing the procurement of all goods and services which are not required to be purchased pursuant to the competitive bidding requirements of General Municipal Law Section 103, a copy of which is on file in the Village Office.

Announcement of Earth Day Participation – a notification to the public that the Village of Marcellus plans to again participate in the Earth Day observance. This observance was to have taken place on April 23, 2021, in conjunction with students from the KCH Elementary School in the Marcellus Central School District. The students will gather at the Village Hall after policing the area and the streets north of Main Street, where the Board of Trustees would like to thank all of the students as well as MCS staff members, as well as our own staff for their help in this matter. This event is subject to cancellation because of the ongoing health crisis in our nation.

Adjournment – following a motion to adjourn the Annual Meeting, the Board approved a motion to open a Public Hearing on the Tentative Budget.

Public Hearing on Tentative Budget – April 5, 2021

Comments from Village Treasurer – on the tentative budget of the Village of Marcellus for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 2021 and ending May 31, 2022 were read. Copies of the tentative budget, which has three components: the General Fund, the Water Fund, and the Sewer Fund, are available for the public.

General Fund:

This proposed budget maintains the Village tax rate at \$6.85 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. It is important to note that there have been no increases in the Village tax rate since 2016. This proposed Village tax levy will also not exceed the NYS Tax Cap Limit. The single largest percentage of expenditures in the proposed General Fund Budget continues to be Transportation, for it is essential that the Village continues to invest in improving and maintaining its network of Village streets on an ongoing basis. As such the Village is grateful to Onondaga County for extending the Village Infrastructure Improvement Program (VIIP) agreement between Onondaga County and the Village through at least the year 2030. The Village greatly values the work performed by its employees, and will be giving employees a 3% raise in this new budget. Through the continuing efforts of the Village departments to operate as fiscally conservative as possible each budget year, departmental costs have been controlled. While this has indeed benefited the Village in offsetting the cuts in State funding, as well as the increasing costs of unfunded mandates by NYS such as pension costs and health insurance, the proposed General Fund budget for the Village's fiscal year ending May 31, 2022 nonetheless shows a budget deficit of \$(33,770). However, the General Fund is expected to have a Fund Balance at 5/31/22, which is sufficient to absorb this projected budget deficit.

Water Fund:

Pursuant to an Intermunicipal Agreement with the Town of Marcellus, the Village shares in the cost of maintaining the Limeledge Water District, in the form of a fixed annual payment to the Town. Also, the Village is required by OCWA to pay for the maintenance of the fire hydrants in the Village, also on an annual basis. In the absence of revenues from water usage charges since OCWA took over water service to Village residents, the revenues section of this proposed Water Fund budget incorporates an inter-fund transfer from the Village's General Fund in an amount equal to the amount of expenditures that will be required for the upcoming fiscal year.

Sewer Fund:

This proposed Sewer Fund budget will be the third full budget year which includes the increase in the minimum sewer rate per unit per 1,000 gallons from \$75 to \$100 for Village sewer users. That being said, total sewer usage revenue from Village users, as well as from School and Town users, is projected to be the same as the previous budget year. Upon the recent completion of the Village's Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Upgrade Capital Project, monies remaining in this Capital Project Fund were transferred back to the Sewer Fund in anticipation of paying for much delayed repairs and other maintenance items for which there were previously insufficient funds available. These items include rebuilds to digester and aeration blowers, stockpiling of parts necessary for anticipated repairs to pumps and other equipment, and the purchase a replacement JCB Skid Steer, which is long overdue. This new budget year will also be the second year of repayment on the 30-year interest free loan from the NYS EFC, which financed a substantial portion of the Capital Project. The annual debt service payment on this loan is \$173,420. It is also worth noting that the total debt service to be paid out of the Sewer Fund in this proposed budget will be about \$35,000 less than the previous fiscal year. This is due to the Village's \$633,450 NYS Environmental Facilities Corp. long-term serial bond having matured in November 2020. Another full fiscal year of increased revenue from all sewer users, coupled with the anticipated decrease in total debt service, has resulted in the Village's proposed Sewer Fund budget showing a \$77,585 budget surplus for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2022.

