

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD  
TRUTH IN TAXATION HEARING  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024  
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the Truth in Taxation meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Marilyn Thomas called the roll. Those present were Village President Richard Hofeld, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Phillip Mason, Trustee Lauren Roman and Trustee Allisa Opyd.

Finance Director Amy Zukowski said that under Illinois' Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), the Village of Homewood was required to hold a Truth in Taxation hearing to notify the public that the proposed levy would be greater than the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Director of Finance Amy Zukowski shared information with the Village Board and those present on the Village's funding through the 2024 levy.

Director Zukowski said the Village's 2024 increase over the previous year was 3.35 percent for CPI and 1.5% for new construction. The Village's total tax levy subject to PTELL is \$7,066,009. Approximately 56%, or \$4M, of the total tax levy will go towards all pension obligations, including Police Pension, Fire Pension, and the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund. Of the \$4M allocated to pensions, 87% or approximately \$3.5M goes exclusively towards Police and Fire Pension obligations. The police and fire pension payments meet the state funding requirements.

The remaining \$3 million from the property tax levy not assigned to pensions goes towards all other operational items, including FICA (Employer Social Security and Medicare payments).

She said the Village is limited by state statute on what it can assess for corporate fund, police, fire, crossing guards, street and bridge.

Social Security and Medicare are not limited, but funding must be enough to cover costs. Audit and risk management also have no rate limit. The Village can levy for debt obligations. Those funds are not part of PTELL.

The Village sold \$2.6 million in General Obligation bonds in November to fund capital projects. Interest and debt on the bonds will be divided into four payments. This levy records the first debt repayment of \$746,688.

The final levy is \$7.8 million reflecting an increase of 13.62 percent; most of the increase is for debt service. The Village's final 2024 levy would have increased 4.8 percent if debt service is excluded.

The Village published notice of the Truth in Taxation hearing November 29, 2024 in the Daily Southtown newspaper.

Director Zukowski said that with the additional debt service, the Village's part of the total tax bill may go up from 10 percent to 11 percent of the total bill.

During public comment, Resident Liz Varmecky asked how the end of the Southgate TIF was allowing for additional taxes. Director Zukowski explained that explanation of the TIF does not

increase property taxes. During the TIF, the taxes collected for property in the TIF is deposited in as special fund administered by the village for infrastructure improvements, development, etc. With the end of the TIF, those taxes previously diverted to the TIF will be distributed to the Village and the other taxing districts.

Village Attorney Chris Cummings explained that the Southgate property tax rate was frozen 23 years ago. With the expiration of the TIF, the Village's tax portion goes back to the general fund. The move is not raising taxes but reallocating the taxes. When the TIF was created, it froze the base assessed valuation for what the property was worth. Over the 23 years, as the property values increased, the taxes raised through the increased valuation have gone into the TIF.

Before the TIF ending, the Village couldn't gain the increased value (for tax purposes). That property, for tax purposes, is now classified as new property because the parcels will register as new assessments.

Director Zukowski said the other taxing bodies – schools, parks, library – are notified that the TIF is expiring so they can capture the new assessments.

Ms. Varnecky asks why the Village is increasing taxes, but Attorney Cummings explained to her that there is no immediate tax increase, simply a reallocation of property taxes that previously were paid into the TIF.

Village Manager Napoleon Haney said he or staff would gladly sit down with Ms. Varnecky to offer her information on TIF funding.

Resident Robert Miller asked what the 13% increase will mean to his property taxes. Director Zukowski said the overall impact for taxpayers will be one percent from 10 percent to 11 percent.

Mayor Hofeld said on the 2023 levy the Village had zero debt, so the levy was lower.

Trustee Opyd said the tax levy is confusing to residents. She appreciated that the Village's increase will be small, compared to what people have been through with Cook County's recent property reassessments.

A motion was made by Trustee Heiferman and seconded by Trustee Roman to close the Truth in Taxation meeting.

***Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Willis, Harris-Jones, Heiferman, Mason, Roman and Opyd. NAYS – None.***

The meeting ended at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thomas  
Village Clerk