

**VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN
VILLAGE COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 8, 2012, 7:00 PM
FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CHURCH
26426 WELLINGTON , FRANKLIN, MICHIGAN**

INFORMATIONAL MEETING ON MILLAGE PROPOSALS

ROLL CALL

Present: Lew Eads, Pam Hansen, Sherry Sparks, Steve Rosenthal, Tom Morrow (Trustee and Village Treasurer), Jim Kochensparger
Absent: Mike Seltzer
Also Present: Amy Sullivan, Village Administrator; John Staran, Village Attorney; Eileen Pulker, Village Clerk; Pat Browne, Village Police Chief; Tony Averbuch, Village Fire Chief

INTRODUCTION

President Kochensparger welcomed the Villagers to the Special Informational Meeting designed to educate the residents about the upcoming millage proposals which will be on the Feb. 28, 2012 Presidential Primary ballot. He explained that Amy Sullivan, Village Administrator, would provide a short PowerPoint presentation, which would be followed by public comments and questions. Each resident would be allowed a three (3) minute time limit for his/her comments and or questions.

POWER POINT PRESENTATION

Sullivan gave a brief power point presentation (attached) covering the breakdown of the 2011 Village Property tax bill residents received, the history of the village tax millage rate, the history of property tax revenue based on the millage rate, the history of expenditures for police and administration (aka General Fund), and the history of tax revenue for the General Fund.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Randy McElroy, Woodside, explained that he had served on Council when the method of funding the pressure sewer was decided, and provided a brief history and rationale of why the Council funded it the way it did. He questioned whether the Village Office staff hours would be restored to 100%. He remarked that by splitting the proposals the Council listened to the residents who had previously voted against the combined ballot item.

Morrow commented that, if the millage passes it is the intent to restore the Village services to normal and to maintain the police services as they are now. He continued by saying the Council listened to the Residents and tried to create a millage that reflected their concerns.

Mark Hanke, Wing Lake, congratulated the Council on its hard work and spoke in support of the millage. He commented that he watches the weekly papers and noticed that Franklin is never mentioned in the "Crime Watch" which is a compliment to the Police.

Charlie Rashid, Oakleaf, explained that normally he is an anti-tax, anti-spend person but he whole heartedly supports the millage and gave a short explanation of how and why he relies on the police and fire departments for his safety.

Molly Hammerle, Suzanne, asked if this millage would be a "one time deal" or would the Village Council come back in a few years and ask for more.

Morrow replied that the term for the additional tax is four (4) years. Morrow further explained that based on the forecast available for the next 4 years, this increase it will get us back to a 25% fund balance which is the Village's target. If the Village doesn't need an increase above the Village's Headlee Cap then the additional tax is eliminated. If the Village Council would need to come back, then the Council at that point would put together another proposal. Kochensparger added that the Village is still going to be looking for cuts and anywhere else that money can be saved. Kochensparger opined that the millage increase alone won't achieve the 25% Fund Balance.

Mira Stakhiv, Crestwood, stated that she supports the tax increase. Stakhiv noted that as a member of Mobil Watch, she has seen somewhat of an increase in crime. She commented that we cannot afford not to support the police. She thanked the Council for the tough job in cutting the budget.

Bill Shepherd, Tudor Lane, asked if a detailed budget projection was available. Morrow explained that it is on the Village web site.

Mike Heisel, Sunset, stated that he recognizes that technically it's an economic issue but the Village needs to attract people into the area, thus increasing the tax base. Heisel opined that one of the ways to attract people to live in Franklin is to maintain good services and responses. He further noted that if there were any more cuts in the budget, the quality of life would deteriorate and there would be concerns about safety which in turn would be counter-productive. Heisel added that he appreciates what the Council has done by splitting the ballot proposals so that the Residents can look at all the issues and the details of the budget and can fully understand it. He complimented the Council on its hard work and stated that he supports the millages.

Mark Ziessow, Redfern, stated that he is moving back into the Village. He complimented the Police and Fire Departments adding that it is his hope that the Village will maintain its superior services and he supported the millage proposals.

Kochensparger asked Chief Browne how the Police would be affected if the General Fund millage is not approved.

Chief Browne explained that he would have to eliminate a police officer and expounded on how this would affect Franklin and Bingham Farms. He also explained the current staffing status.

Chief Averbuch also explained how the Fire Department would be affected if the millage did not pass noting that saving money for the department and its' equipment would be very difficult. Averbuch noted that there are certain things that must be maintained according to state mandates, laws, and standards. He added that without the increase there might be significant changes in Village fire protection.

Morrow thought it was important to emphasize the effect of the Headlee Amendment on Village tax revenue. He explained the workings of it on property taxes resulting in the increase and/or decrease of tax revenues.

Judy Wiener, Franklin Rd., stated that she is a long-time resident. She opined that she would question how anyone could say "no" to the Police and Fire Departments. Wiener noted that

she believes it is necessary to support the excellent quality of life that the Village enjoys now, that she supports the passage of the millages and asked the residents to vote “yes”.

Karen Couf-Cohen, Romsey, stated that she concurs with everything everyone has said. She inquired if there was a “Tax calculator” which the residents could use to see what their particular tax increase would be. Kochensparger stated that there was one on the Village website.

Susan Clayton, Farmington Hills, told the audience that her daughter has a house in the Village and she spends more time there than in her own house because she enjoys the Village. What she doesn’t understand is that with so many large homes in the Village, where is all that tax revenue from those property taxes?

Morrow explained that because of the decrease in home values the tax revenues also decreased and even though there might be new homes built, the Village is projecting a flat property tax base for the upcoming year.

