



Village of Mamaroneck Budget Committee

Meeting Date: 17th February 2016
Time: 7.30pm
Location: Regatta Conference Room

Attendees:

Budget Committee Members:

Stephanie Lividini
John Fall
Keith Waitt, Chair
Carlo Reca

Apologies for Absence: Adam Honig, Diane Hirschberg, John Campbell, Richard Slingerland, Ilissa Miller

- Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7.40pm.
- Minutes of the previous meeting on 26th January 2016 were reviewed and approved.
- KW listed the 5 imminent items for discussion over the coming months:
 - a) A review of the current Procurement Policy Value Limits and Signing Levels (see attached) to determine if they are fit for purpose.
 - b) Decision on whether to recommend an independent review of the Procurement Policies, Procedures and Processes.
 - c) Agreement to advise BoT to review current governance procedures on the appointment or re-appointment of the Village External Auditor.
 - d) Review of proposed 2016/7 Budget, analysis and recommendations and meeting with VOM departments.
 - e) Discussion on consensus over Recreation Department's position on charging of field fees.

Each item was discussed in full by the Budget Committee with following comments and outcomes:

- a) In order not to spend too much more time on this review, KW recommended that each committee member reviews the current Limits and Levels and prior to the next meeting and comes ready to opine

on their appropriateness. Consideration should also be given to whether there is anything missing from the current Policy (e.g. credit card usage and internet ordering procedures).

- b) Discussion was around whether an independent audit of the Procurement PPP should be demanded this year, or whether less formal recommendation be given. There was a consensus that overall the process appears to be working, and therefore SL suggested that the BoT should receive a recommendation from the Budget Committee to independently review the process in 2016 rather than conduct a formal audit.
- c) The issue with replacing the VOM's current auditor is that there are very few similar firms in the area who can audit NYS municipalities. However it was recommended that the BoT review the governance policy on auditor appointments and ensure that they are in line with Law.
- d) KW advised the members that the Budget review and approval cycle would be beginning in March and that we would be receiving a draft Budget from the Village Manager shortly. He stressed that it was in the Budget Committee's interest to review this document and that there would be a session with VOM officials to clarify, discuss and recommend. KW also advised the members that attending the departmental meetings would also be helpful.
- e) CR introduced the discussion field fees and the current discussions that are taking place at the Recreation Committee. Before the details of how or if fees should be demanded by the VOM, KW asked whether the Budget Committee could agree on our approach to this issue. Specifically :
 - i.- events/programs should be covering their costs
 - ii.- usage based fees should be considered and are more palatable than a tax
 - iii.- any Harbor Island Ground Fees should be directly associated with improvements in the field conditions
 - iv.- subsidies should be given to those families that cannot afford it
 - v.-special commercial events (such as the BeerFest) need to be commercially priced

There was consensus on these 5 points.

CR proposed a methodology for pricing for field usage, with which the RC was in agreement and would like to propose to the BoT. This was to charge each sports program based on percentage usage during the season (e.g. 50% for soccer etc.). This would be a percentage of the overall costs of maintain the fields, and the percentage numbers for each sports programme are easy to obtain and fully transparent. The BC agreed this approach but the question was how to determine the overall cost. Was it the outside contractor fee? How much of the Parks Department costs should be allocated? Can we determine this?

SL raised the point that, in order to charge a fee, we have to demonstrate a value to the user, and so we need to demonstrate over time that the standard of the fields are improving. CR added that improvement would require portable irrigation (water wheel) that needs to be purchased, and so has to be factored in to the overall field maintenance costs.

The Budget Committee agreed that:

- Percentage usage was the right way to price the fees,
- An accurate determination of field maintenance costs needs to be determined by the Village Manager,
- The introduction of a usage fee needs to be phased over a 3 year period,
- This fee should be introduced, if possible, for the 2016 Fall season,
- The BC should advise the RC that we support their approach and are happy to work with them in any capacity to make sure field fees are introduced in 2016.

KW brought the meeting to a close at 8.45pm