

Village of Webster
Village Board Meeting
April 28, 2011

Webster Community Meeting Hall
29 South Avenue
Webster, NY 14580

Present: Mayor Elder, Trustee Reynolds, Trustee Lancy, Trustee Kildal, Trustee Balcaen and Attorney Don White

Proclamation was read by Mayor Elder, for Nick Haldoupis, making Thursday, May 5th 2011 Nick Haldoupis day in the Village of Webster.

Motion Trustee Reynolds and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to approve the proclamation, all were in favor and carried.

Visitors, Guests and Residents:

Donna Rickard from 68 Lapham Park wanted to address some issues she had with the budget.

1. Salaries that were in the paper this past week, she wanted people to take note that the Village Clerk makes \$81,000 per year. Kathy Vendel had to correct that statement since she currently only makes around \$76,000 a year. Mrs. Rickard wanted the board to take a survey of the salaries paid to other Village/Clerks in surrounding villages. She felt they would not believe the disparity in salaries. Her suggestion was that Mrs. Vendel not be reappointed and that the Deputy Clerk and other part-time clerk take over that position. She felt this board owed the Village residents these changes.

2. The \$17,000 that was spent on tuition, I was on the board four years and never did I approve a tuition payment for anyone, never. Every class, every conference and every workshop came before the board with their name and the expenses, never did a person's name come up with their name on it. I personally spoke with the former Mayor and he stated he did not know. I know the Mayor knew because he told me, but none of us knew. How did these bills get paid and was it part of their income. I think as an elected official, I was betrayed because people are asking, where were you, I keep saying I swear I never saw it. I think this is so outrageous it's stunning that we are here. This is a time when we have to have the people know that we are keeping track of what is going on. I know that I gave you a note this week, I returned the note, and I asked for five years records of how much tuition was spent, who received it, for what courses and who approved it. Once I get that, I will come back to the board and discuss it further.

3. She thinks there should be a huge cut in the tuition line. She wants the board to take a really good look at this and the reappointment. We have two super professionals in the office and we should use them.

Mayor Elder, Kathy you asked if you could speak to these issues,

Kathleen Vendel, there were many issues spoken about, let's start with my salary, currently I make around \$76,000 a year. There are many Village Clerks that make more than I do. Fairport

makes around \$82,000, Fairport also has an administrator that makes \$122,000, East Rochester's Village Clerk/Treasurer makes \$110,000, Hilton's Village/Clerk before she was promoted to Administrator made around \$79,000, if you take the town's Clerk and Treasurers salary and add them together and divide by 2, that equals \$78,000 those are four positions that does about the same job duties as I do, that make more than I do. Some have been at their position fewer years than I have and some have been there more years than I have.

Donna Rickard, you mentioned administrator in those salaries, and you have to take into account how many people are in the Village also.

Kathleen Vendel, Hilton was promoted to administrator just recently so I had to take her salary at the time of her promotion, Hilton has less residents than we do so they are smaller than us.

Donna Rickard, ok

Kathleen Vendel, but there are plenty of examples of my salary range for the position out in other communities, villages and even towns. I can only go by history here at the Village when Bill Shear was here as an administrator in the year 2000 he was making close to \$87,000. The Clerk who I replaced in 2002, was making somewhere around \$60,000. So if you take those two salaries and divide you are right along the salary range that I am at. So, I am not sure if it's an issue of a female in this position who shouldn't get that salary considering the males did in the history of the village or if it's just a personal attack on me because there certainly history that shows people have been making more than me or about the same in the position. When you compare salaries you have to have your ducks in a row and you have to know what you are talking about. You have to look at the other villages and you have to see what the other Clerks are making.

Donna Rickard, I have that information.

Kathleen Vendel, then you should be able to see, I am not the highest paid and I am not the lowest paid I am somewhere in the middle.

Donna Rickard again interrupted and Kathleen Vendel asked the Mayor if this was a debate.

Mayor Elder told Mrs. Rickard that she did have her time to speak and since she asked Mrs. Vendel these questions, she had the right to be able to answer them.

Kathleen Vendel, with comparing salaries, I don't care what position you are talking about like you Mayor working for the County; you cannot compare someone else's job with mine. You have to compare other Village Clerks or Village Clerk/Treasurers. There are so many different titles out there. Fairport is probably the closest to what my job responsibilities or what do here at the Village of Webster because they have a utility. No other village has a water department like ours; you need to take that into consideration. Jake is in the same boat as Superintendent, not many people in his position has the responsibility of a water department. So Jake does double duty just like a Clerk in that position would do double duty. We have our own Sewage Treatment Plant, again, not many villages have their own. Jake again has that responsibility also

which many people don't realize. Our jobs are not like most Clerks or Superintendents. Salary should reflect that, Bill Shears salary reflected that. I am assuming anyone that worked in our positions, the salary would reflect that.

