

Legal voters of the Village of Old Bennington to meet May 9.2017

This is to certify and warn the legal voters of the Village of Old Bennington To meet at the Old First Church Barn in said Village, on Tuesday May 9, 2017, at eight o'clock in the evening to transact the following Business.

- (1) To hear the reports of the Village Officers and to take action thereon.
- (2) To discuss and approve the budget.
- (3) To see how much tax shall be appropriated by the Village to pay the Expenses of the ensuing year, and to determine when and in what manner the Village will collect taxes.
- (4) To see if taxpayers will authorize the Trustees to borrow monies in Anticipation of taxes.
- (5) To elect the following Officers: Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer/Tax Collector, Auditor, and Two Trustees for a two year term.
- (6) To transact any other business that may come before us.

By order of the Trustees Dated at Old Bennington March 29, 2017 Donna Berry
Village Clerk of the
Village of Old Bennington



#### Annual Report of the Presiding Officer

Village of Old Bennington

May 2017

As we all look forward to a hopefully pleasant and relaxing spring and summer, may we pause to reflect on the possible changes and needs of our Village in the year ahead. Much activity has occurred in the past year and plans (with your approval) will be presented. Accordingly, highlights of the various enclosed Trustees' reports are offered to you at this time.

As will be further conveyed in detail by Charles Edson, the streets of Old Bennington have been relatively quiet except for a couple of incidents over the past year. The Trustees again thank Officer George "Andy" Corey for his continued effort to reduce speeding in the Village and his efforts in protecting our homes while we are absent from them. Statistics seem to indicate the Trustees' approval of an increase of hours for Officer Corey has once again had a positive impact on the speeding problem. Thanks to Bennington Police Chief, Paul Doucette, for being very helpful in the continued placing of speed monitoring machines, providing traffic data, supplying additional patrols in the Village as well as assistance in solving some Village crime scenes. We continue to observe speeding problems throughout Old Bennington and place emphasis on the observed speeding locations. Please continue to help reduce speeding in Old Bennington by traveling our roadways within the 25 mph speed limit on Village streets. Your safety is important, so we ask that you lock your home entrances and your vehicles routinely.

Our Village Treasurer, Kathy Wagenknecht, reports 2016-17 was generally a successful year. From an income perspective, we were slightly below budget, primarily because of increase revenues and savings on a couple of budget items. On the expense side, streets and roads expenses increased due to Mother Nature's "gift" of a classic Vermont snowy winter. We did reduced expenses regarding the Police Car and Equipment, Sidewalks and Trees, the Audit and Planning and Zoning Activities. As a result, we were able to use little to none of the Reserve Account reduction we had budgeted. Her presentation to the Village will detail these numbers.

Road Commissioner Andy Buchsbaum will offer details as to the past year expenditures and forthcoming plans for the upcoming year. Central to his report will be the continued upgrading of sidewalks on the west side of Monument Avenue and the shared Town of Bennington/Village of Old Bennington installation of a crosswalk at the Bennington Museum. In a related manner, we will provide a brief presentation outlining the State of Vermont Department of Transportation 2018 summer plan for paving Town Hill Road through the middle of our Village. It is part of a larger project involving roads throughout the Town of Bennington as well. These plans and others are presented with our desire to ensure that Old Bennington retains its character as a Village.

The Parks/Tree Commissioner, Don Miller, reports a quiet year for the trees with some damage due to storms this past winter. He reminds us that when in doubt, check the Village by-laws before taking down trees or call the Tree Commissioner. Plans for improvement of the Center Island will be presented. Additionally, Auditor Ron Rabidou will present a summary of our recently completed audit of the Village financials.

Our Planning Commission has continued their fine work in maintaining the residential nature of our Village. Many thanks to Chairman Bob Bullington, the Commission members, and Kimberly Gould for their efforts in these matters. Currently plans are in the works to produce and publish new modifications to the Village by-laws. Finally, I close with an expression of gratitude for the work of all our Trustees and various Village officers. Please find the time to thank them for all their endeavors on our behalf.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard H. Caswell II

69 Monument Avenue

### Road Commissioner's Report

In a protracted winter season, which included several major weather events, the village spent more on the salting and plowing of sidewalks and roads than was budgeted. This was in contrast to the previous seasons mild winter where we spent significantly less than budgeted, and then applied the savings to constructing a length of sidewalk on the west side of Monument Ave. As a result, we are going to postpone pouring another section of sidewalk until next season.