Comments by Mayor on Tentative Budget

- Loss of sales tax revenue – continues to affect the Village budget. The Village continues to receive infrastructure monies from the County, under an agreement between Onondaga County and the Village called the Village Infrastructure Improvement Program (VIP). It has been now been extended for another ten years, until 2030, and includes multiple increases in the amount of financial assistance to the Village over the next ten years. This helps to offset this sales tax revenue loss.
- Decrease in Assessment – the County Finance Department provides the amount of total assessment for all Villages and this year the assessment went down slightly, as noted by the Treasurer.
- We expect to keep the tax rate at \$6.85/1000 of assessed valuation – which means that the assessment on a \$100,000 home, will continue to be \$685 a year. It also stays within the state mandated property tax cap.

- Property tax revenue will decrease – from \$596,997 to \$596,602 (approximately \$395), which represents approximately 55% of the total revenue received by the Village from property taxes.
- A 3% increase in salaries – for all employees, full and part-time, is included in this budget. Our employees received a 3% raise last year, and the Board felt that another 3% raise was not out of line this year, especially in this year of COVID challenges. This is not much, but the benefits package remains the same – the Village employee pays 10%, while the Village provides 90% of health coverage. This, I might note, is much better when compared with similar arrangements in the private sector
- Employee Benefits – many of these, including retirement, health insurance, unemployment insurance, and workers continue to remain beyond Village control.
- Debt Service – continues to be a large item in the budget and it cannot be overemphasized. It is always the gorilla in the room and one that will not go away even if there was complete dissolution of the Village – residents would still pay this debt. The debt for the WWTP upgrades will continue to be very significant for many, many years to come – until 2050.
- State Regulations and Unfunded State Mandates – continue to compound budget problems for the Village – items over which, there are no controls by the Village. The most recent example is the requirement from NYSDEC, which has ordered the removal of phosphorus down to a 1.0-mg/L level so as to stop the pollution of Onondaga Lake. This is of major concern to the Village and our plant operators because of the high cost to implement this unfunded mandate. Our WWTP is the only one, other than METRO, that comes under this directive and we did meet a 2019-20 State mandate, the cost for which is now almost \$8,000,000. We were able to secure some grant money as well as a no-interest loan to cover this cost, which can only come from sewer rents. As a result, sewer rents have increased significantly in recent years.
- Department of Public Works – the Village DPW and our Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent are always very sensible in planning for each budget year. Monies have already been set aside from the previous budget to complete some highway resurfacing, the repair of at least four (4) light poles and to share in the cost of brush and tree removal and street sweeping with the Town of Marcellus. The new DPW budget also calls for resealing Reed Parkway, along with sidewalk repair in several locations in the Village, a continuation of street sweeping and repainting of crosswalks, assisting MCS students in the development of the Green Gateway Project and implementing a changeover from head-in to parallel parking on the south side of East Main Street. A major item in this budget year is a capital improvement project on Meadow Street and this will require a significant investment, not only for reconstruction of the road itself but also for significant sanitary sewer and storm drainage reconstruction.
- Police Department – some notes follow

- o The budget for the Police Department has remained stable this year and Chief Podseidlik continues to hire excellent part-time officers, including a new School Resource Officer at KCH Elementary School in recent months. The MPD has also been able to provide SROs, as well as their supervision by Chief Podsiedlik, for the Onondaga Central School District and the Lyncourt Free Union District. There is no cost to the Village for this service and provides a way for school districts that do not have a local municipality to obtain the services of a school resource officer. The department's budget remains stable this year, and while the purchase of a new police car is being planned for the 2022-23 Police budget, there is a need to replace police radios, an increase in the 911 upgrade in the County and the cost of gasoline will and has increased considerably.
- o The Chief reports that the successful closure rate (identify and arrest suspects) is far above the national average.
- o Chief Podsiedlik, along with a number of Police Chiefs from neighboring agencies, in response to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order #203, have combined to present some updates and changes in policies related to use of force, increased transparency regarding use of force and police misconduct complaints, crisis response and stabilization for individuals who may be experiencing behavioral health issues, unbiased policing, interactions with individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities, and detained transgender individuals, all of which policies are available for public inspection in the Village Office. He has also posted a survey on the Village website, for residents to discuss Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 203, or anything involving our Village providing any thoughts or comments related to the Marcellus Police Department to help the Department improve and better serve the residents and the community.
- o Some continue to argue that if there is a need to cut services, the Marcellus Police Department should be eliminated. Our Board is unanimous in its decision that our Village needs a police force, and I would like to address that issue once again. The absence of major crime in our Village has given rise to some complacency as well as questioning the need for a police force. The absence of major crime is not just a piece of good fortune. We don't have major crime because the mere presence of a police force acts a significant deterrent to crime and causes the criminal element to move on to other communities – ones that would provide less scrutiny and not hinder illegal activity as much. The criminal element prefers to be as inconspicuous as possible. Some claim that our police department could be easily absorbed into a larger police entity (e.g. the County Sheriff's Department) without losing the level of protection that the community currently enjoys. While the Sheriff's Department provides much assistance to our Village, including use of its many resources, it is doubtful that the Department could answer 300-400 extra calls a month adequately, since it would not be able to dedicate a patrol car to the Village on a regular basis. The Sheriff's Department, like all policies agencies, is stretched to the limit with its own budgetary concerns. Our Village would be safe, but quality of life issues (a hard-to-define concept made more