Mayor Elder, did you have comments about the tuition issue that was brought up?

The tuition line item was put into the last seven budgets that I know of. Each budget was discussed in many budget meetings; we have gone through that individual line item every time we have gone through the budget. The budget meeting was televised last year and when we got to that line item I explained explicitly what that line item Conferences and Higher Education consisted of. I showed the board the two minute tape of me stating those facts. I don't feel anyone here has hid anything, it's always been on the bill pays for approval, and we have discussed it in many, many, many meetings. I have always said if anyone wanted to change any line items they had every right to do so. It really doesn't matter to us, it's the budget that was presented and the Village Board looks at it and discusses those line items but as you are going to see tonight, when we pass the budget all accounts 100's, 200's and 400's are all added together and a single number is passed within each department. So each department passes a total number for 100's, 200's and 400's. Our individual line item budget is really nothing the state wants to see it's used so Jake and I don't overspend in our departments. The budgeted money can be changed back and forth at any point in time. Since the last year's budget was approved and you can ask the auditor tonight, once you approve the budget and you have a certain dollar amount approved for conferences and higher education that money can be spent legally. So, I am not sure where the failing is but I can honestly tell you it's been brought twice before the board, once when we have our budget discussions and also in the bill pays or vouchers for approval.

Donna Rickard, I do have a couple of more questions, you listed some schools that were listed on the bill pay, I would like to see that because I do not recall one, ever, how could it be that the past Mayor and I don't know about this are we deaf, dumb and blind here.

Kathleen Vendel, I don't know.

Donna Rickard, were the other board members aware.

Kathleen Vendel, I cannot speak for the other board members.

Donna Rickard, would the other board members mind answering my question. Christine were you aware – No, Dave – No, Jude – No, Peter you said you know,

Mayor, Peter Elder, yes I knew there was an education line; I didn't know how much was spent. I am confident that they were listed correctly. I probably should have looked harder.

Donna Rickard, so that's a no

Mayor, Peter Elder, a qualified no, we certainly can go back and take a look; it has nothing to do with the present.

Donna Rickard, ok, was the amount that each employee got was that part of their total salary received.

Kathleen Vendel, no, I don't believe it ever hit the threshold.

Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to approve the payrolls and claims all were in favor and carried.

General and Water Budget Discussion:

Mayor Elder, One thing to keep in mind with these comments and I appreciate all comments about the budget, but the one thing I wish everyone would keep in mind is that the tax rate is remaining the same.

This rate \$2.22 per thousand has actually stayed the same for the last six years. It's important to keep in mind there has been no tax increases and in real dollars and with costs going \$2.22 in 2005 has much less buying power as \$2.22 in 2011.

Mayor Elder, We have seen increased revenue but not from property taxes, sales tax has gone up and with the growth in the village the total assessed value has increased.

Mayor Elder, We had a couple of people stand up and say do more with less, well in fact we have. That is exactly what we have done for the last six years. Every year that \$2.22 becomes less because of inflation. Inflation takes the money downward. It's just common sense on that score. We continually do more with less. We have held this type of thinking and I am sure there are very few if any municipalities that have held their tax rate for six years but I am good at research so it shouldn't take long to find out.

Mayor Elder, the other thing to point out is what a village is and there are two things a budget does most obviously, it lists the priorities of the particular municipally and infrastructure is one of the most expensive things in this our budget over the last few years. The second thing, to keep in mind is we can move things around. If a line item needs to be overspent we can switch money from another line item. Budgeting has flexibility and is a guideline it's not set in stone. I appreciate the comments, keep in mind those line items can move around. And based on all of this, I would like to suggest the following amendments we discussed and looked at last meeting to the budget:

1. The village is a member of the Monroe County Association of Villages, I have found the meetings to be useful but I have found the meals to be useless. Even though it is a small amount of money, I don't feel the Village taxpayer should be paying for me to eat dinner. So I am looking to send a letter to the organization for a two tier payment options, one with dinner and one without dinner included. I would like to take \$750.00 from budget line item 01-02-1920-402 and add it to sidewalk repairs 01-05-5410-401. I would like a motion to that effect. Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to move the \$750.00, all were in favor and carried.

2. We passed a policy stating a maximum of \$1,500.00 per employee for higher education benefits so I would like to move \$10,000 from the conference and higher education line 01-01-1325-404 to Contingency 01-02-1990-400. Motion Trustee Lancy and Seconded by Trustee Reynolds to move the \$10,000, all were in favor and carried.