The crosswalk at the museum is slated to start construction in May. The village's share of the project cost includes materials only, with the town providing labor. This should be a real asset for pedestrians in the village, and make it safer for everyone wishing to cross Town Hill in that area.

The state is planning a major repaving project of Rt 9/Main St. and Rt. 7 starting in May of 2018. The scope will encompass the section of road from the Four Chimneys eastward to the 279 bypass, and along Rt. 7 from the Veteran's park southward to Park Lawn Cemetery.

In general, the village roads and sidewalks are in decent condition. Minor patching and repairs, and some re-striping will be taken care of. A new length curb will be installed on the western edge of the western spur of the south island to help prevent the constant erosion that occurs there.



#### ANNUAL REPORT

#### POLICE COMMISSIONER

May 2017

Part 1 - Police Activity

The Streets of Old Bennington have been without a major incident over the past year. Officer George "Andy" Corey continues to serve in an outstanding manner as police officer for the Village with much success at helping to reduce driving speeds and assisting residents by checking their homes while they were absent. He continues to update his skills by attending appropriate training classes. The police car has functioned well, but now needs occasional repairs.

Bennington Police Chief, Paul Doucette, has been very helpful by placing speed monitoring machines, providing significant traffic data and by supplying additional patrols in the Village. We thank the Town of Bennington for the help they provided this past year.

The Trustees approved an increase of hours for Officer Corey. His additional hours have a positive impact on the speeding problem.

This winter we had some burglaries in the village and Officer Corey has increased his inspection of homes that are obviously vacant. Thank you! Apparently, the culprits were apprehended by Bennington PD thanks to a village resident who noticed unusual activity and called BPD. One of the houses had unlocked doors. Every year, in my Annual Report, I requested residents to lock their doors when absent from the house. Again, you are requested to lock your doors when absent from the house. Please also lock your vehicles when not in use, even if they are in a garage. Officer Corey increased his vacant home type of inspection to be more detailed. This consumes more of his time than in the past.

It was reported that buses were blocking the roadway at the monument. I met with Mary Lou Chicotte and talked about bus parking at the monument. I found <u>no</u> reserved or marked spaces for bus parking, which we thought needed some attention. Several ideas were considered, but no acceptable method of parking the buses has been found as of this writing.

The Road Commissioner, the Police Commissioner and Officer Corey met to review the upcoming events at the Monument and determined that "No Parking" signs should be placed on the West side if Monument Ave. during the events. Road Commissioner, Buchsbaum, will place the signs. Officer Corey and Bennington PD will monitor them. Thanks to Planning Commission Chair, Bob Bullington, for supplying the method for obtaining the scheduled events.

A light pole on Monument Circle was struck on June 26 by a Western truck was investigated by Bennington PD and a police report issued. The insurance company paid for a new pole. Thanks to a concerned citizen who provided the information from which we could find the responsible party.

A tractor trailer knocked down the yield sign and did other damage at the intersection of Monument Circle and Walloomsac Road. It was appreciated that a resident was at the scene and captured the license plate number of the vehicle and that another resident called the Bennington police. We sincerely appreciate their help. The culprit was never found, due to a fictitious license plate.

Note: Vtrans has a website that shows Old Bennington official street map with dimensions.

We continue to thank Dr. Richard J. Mahler for continuing to allow the Village to store the police car in his garage. We appreciate his generosity.

We recommend that villagers do not exceed the speed limit of 25 mph on Village streets (30 mph on Route 9).

#### Part 2 - Bennington County Regional Commission

This representative of Old Bennington has attended the BCRC meetings and serves on the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC has reviewed all the proposed transportation projects for the county and placed them in a priority order for VTrans. Old Bennington has no projects on the list this year. Some of the presentations at BCRC meetings were:

Batten Kill, conservation and water quality improvements

Transportation and Housing development

Bennington County Regional Energy Plan.

ANR River Management Program

Facilitating Economic Development in Villages and Downtowns

NeighborWorks of Western Vermont: Programs and Opportunities in Bennington County.

Charles Edson

Trustee/Police Commissioner

# **Tree Commissioner**

Don Miller

I would remind residents of the current Bylaws, both because we sometimes forget and because they may be something residents would like to express an opinion on while the Village Plan is being reviewed and updated in the coming months.

