

**Finance Meeting
August 23, 2023**

Attendees

Committee: Art Merrill, Wayne Marshfield, Jeff Taggart, George Haynes, Mark Tuthill, John Kosier, Wayland Gladstone, Tina Molé
Staff: Amy Merklen, Penny Bishop
Guests: Village of Delhi Mayor Jeffrey Gearhart and Trustee Barbara Sturdevant

Mr. Merrill called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

On a motion by Mr. Taggart, seconded by Mr. Kosier, the draft minutes of the August 9 meeting were unanimously approved.

Mr. Merrill introduced guests Jeffrey Gearhart, Mayor and Barbara Sturdevant, Trustee.

Mr. Gearhart stated he would like to reestablish a working relationship with the County. He understands the County is aware of the Village's situation. Mrs. Sturdevant distributed a list of all the Section 8 tax roll property in the Village of Delhi noting they would receive an additional \$1,000,000 in property taxes if they did not have this list of tax-exempt properties. Delaware County has more than 20 properties on the list, and the village would like to open the door to getting some relief from sales tax and bed and breakfast occupancy tax revenue.

Mr. Merrill said he does not believe there is an adversarial relationship from the last presentation from the village. However, His position has always been that the fairest way to disseminate those taxes to the people is through budget cuts to keep the budget down.

Mr. Taggart stated Mrs. Sturdevant has a great point on the bed tax. He is a proponent of sharing occupancy tax revenues because there is a specific cost to towns that have this type of business.

Mr. Marshfield maintained that these Section 8 entities in the village bring a lot of people into Delhi. Mrs. Sturdevant noted that whether 20 people or 120 people dine at the Blue Bee, it does not give the Village any more revenue. Mr. Merrill sees an entity as being part of the community because people will need other services, such as a gas station, drug store, or grocery store. Delhi has a population of hundreds of people, and that has brought in many amenities that probably would not be here otherwise. Mr. Gearhart asserted that many people spend money out of town for gas and groceries.

Mr. Taggart said he believes this problem began when the state took away host funding for the college.

Mr. Tuthill communicated the other side of the picture—yes, a lot of people come to Delhi and spend money, but he acknowledged that tax revenue benefits the county and the state and does not help the village at all. It does not help residents who do not own a business because those residents do not receive funds from economic development or other help from the sales tax revenue. He and other supervisors believe the county needs to revisit the study of counties sharing a portion of tax revenue. With all the people doing business in Delhi, additional services are needed such as having a police department because of the college. Mr. Gearhart reported the village has a population of 3,500, and

5 full-time police officers are needed along with vehicles, equipment, etc. Mr. Merrill stated Colchester has a police force and he understands the expense. He still holds the position that it would not be fair to choose one village over other municipalities in the county.

Mr. Marshfield observed from Mrs. Sturdevant's data that the county has approximately \$30 to \$35 million in assessed values, the school has \$30 million, and the state has \$60 to \$65 million. The entity that is assessed double what the county is assessed also pays \$0.00.

Ms. Molé asked Mayor Gearhart if they have had any discussions or thoughts on perhaps dissolving the village. Mr. Gearhart confirmed that a study they did a few years ago showed that ultimately, costs would be pushed onto the town. Mr. Tuthill agreed indicating that reports confirmed that when a village dissolves, it generates a 3 to 5% tax increase to the taxpayers. Mrs. Sturdevant concurred, saying their study showed a long-term increase over any initial savings.

Mr. Taggart restated that the governor should restore the \$200,000 host benefit. Mrs. Sturdevant noted 2021 was the last year they received the funds from the state. Mr. Gearhart said they spoke with Assemblyman Tague and Senator Oberacker, but the onus is on the village to pursue. Mr. Taggart exclaimed that the state is cutting their budget on the backs of local citizens and without a budget cap.

The committee thanked Mr. Gearhart and Mrs. Sturdevant.

The June and July 2023 Bank Balance reports were reviewed. The Sales Tax report from August 11 indicates an increase in collection of 1.4832 percent compared to the same time period last year.

Mr. Merrill announced that Mrs. Bishop is working with IT to accurately load the budget lines so 2024 data can be entered electronically this year. Ms. Molé declared that will be a significant time saver. Mrs. Bishop reported that the budget data should be ready by the end of next week.

Mr. Tuthill made a motion to approve the purchase of a dehumidifier for 111 Main Street lower level rather than request ARPA funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taggart and unanimously approved.

There were three not-prefiled resolutions for review: Probation to dispose of 9 vehicles to the leasing company as they will be leasing all their vehicles; Sheriff's office to employ special patrol officers; and the audit resolution. Travel, equipment, and vacancy requests were approved as presented.

In answer to Mr. Marshfield, Mr. Merrill explained that the Increase of Sales Tax resolution is a bit confusing but this is the language required by the state. Mrs. Bishop stated this is the final resolution to renew the sales tax extension but it could not be presented to the Board until the governor signed it.

Mr. Taggart expressed that the intervenor payment to the County for Clear Path negotiations is not enough to cover the expenses. Mr. Marshfield said that Young and Sommers has done a lot of work on this, and he believes the county is fighting this harder than anyone else.

Mr. Tuthill announced that borings were done on the monument base for concrete testing.

Upon a motion, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.