McElroy stated that hopefully when the economy turns around, housing starts in the Village will pick up, property values will increase, and tax revenues will go up.

Sparks reminded the Residents that if they had questions and/or concerns as to how the Council was spending the discretionary funds they should get involved and attend the budget meetings and hearings which will begin in the spring.

Eileen Harryvan, Vincennes, expressed her appreciation to the Council, Police and Fire Chiefs for all their hard work. She added that she felt that it was imperative that the services in the Village be maintained and if services and safety are not maintained the property values will decline because it is a numbers game. Property values have gone down, tax income has gone down, and expenses have gone up. She re-iterated Sparks’s comments about residents attending the budget meetings and urged the residents to vote “yes” on both millages.

McElroy, Woodside, advised the Council and the residents to sell the tax increase by talking to friends and neighbors.

Police Chief Browne provided a quick overview of the safety tips brochure that the Police have produced adding that it will be distributed throughout the Village.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Beke

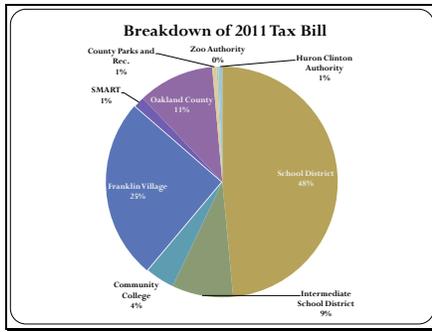
Eileen H. Pulker
Village Clerk

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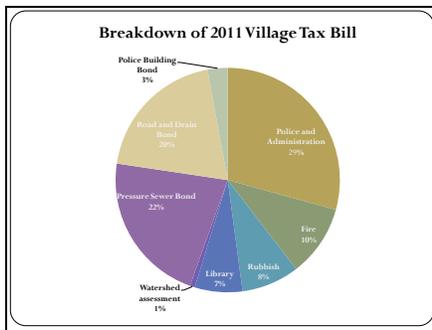
Village of Franklin
February 28th Millage Election Information

Presented February 8, 2012
Franklin Community Church
7 p.m.

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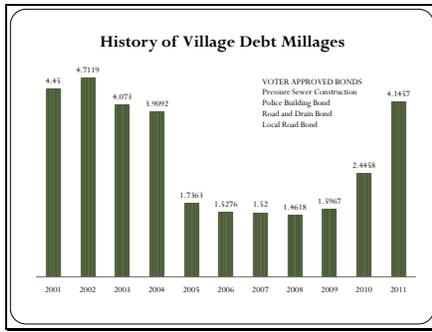
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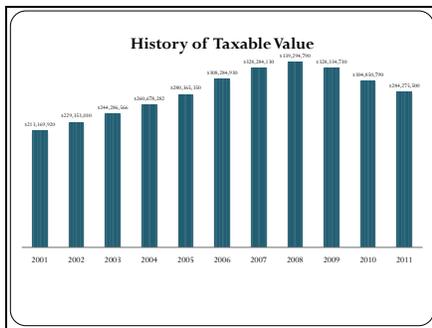
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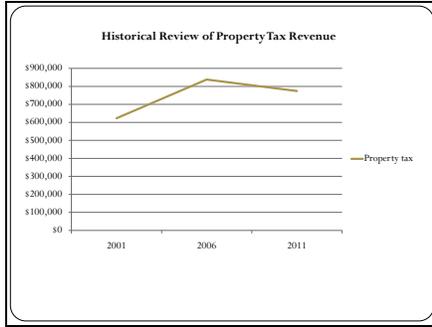
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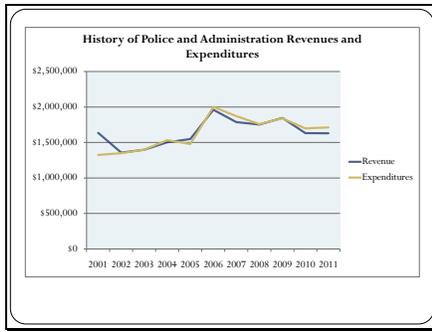
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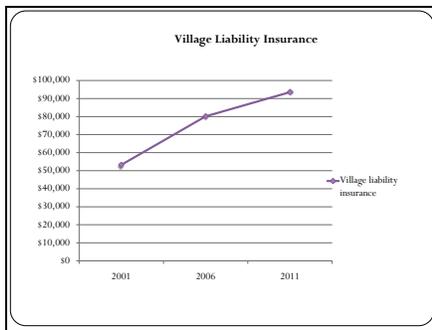
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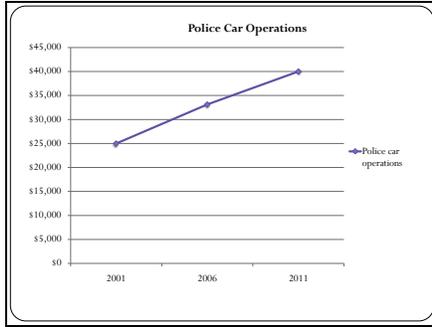
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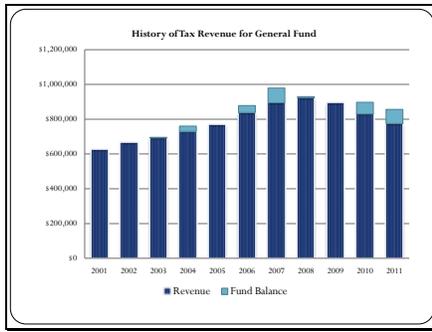
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