3. Mayor Elder also wanted the water rate to go from \$2.45 per thousand gallons to \$2.47 per thousand gallons. Motion Trustee Lancy and Seconded by Trustee Kildal to move the water rate to \$2.47 per thousand gallons, all were in favor and carried.

4. We are still talking about the salaries; they really do not have to be set until the new budget year which is June 1, 2011. Salaries are a much more complicated issue that need more than a few meetings to have good discussions. We need to look at comparable salaries around the county, legal ramifications from our attorney and employees.

Bob Anderson from Elm Street had these points about the budget: the \$13,000 cost difference between the salaries posted in the newspaper and the line item budget. Kathy Vendel commented that the difference is the interns in the office. He also commented that cost of higher education for each of the employees in his opinion, too high, Kathy Vendel's salary was too high since in his office a person running a budget of the village's size would run around \$65,000 - \$70,000. Kathy Vendel asked if that person held a Clerk/Treasurer's position. He stated no they are a finance manager. Mr. Chamberlain also wanted to know what the \$10,000 conference and higher education line is used for, what exact training. He felt 5.1% raises is extremely high. He also wanted to know what the reserves are for the general account. Kathy Vendel advised him he needed to fill out a FOIL request for that information. He also asked if we get three quotes for all our insurances, which Kathy Vendel stated the insurance broker has done. He wanted to know about the health insurance and if we could consolidate with the town for a better rate. The Mayor stated the health insurance coverage we have right now is the best deal available to us. He wanted to know why the spending is up this budget year. James "Jake" Swingly stated there are two main projects that are driving up the costs, the new SCADA system at STP and equipment purchases. He asked if we review the budget overruns for the month or year. Mayor Elder said yes, we do that with the monthly reports.

Donna Rickard, from 68 Lapham Street said last year we cut our budget for flowers, it's a small thing but everyone notices and they did notice, this year we cut it again, it's less money.

Mayor Elder, no I don't think that's right.

Donna Rickard, unless I am reading the wrong figures but please check. I think it's less.

Jake Swingly, there are three different lines for plantings and flowers.

Donna Rickard, I would like to see us bring that figure up a few hundred bucks. The other thing is if you look at this carpet in this room the first thing someone would say is "are we ever going to get this cleaned". There is nothing in the budget for carpet cleaning.

Kathy Vendel, that's because we actually own a carpet cleaner, Jake confirmed we do own one.

Donna Rickard also wanted to have Village Hall and the community room and bathrooms kept cleaner. She wanted someone hired to come in and clean these areas. "Certainly, we should have enough money there; we are moving money all over the place to pay for things".

Motion Trustee Lancy and Seconded by Trustee Reynolds, to pass the 2011-2012 General Budget at the tax rate of \$2.22 per thousand and a total cost of \$2,542,885.26, all were in favor and carried.

Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Balcaen, to pass the 2011-2012 Water Budget with a water rate of \$2.47 per thousand gallons. Kathy Vendel has the board's permission to adjust the expense side of the budget to reflect the new water rates; all were in favor and carried.

Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to approve Blair Supply's Bid of \$42,599.35 for piping and parts for Commercial Street and Martin Street Water Main Upgrade, all were in favor and carried.

Kathy Vendel submitted her comp-time for approval and it was suggested by Trustee Reynolds that maybe she adjust her schedule on Thursday morning or maybe continue leaving early on Friday or a different day within the same week depending on the office coverage for those days. Mayor Elder said that we can try this for the next month and see how it works out.

Mayor Elder spoke about the Webster Yankees Proposal, Relay for Life or Paint the Village Purple and the Main Street Banner Program.

Mayor Elder also stated that on May 21, 2011 at 3:00pm is the open meeting for the comprehensive plan.

Jake Swingly spoke about the household hazard drop off, also the fact that we are flushing the system for the next two weeks.

Don White spoke about the email he received from Carol Moranz concerning the folders and emails that were deleted off Trustee Rickard's computer. There was a discussion about original records being destroyed but the board was undecided as to what that actually meant. The Mayor stated he wanted a policy put together concerning destroying original documents because that seemed to be the main issue.

Article 13 Special Use Permit, SEQR, Impact on Land - Motion Trustee Reynolds and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to declare this a type one SEQR, all were in favor and carried.

Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Reynolds to accept the SEQR as written by Will Barham, and send it to all the appropriate agencies, all were in favor and carried.

Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to go into executive session, regarding two specific employee matters, all were in favor and carried.

Motion Trustee Kildal and Seconded by Trustee Lancy to adjourn the meeting, all were in favor and carried.

Kathleen Vendel, Village Clerk-Treasurer

Peter Elder, Mayor