

Mayor's Budget Message – 2020/2021

Here's a quick list of progress made over the last year or so:

- Road improvements on Greenman Hill
- Another difficult and challenging round of winter conditions handled expertly by our DPW team and our winter road contractor.
- Improvements to Bell Park

Our current financial picture – the summary

Our total assessed valuation went up by \$538,665 compared to a gain of \$286,682 last year. Our total taxable assessed valuation is \$30,728,879, this provides us more revenue from our tax base. These two increases in valuation for this village provides us the opportunity to reduce our tax rate while maintaining a prudent revenue stream. If we left the rate alone, \$1.77 per thousand, that would now equate to a 1.8% tax hike for village taxpayers. Reducing it to \$1.755 allows us to keep pace and reduce any increase to less than 1%. We had planned for this year to be a year for chip sealing however due to circumstances causing us to pave our portion of Greenman Hill Road, I am postponing any chip sealing until the 2021/2022 fiscal year. We have moved all cookie contest revenue off our budget which is prudent. Those monies raised will continue to be reported to the public and projects will be transparent. That leaves our other main funding streams – state AIM, county sales and mortgage taxes, and village property tax – to pay for our “regular operations” including road maintenance, village boards and departments, and office expenses. This strategy has kept our finances in check while providing gradual, affordable upgrades to our infrastructure and services. We have managed to keep our actual expenses in line with (or below) our actual revenue, allowing our annual carryover (the “unexpended balance” line) to remain healthy. The “unexpended balance” provides a cushion against unexpected expenses or extreme weather emergencies while keeping our tax levy near constant.

What changes are reflected in the proposed budget?

Highlighted changes in proposed budget:

A slight COLA for our Department of Public Works Superintendent

An increase in our attorney line to reflect a slight hourly rate increase to \$125/hour.

An increase in road maintenance line to reflect the \$1,000 contribution toward the Murdock Road bridge project. There is also an increase in this line to reflect the cost of a new village sign at the triangle.

A reflection in the parks line of \$600 for a sign for Bell Park as well as a \$500 increase for beautification at selected sites in the village.

A reduction of \$500 to reflect the combining of the deputy clerk position and the deputy treasurer position. The new position will be funded at \$500 and be titled deputy clerk/treasurer.

Conclusion

We have benefited from improvements to our village infrastructure which is reflected in our taxable village valuation increases. We will examine which roads will take priority for next year for chip sealing, Webster Hill, Smith Hill, Hayes Road, or Murdock Road. The proposed budget reflects priorities and constant costs while maintaining our policy of using volunteers and fundraising to seed new and existing efforts.

As we move forward we will be exploring new initiatives including a junk collection day for village residents and exploring other needs and priorities. Our village remains in good fiscal condition and we look forward to improving our overall quality of life here in East Nassau.