There are two long standing ordinances:

- #3-102 No person shall cut down or remove any tree or shrub in the public right-of-way in front of your house without the permission of the Trustees (i.e., the Tree Commissioner).
- #4-401 Property owners shall keep the right-of way free of dead trees, shrubs, and hedges.

Trustees (i.e., the Tree Commissioner) may notify the property owner of the presence of a dead tree and the tree shall be removed at the expense of the owner.

There is a newer rule established in the last revision of the Zoning Regulations that requires obtaining a zoning permit before:

- "Removal of trees over 6" diameter breast height (DBH) located forward of the building line within any yard fronting a street, and which is also within 150' of the street right-of way. Removal of dead trees does not require a permit."
- 2. "Removal of more than 20% of trees forward of the building line of the principal building in any yard fronting a street."

If you would like to discuss these provisions, please contact the Tree Commissioner, the Zoning Administrator, or one of the Trustees.

This past winter did see a heavier than normal windfall, because of the strong winds We appreciate all the work by residents in cleaning up the fallen branches in their yards and in the right-of-way.

We did plant three new trees in the right-of-ways this year but are not aware of any other trees that need replacement in the upcoming year.



# Auditor's Report May 2017

#### **Administrative Matters**

We completed three important tasks in the financial accounting and control area this year.

First, we engaged Love, Cody & Company, CPAs to assist us in evaluating the accuracy and completeness of our accounting records. While voters at last year's annual meeting authorized the trustees to engage an accounting firm to audit the village's financial statements, we learned that an audit would likely cost at least \$10,000, significantly more than the \$8,000 approved in the budget.

Given the cost of an audit, we explored possible alternatives with Love, Cody & Company. In doing so, we learned that we could engage them to perform selected auditing procedures that would provide us reasonable assurance about the accuracy and completeness of our financial records at about half the cost of a full audit.

They performed their work during the fall and issued their report in early December. In the course of performing their procedures, the firm found just one exception, resulting from a change in accounting procedures several years ago. The exception had no effect on our reported financial statements. Interested residents can request a copy of the report from the village auditor.

Second, we created a Policies and Procedures Manual to formally document our financial accounting and internal control policies and procedures. In addition to complying with the recommendations of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the manual will serve as a resource for newly elected and appointed village officials in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. It will also facilitate any future audit engagements. We intend to distribute the manual along with the revised general ordinances and zoning bylaws to village residents in the coming year.

Finally, we simplified the presentation of our financial statements in this year's Annual Report to more clearly reflect the results of our operations during the year and the status of our financial reserves as of the end of the year.

# Report on Financial Statements

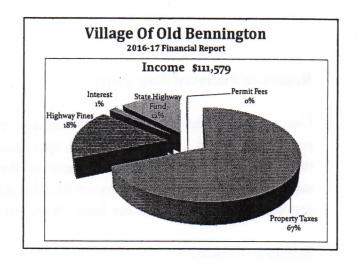
I have reviewed the accompanying financial statements and verified that the results for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2017 agree with the financial records of the village. During the course of the year, I traced all disbursements shown on the warrant lists and the related checks to supporting documentation. I also verified that all revenues, cash balances, and certificate of deposit balances agree with our bank statements. I did not find any exceptions.

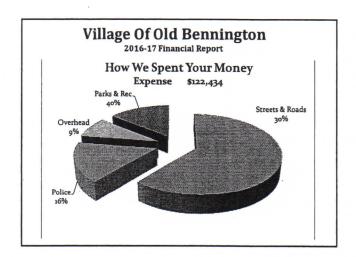
Ronald E. Rabidou

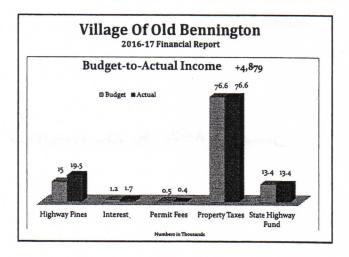
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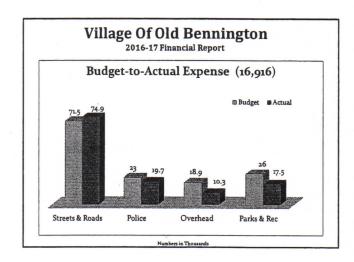
Auditor

