SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE
Municipal Offices
76 South Orange Ave
Suite 302
South Orange
Essex County
New Jersey 07079

www.southorange.org
P 973.378.7715
F 973.763.0987

FINANCE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 21, 2021 - 10:00 AM
Virtual Webex Meeting

Call to Order and Roll Call

Trustee Hartshorn Hilton, Chair
Trustee Haskins
Trustee Zuckerman
Adam Loehner, Village Administrator
Ellen Malgieri, Tax Assesor-**Absent**
Irma Weir, Tax Collector
Chris Battaglia, Village CFO
Greg Bock, Village Treasurer
Howard Levison, Water Administrator- **Absent**
Joycelyn White, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes

Regular meetings held on July 23, 2021

All members present approved the Regular meeting minutes held on July 23, 2021.

Public Comments

Chair opens the meeting for public comment

Ed Moore, South Orange Resident; asked for an updated timeline for the budget cycle since it was pushed back due to Ida. Mr. Moore also asked when the next CBAC meeting would be scheduled.

In response to Mr. Moore, Trustee Hartshorn Hilton explained that the Citizen Budget Advisory Committee is a self-governing committee and can schedule meetings as the Chair sets forth.

New Business

2020 Audit

Mr. Battaglia briefed the committee on the 2020 Audit. Essentially, the Audit is a summary of the Village's books for the year. The first few pages are disclosures detailing pensions and liabilities set by the state. The first step after the BOT reviews the document, the Board will have a resolution before them to approve the audit. Once approved, the BOT needs to sign a Group Affidavit. Which is a statement that indicates each Trustee has read the state comments and recommendations. The two comments the Village received; state recommendation is a Payment of Claims, which means all requisitions are submitted prior to any commitment of good or service. The second comment was a Fix Asset Inventory, which is a statutory requirement and a list of our capital purchases. Anything over five thousand dollars that was purchased at anytime. The state would like to see a more detailed document, Mr. Battaglia and Mr. Loehner is currently working on this. In addition to the audit and group synopsis, the Board will review a Corrective Action Plan. In the Corrective Action Plan, it will state the Village's plan to correct the state's comments. Mr. Battaglia detailed the balance sheets, which show the actual cash the Village has on hand, fund balance, and debt. In response to Trustee Zuckerman, Mr. Battaglia stated that within forty-five days of receipt of the audit, a resolution must be adopted to accept it. This would be before the board at the November 15th meeting. The Village will have sixty days from the receipt of the audit to approve the Correction Action Plan. Prior to the next BOT meeting, the audit will be circulated to the BOT members. Mr. Battaglia added a synopsis of the audit will be published in the News Record and proof will be sent to the state. Trustee Hartshorn Hilton clarified that this audit will be adopted and not approved by the BOT.

In response to committee members' questions regarding the Fixed Asset Inventory, Mr. Loehner discussed hiring an outside company to do the inventory but would like to interview a few companies before moving forward.

Water Capital Request

Trustee Haskin detailed the request for the working capital for the water utility system. This is the funding for the day-end day out maintenance of valves and fire hydrants. The requested amount is $500,000 for the year, which would cover any repairs as needed. In response to Trustee Hartshorn Hilton, Mr. Battaglia explained that this request is made yearly and it was not approved for 2021. Mr. Levison had funds left over from the 2020 allotment and before the fund are depleted, and suggested moving this forward.

The Finance Committee is all in favor of moving this request to the Board of Trustees.

Old Business

Department Updates:

- **Finance Department**
- **Tax Collector**
- **Water Department**
- **Tax Assesor/QPA**

Finance Department- Mr. Battaglia discussed working on reconciliation at the end of the year and will start working on budget transfers at the beginning of the year. Mr. Battaglia is working with the Deputy Administrator to assist every department make payments through Govpilot.

Tax Collector- Mrs. Weir detailed gearing up for the fourth quarter tax period due November 1st and the end-of-the-year preparations. Last month's tax sale, the village was offered a $995 premium. The Tax Collector's office entered added billing for added assessment and it was completed for the rest of the year. Mrs. Weir updated the committee on a foreclosure on an outside lien, which would be a $10,000 premium of unanticipated fund for the village.

Water Department- In the absence of Mr. Levison, Mr. Leohner detailed a few items, such as AMI Approval and continued planning. Mr. Levison is working with the Village Engineer on new roads being added to the repair list.

Tax Assessor/QPA- In the absence of Mrs. Malgieri, Mr. Loehner stated a RFQ's for professional services is out and the Tax Assessor is awaiting responses to the Bosway redesign. Mr. Loehner anticipates responses by the end of the month. In response to Trustee Hartshorn Hilton, Mr. Loehner stated that the Water Green Way project has been stalled due to updating paperwork and a new Village Engineer being caught up in the current progress. On a positive note, because of the big push last year, the village is working with the leader that is in charge of the division and discussing dates. There is a possibility of shovels in the ground after summer. Mr. Loehner detailed some site work being started on the DPW side, but in the heavier greenery areas would have a later start date.

In response to Trustee Zuckerman, Mr. Loehner explained the location for the Bosway redesign. The stretch from the mechanic shop on Bosway all the way to the playground. The committee discussed various updates to the road, bathrooms, paddle courts, and tennis courts.

FY' 21 Operation Budget

There was no report.

FY'21 Capital Budget

There was no report.

Public Comment

Ed Moore, South Orange Resident; stated that it was his understanding that the five million dollar bond to cover Ida's damage would be reimbursed. Once the village receives the reimbursement, where will that money be placed? Or will it be used to pay for the bond or general revenue? Finally, Mr. Moore asked if there is any correlation between high overtime and employees not being vaccinated. In regard to public safety, what are the vaccination requirements for village employees?

Mr. Battaglia explained the two types of expenses as a result of the storm; operating and capital. The primary concern is the capital expenses and it will offset the debt. As the reimbursements come in, it will reduce the amount of debt. The village will be responsible for 25% of the total cost.

Mr. Loehner explained the high overtime use is not due to Covid. However, all employees were able to carry over 50% of their 2020 vacation time into 2021. The requirements for employees are to be vaccinated or get a weekly test.

Next Meeting Date

November 18, 2021; 10AM

Adjournment