

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**OF THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**VILLAGE OF WHEELING**  
**BOARD ROOM - 2 COMMUNITY BOULEVARD**  
**COOK and LAKE COUNTIES, WHEELING, IL**  
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2023**

**1. Call to Order**

President Horcher called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance led by President Horcher**

**3. Roll Call**

Village Clerk Kathryn M. Brady called the roll and the following Board members were present:

Present: Pat Horcher, Mary Krueger, Ray Lang, Mary Papantos, Jim Ruffatto, Joe Vito, Dave Vogel

Department Heads and Deputy Finance Director Brian Smith were also present.

**4. Citizen Concerns and Comments - None**

**5. New Business - All Listed Items for Discussion and Possible Action**

**A. DISCUSSION RE: FY 2024 Proposed Annual Budget**

Manager Sfondilis opened discussion by thanking staff for all the effort that goes into producing the budget, and to the Board for their continued leadership. Manager Sfondilis spoke about the budget process, the Board liaison role, noted that the proposed budget is available on our website, and laid out the schedule for the meeting. Manager Sfondilis spoke about the retirements of Finance Director Kaplan, and Financial Services Coordinator Angela Peters both of whom are responsible for the budget. It was also noted that Assistant Village Manager Michael Crotty and Fire Chief Michael McGreal are also retiring in the near future; Manager Sfondilis thanked everyone for their service to the Village.

The Village of Wheeling remains in excellent financial condition, this is the 7th out of 8 surplus budgets which includes monies to supplement some balloon payments that will help the Village be debt-free by 2030. TIF surplus funds will continue to be distributed to other taxing bodies, there will be no request for a tax levy increase, no additional personnel requests, no additional program requests, and no "pink sheets"; this is due to everybody being aware of asking for only what they absolutely need, now it's a matter of maintaining healthy reserves.

Deputy Finance Director Brian Smith reviewed portions of the budget including inflation, home values, unemployment numbers, the economy's positive impact on Wheeling, surplus vs. deficits in the general fund, fund balance percentages compared to other towns, and Wheeling earning a Moody's Bond rating of AA; Manager Sfondilis noted that the Moody percentage scale is a minimum. Deputy Director Smith continued with the budget presentation reviewing the three main sources of revenue which are sales, income, and property taxes (aka the three-legged stool), stated that we don't need to rely on a property tax increase this year, however depending on the market, a 2.25% tax increase is likely beginning in 2025, and noted that the South Milwaukee TIF ends 12/31/2023 and will be terminated by Ordinance in 2024.

Manager Sfondilis stated that the budget presented went up by 3.8%, which we were able to carry due to revenues exceeding expenditures, but this is all market dependent.

**[BREAK]**

President Horcher asked for a Motion to recess for a break. Motion by Mary Papantos, second by Mary Krueger. Motion carried by Voice Vote, all ayes, the meeting recessed at 9:20 a.m.

**[RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION]**

President Horcher asked for a Motion to reconvene into open session. Motion by Mary Papantos, second by Mary Krueger.

Motion carried by Voice Vote, all ayes, the meeting reconvened at 9:33 a.m.

Finance Director Michael Kaplan continued reviewing the budget covering major sources of revenue, a general liability insurance fund increase of 11%, results of the water & sewer fee survey (Wheeling has the lowest water rates of the eleven (11) communities surveyed), success of the Stormwater Fund, AA bond rating from Standard & Poor's, pension funds status, and sales tax & property tax levies by community.

Manager Sfondilis confirmed Board consensus on the following:

1) There will be no increase in property tax levy.

2) Skunk Abatement program will remain in the budget, but the cost allocated may be reduced in the next budget due to lack of applicants.

3) Volunteer Recognition - based on results of a survey by the Northwest Municipal Conference, going forward volunteer recognition will consist of a dinner for each Board/Commission.

4) 6b Tax Classification Public Hearings - the practice of holding a Public Hearing at Board meetings will be discontinued as it is not a requirement.

Manager Sfondilis spoke about the Budget in Brief flyer which helps the public understand what the Village does with their money.

#### **6. Official Communications**

Trustee Papantos reminded everyone of daylight savings this weekend and to replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Trustee Lang stated that what sets us apart as a Village is that staff cares, and he thanked everyone in attendance.

#### **7. Executive Session - None**

#### **8. Action on Executive Session Items - N/A**

#### **9. Adjournment**

President Horcher asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Jim Ruffatto, second by Mary Papantos.

Motion carried by Voice Vote, all Ayes, the meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

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Kathryn M. Brady, Village Clerk

Approved this 20th day of November 2023, by the President and Board of Trustees