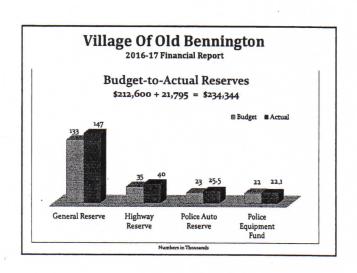
# Village of Old Bennington 2016-2017 Financials & 2017-18 Proposed Budget











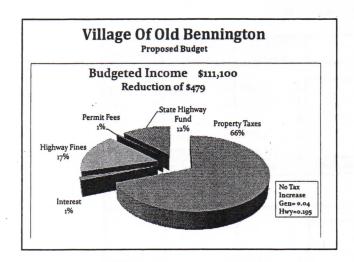
# Village of Old Bennington

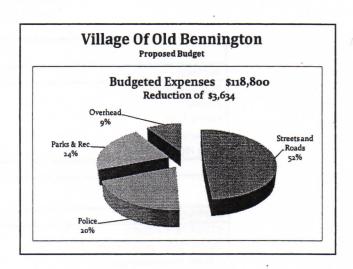
# 2016-2017 Financial Report

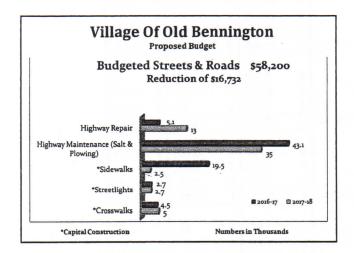
April 1, 2016- March 31, 2017

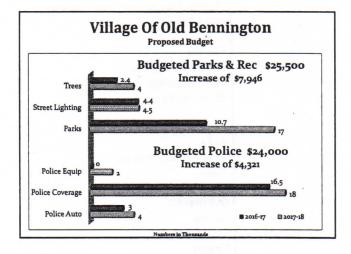
|                                      |              | 1        | 2016-17<br>Budget |     | 2016-17<br>Actual |     | Variance            |  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|---------------------|--|
| INCOME                               |              | $\top$   |                   | +   | Actual            | +   |                     |  |
| Highway Fines                        |              | \$       | 15,000            | \$  | 19,549            | 18  | 4,549               |  |
| Interest                             |              | \$       | 1,200             |     | 1,684             |     |                     |  |
| Permit Fees                          |              | \$       | 500               |     | 350               | т.  |                     |  |
| Property Taxes                       |              | \$       | 76,600            | 1.  | 76,583            |     | ,                   |  |
| State Highway Fund                   |              | \$       | 13,400            |     | 13,413            |     | ,                   |  |
|                                      | TOTAL INCOME | _        | 106,700           |     | 111,579           |     | _                   |  |
|                                      |              | 1        | ,                 | 1 * | 111,013           | 1 4 | 4,073               |  |
| EXPENSE                              |              |          |                   | _   |                   | _   |                     |  |
| STREETS & ROADS                      |              | 1        |                   |     |                   |     |                     |  |
| Capital ConstructionHighway          |              | 1        |                   |     |                   | 1   |                     |  |
| Bank Street Drainage                 |              |          | 4 000             |     |                   | ١.  |                     |  |
| Crosswalks                           |              | \$       | 4,000             |     | -                 | \$  | (4,000              |  |
| Lighting Fixtures                    |              | \$       | 5,000             | \$  | 4,464             | \$  | (536                |  |
| Sidewalks                            |              | \$       | 2,500             | \$  | 2,734             | \$  | 234                 |  |
| Highway Maintenance (Salt & Plowing) |              | \$       | 20,000            | \$  | 19,510            | \$  | (490                |  |
| Highway Repair                       |              | \$       | 28,000            | \$  | 43,119            | \$  | 15,119              |  |
|                                      | TOTAL        | \$       | 12,000            | \$  | 5,105             | \$  | (6,895              |  |
| POLICE                               | TOTAL        | Ψ        | 71,500            | \$  | 74,932            | \$  | 3,432               |  |
| Police Auto Expense                  |              | \$       | 2 000             |     | 0.007             |     | 400                 |  |
| Police Coverage                      |              | \$       | 3,000<br>18,000   | \$  | 2,997             | \$  | (3)                 |  |
| Police Equipment                     |              | \$       |                   | \$  | 16,523            | \$  | (1,477)             |  |
|                                      | TOTAL        | \$       | 2,000             | \$  | 159               | \$  | (1,841)             |  |
| PARKS & RECREATION                   | TOTAL        | Ψ        | 23,000            | Þ   | 19,679            | \$  | (3,321)             |  |
| Parks                                |              | \$       | 17,000            | \$  | 10,689            |     | (0.044)             |  |
| Street Lighting (Power)              |              | \$       | 4,000             | \$  | 4,433             | \$  | (6,311)             |  |
| Trees                                |              | \$       | 5,000             | \$  | 2,432             | \$  | 433                 |  |
|                                      | TOTAL        | \$       | 26,000            | \$  | 17,554            | \$  | (2,568)             |  |
| OVERHEAD                             |              | <u> </u> | 20,000            | Ψ_  | 17,554            | Φ   | (8,446)             |  |
| Clerical                             |              | \$       | 800               | \$  | 603               | \$  | (407)               |  |
| inancial Audit                       |              | \$       | 8,000             | \$  | 4,000             | \$  | (197)               |  |
| Towers                               |              | \$       | 250               | \$  | 61                | \$  | (4,000)             |  |
| nsurance                             |              | \$       | 2,000             | \$  | 1,951             | \$  | (189)               |  |
| egal & Zoning                        |              | \$       | 1,000             | \$  | 262               | 1.0 | (49)                |  |
| /lemberships                         |              | \$       | 2,700             | \$  | 2,713             | \$  | (738)               |  |
| Planning Commission                  |              | \$       | 2,000             | \$  | 58                |     | (1.042)             |  |
| Rent                                 |              | \$       | 600               | \$  | 620               | \$  | (1,942)             |  |
| oning Administration                 |              | \$       | 1,500             | \$  |                   | \$  | (1,500)             |  |
|                                      | TOTAL        | \$       | 18,850            | \$  | 10,269            | \$  |                     |  |
| TO                                   |              | \$       | 139,350           | \$  | 122,434           | _   | (8,581)<br>(16,916) |  |
|                                      |              | _        | ,                 | _   | .22,707           | Ψ   | (10,310)            |  |
| ET INCOME (LOSS) transferred to Re   | 507/00 T     | <u>^</u> | /22               | _   |                   | _   |                     |  |
| to me (2033) transferred to Re.      | serves       | \$       | (32,650)          | \$  | (10,855)          | \$  | 21,795              |  |