conspicuous by its absence), ones that are important to village residents, would be seriously compromised. Each village is, of course, different and each should address the issue of police protection in light of its own particular circumstances. At present, our Board is committed to maintaining a police presence in the Village of Marcellus – a force that continues to be increasingly professional and a model for others in the county.

- Clerk and Treasurer – the salaries and benefits of the Village Clerk and Village Treasurer are divided between two funds – the General Fund and the Sewer Fund – since the duties and work activity of both employees is equally divided between these two funds.
- The Village Attorney – is now considered an officer of the Village, not an employee hired by the Village. Our Board continues to greatly benefit from his advice and counsel.
- Village employees, Bill Reagan and Dave Weber, now perform Code, Fire, and Zoning Inspections – and their efforts have been very helpful as we continue to enforce the Rental Registration and Inspection Law as well as the Vacant Registration Law and Building Code Regulations. In addition, we are under increasing scrutiny from the DEC to meet mandatory storm water regulations and our Code officers have been most effective making sure that the Village was in full compliance, following recent DEC audits.
- Culture and Recreation – parts of the budget include some monies, in the form of contract agreements, for the Health-Loan Closet and the Marcellus Historical Society, since these organizations provide a service to the Village and its residents.
- The Water Fund – remains but has no revenue. Monies are allocated from the General Fund to supplement this Fund, primarily to pay for hydrant inspections by OCWA (\$4,000) and to pay for the annual Limeledge Contract (\$6,000) for a total of \$10,000 each year.
- The Sewer Fund – the Village Treasurer has addressed this part of the budget and the need to continue to maintain a fund balance that will keep the plant prepared for expected and unexpected emergencies and mandates. In addition, a major expense this year will be the replacement of the Park Pump Station, the purchase of a new snow blower, and the increased cost of service contracts for the new equipment at the plant – there is significant decrease in one area of supplies – chlorine is no longer used as a disinfectant at the plant, supplanted by ultra violet disinfection – this is much safer but will cause an increase in the cost of electricity
- The Compost Project – continues to be most successful.
- Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrades – the \$8 million treatment plant upgrades mandated by NYSDEC to remove phosphorus from the plant’s effluent is complete, including site restoration as well as paving and sidewalk construction. The financing package which the Village has been able to secure includes a \$5,202,600 short term (30 year), interest-free hardship loan and a \$1,379,900 WIIA Grant (formerly called a NYS Water Grant) along with an \$80,000 WQIP #11 grant, a \$1,000,000 WQIP #14 Grant and a \$250,000 SAM (DANSY) Grant.

- Increase in the sewer rates – this has meant a minimum quarterly sewer rate, for Village sewer users, of \$100.00 (from \$75.00), a minimum annual cost of \$400 (from \$300) and an average annual cost of \$548.31 (from \$413.13). Keep in mind that this is an average estimate, since sewer rates are based on water usage in the Village and that fluctuates. The annual cost for outside users (Town and School Districts) is projected to be \$685.39 (from \$516.41), given that outside users pay an additional 25% over that of the average Village sewer user – an increase of about \$160.00 per year. In order to prepare our Treatment Plant for operation well into the 21st century, these increases, while hefty, are unavoidable.

Motion to vote on the Tentative Budget for 2021-2022 – the Tentative Budget for the Village of Marcellus, for 2021-2022, as well as a motion to keep the property tax levy the same as last year – \$6.85/1000 of assessed valuation – were approved by the Village Board