Tax Budget Hearing Minutes: July 9, 2026 6:15 PM
Attendance: Councilpersons Camara,Koss, Martin, Paessun, Pinter & Grant; Fiscal Officer Wilcheck

Meeting Purpose

The meeting was convened to conduct the Village's required public Tax Budget Hearing for Calendar Year 2027. Fiscal Officer Jeff Wilcheck presented the proposed tax budget, explaining that the hearing is required by state law to justify the collection of authorized property taxes and to enable the Village to participate in the distribution of Local Government Funds received through the county.

Mr. Wilcheck noted that the tax budget is separate from the Village's annual appropriations budget, which will be developed and adopted later in the year. The tax budget must be approved by July 15 and filed with the County Auditor by July 20.

2027 Budget Assumptions

The proposed tax budget was developed using the following planning assumptions:

- 4% increase in wages
- 10% increase in healthcare costs
- 3% increase in all other operating expenditures
- Continued annual 0.75% increase in police pension contribution rates until reaching 24%

Estimated property tax revenue for 2027 is **$500,500**.

Mr. Wilcheck also advised Council that the Village's assessed property valuation for tax year 2026 had decreased slightly (approximately $25,000), although the exact figure was not immediately available.

General Fund Outlook

The General Fund is projected to end 2027 with an estimated carryover balance of approximately **$787,000**, which Fiscal Officer Wilcheck stated is close to the Village's target reserve level.

Debt Service Review

The hearing included a review of the Village's outstanding debt obligations:

Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Loans

Interest-free OPWC loans remain outstanding for Sewer Phase II and Sewer Phase III improvements.

Annual debt service includes:

- Sewer Phase II: **$14,500**
- Sewer Phase III: **$10,010**

MP-TIF Debt

The MP-TIF Tax Equivalent Fund continues to receive PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) revenues used to pay principal and interest on the Village's TIF bonds.

- Annual debt service: approximately **$490,000**
- Annual TIF revenues have remained relatively stable at approximately **$750,000**

Mr. Wilcheck expressed concern regarding increasing deductions made by the County Auditor for county levies that are not exempt from the TIF. Those deductions are projected to total approximately **$196,000–$198,000** next year, and he indicated they will continue to monitor this trend.

Road and Transportation Funds

The Fiscal Officer reviewed the Village's Motor Vehicle License (MVL) funds.

County Engineer MVL Fund

- Estimated year-end balance: **approximately $164,000**
- Funds are restricted for use on **North Brook Road**
- Funds remain with the County Engineer until the Village submits and receives approval for an eligible project.

Village Permissive MVL Fund

- Estimated year-end balance: **approximately $115,000**
- Funds may be used on any Village road.
- Current planning is focused on future improvements to **North Lake Road**.

Mr. Wilcheck explained that projects utilizing County Engineer MVL funds require approximately one year of advance planning and coordination with the County Engineer and County Commissioners.

Utility Funds

Council reviewed the following utility maintenance funds:

- Storm Sewer Maintenance
- Waterline Maintenance
- Sewer Line Maintenance

Mr. Wilcheck noted that utility rates have not been reviewed in several years and recommended that Council revisit the rates during the coming year to ensure revenues remain adequate.

He reminded Council that previous rate adjustments reduced water and sanitary sewer charges to offset storm sewer-related charges and indicated that another comprehensive review would be appropriate.

Capital Improvements and Other Funds

Additional information included within the tax budget package consisted of:

- Various inactive and minimally active Village funds
- Capital project funds
- Outstanding debt schedules
- Permanent improvement project summaries

The permanent improvement schedules were expanded to include:

- Historical expenditures through 2025
- Estimated expenditures for 2026
- Planned expenditures for 2027
- Preliminary projections for 2028

Mr. Wilcheck explained that these projections provide Council with a longer-term view of anticipated capital needs before development of the appropriations budget later in the year.
The hearing materials also included an amended Official Certificate of Estimated Resources establishing the Village's appropriation limits.

Council Discussion
Council asked for clarification regarding how permissive MVL funds are received and administered.
Mr. Wilcheck explained that:

- The Village-enacted permissive MVL is distributed directly from the State.
- The County Engineer MVL remains with the County until the Village submits an approved project request.
- Advance notification and planning are required before those funds can be accessed.

Council indicated the explanation addressed their questions.

Meeting Action
Following the conclusion of discussion and with no additional questions from Council, the hearing was closed.
A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.
Vote: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote ("Aye").

Key Takeaways

- The 2027 Tax Budget fulfills the Village's statutory requirements and supports continued collection of authorized property taxes.

- Conservative planning assumptions were used to account for inflationary increases in wages, healthcare, and pension costs.
- The General Fund is projected to maintain a healthy reserve balance.
- Debt obligations remain manageable, although increasing TIF-related county levy deductions will continue to be monitored.
- Significant road funding remains available through both County Engineer and Village MVL programs.
- Utility rates should be reviewed during the upcoming budget cycle.
- Capital improvement planning continues through 2028 to support long-term financial management.

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Jeffrey Wilcheck, Fiscal Officer Tiffany Southard, Mayor