

**Village of Woodstock
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 20th, 2024
8:15AM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Seton McIlroy, Jeffrey Kahn, Lisa Lawlor, Brenda Blakeman

Staff: Eric Duffy, Kathy Avellino, Robert Densmore

Public:

Call to order

1. Chair Seton McIlroy to call the December 20th Village Trustees meeting to order at 8:15AM.

B. Additions and Deletions - none

C. Citizen's Comments -none

D. Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313

Motion: by Seton McIlroy enter Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313 to discuss personnel Issues (8:16AM)

Seconded: by Jeffrey Kahn

Vote: 5-0-0, passed (Returned 8:31AM)

E. Discussion

FY26 Budget Discussion

Brenda Blakeman suggested renting out the covered bridge for events to generate additional revenue and explored various creative ideas to bring in money.

Eric Duffy discussed the budgeted revenue from short-term rental enforcement and suggested it could increase if more rentals are registered.

The village's portion of GovOS contract is around \$12,000, and the total revenue could reach \$17,000.

Eric Duffy mentioned the town's moratorium on short-term rentals ending on December 31 and the need for enforcement and staffing.

Brenda Blakeman suggested having a conversation about the pros and cons of short-term rentals.

Seton McIlroy read Frank Horneck's text message, for he was unable to attend the meeting, suggesting deferring non-essential initiatives and budgeting for a new pick-up truck for FY26, and the idea of increasing parking ticket fees.

Jeffrey Kahn expressed concern about a 17% increase in the tax rate and suggested reducing the contingency fund by \$10,000.

Jeffrey Kahn also suggested not buying rifles for the police and reducing the payment to the elementary school for parking lot use.

Eric Duffy explained the impact of these cuts on the tax rate and suggested a 3% decrease if these cuts are implemented.

Lisa Lawlor questioned the need to pay the elementary school for parking lot use and suggested not paying if no lease exists.

Lisa Lawlor asked about the funds allocated to the Tree Fund.

Lisa Lawlor would like to ask the Selectboard if the money that they get from infrastructure could be used to electricity on the Gore.

The Trustees and staff discussed the elementary school for parking lot use and payment.

Seton McIlroy and Jeffrey Kahn discussed the need for snow tires for the police cruisers and the request for rifles for the police.

Seton McIlroy suggested exploring grant opportunities for rifle purchases and considering a compromise on providing rifles to officers.

Seton McIlroy emphasized the need to focus on revenue generation and suggested forming a commission to explore revenue opportunities.

The Trustees discussed the importance of setting standards for using the Rockefeller Fund and estimating the village tax rate.

Eric Duffy explained the process of setting the tax rate and the impact of the grand list on the tax rate.

The Trustees discussed the need for a larger discussion about revenue and the potential for increasing parking ticket fees, short-term rentals and exploring the use of the Green for events.

Seton McIlroy and the Trustees discussed the cost of using the police for events like Wassail Weekend and the Turkey Trot.

Eric Duffy mentioned the involvement of all police staff during events and the need to consider the costs of public works and other departments.

The Trustee discussed the potential for grants to cover police equipment and the importance of balancing the need for police presence at events with the cost.

Seton McIlroy suggested making a list of all events where the police are used and estimating the costs to decide what should be subsidized.

Eric Duffy outlined the next steps, including looking at revenue and expenses and being conservative in budgeting.

The Trustees would like to meet on January 2 to finalize the budget and discuss the importance of having all members present.

Eric Duffy discussed the importance of talking to businesses before making decisions on parking fees.

Lisa Lawlor thanks Eric Duffy for his work and acknowledges the efforts of town employees.

J. Adjournment

Motion: by Chair Seton McIlroy to adjourn the meeting at (9:17AM)

Seconded: Jeffrey Kahn

Vote: 3-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kitty Mears Koar*