

April 11, 2017

Supervisor's report

As I prepare for the Town Board meeting tonight I have had a chance to review the financial reports recently completed by our bookkeeper, following the close of activity for the first quarter of 2017. While it is still too early in the year to draw firm conclusions regarding our financial status, there is a noticeable trend. So far, we are currently under our budgeted expenditures in both the Highway fund and the General fund. Additionally, our revenues, especially in the General fund are slightly above budgeted projections. In calculating expenses for personnel costs for the remainder of the year we will be able to generate a fair surplus in this category. This information is good news especially as it seems to forecast that we will be able to maintain a consistent tax rate for the coming budget cycle.

In the past several weeks I have an opportunity to meet with a number of individuals regarding the potential of increased commercial development within the Town. I feel this reflects on the momentum that is being generated by the Lakeside Commons project and the possibility that such developments will spur other interests. I see this as a positive sign, I feel that it is not sufficient to just continue to keep a low tax rate, but that we must expand our commercial growth as a way to produce additional revenues in the future. There also seems to be a strong sense that in order to grow commercially, notably along the Fred Haynes Blvd and route 104 corridors (in areas currently zoned as commercial) there is a need for access to a sewer system. There is no guarantee of such a project, but developers are excited that we are investigating possibilities. The establishment of a commercial sewer system has quite a number of hurdles, but I am excited that the grant from NYS and Empire State Development will help us to determine if such an undertaking is feasible.

Last week at a public Town Board Workshop, Highway superintendent David Sterio and I presented to the Town Board a formal capital planning outline and a Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Schedule. In developing this plan, we examined our current equipment needs, our current repair costs, our current and past (10 years) indebtedness rate and several other factors. We also tried to develop a plan that would fit into the Town's overall tax position without causing additional tax burdens or increases to the residents. We feel that it is important to have a long-range plan in place to help secure the future needs of the Town. It is only through consistent long term planning and budgeting that we will be able to insure a reasonable rate of growth and repair while working to stabilize the tax rates for the community. We have proposed a rate of bonding that is consistent with past practice, yet one we hope will not present additional tax burdens on the residents. Hopefully this will become a workable schedule that, while may need to be often revisited and modified, will serve as framework for upcoming budgeting processes.