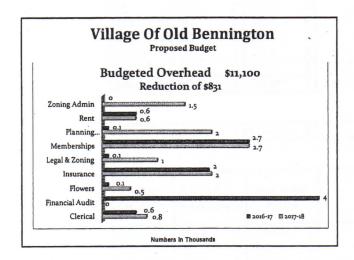
| RESERVE ACCOUNTS |       | Actual as of Actual Net 4/1/16 Income (Loss) |    | Actual as of 3/31/17 |    |         |
|------------------|-------|--|----|----------------------|----|---------|
| General Fund     |       | \$<br>155,425                                | \$ | (8,671)              | ¢  | 146,754 |
| Highway          |       | \$<br>50,000                                 | ٠. | (10,000)             |    | 40,000  |
| Police Auto      |       | \$<br>19,500                                 | \$ | 6,000                | \$ | 25,500  |
| Police Equipment |       | \$<br>20,274                                 | \$ | 1,816                | \$ | 22,090  |
|                  | TOTAL | \$<br>245,199                                | \$ | (10,855)             | \$ | 234,344 |

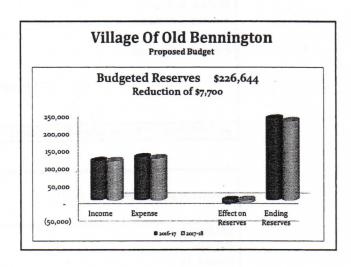












## Village of Old Bennington

## **Proposed 2017-2018 Budget** April 1, 2017 - March 31, 2018

|   | 20 | 16-17 Actual | PROPOSED<br>2017-18<br>BUDGET |         | Variance 18 Budget- 17 Actual |          |  |
|---|----|--------------|-------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|----------|--|
| INCOME                                    |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| Highway Fines                             | \$ | 19,549       | \$                            | 19,000  | \$                            | (549)    |  |
| Interest                                  | \$ | 1,684        | \$                            | 1,600   | \$                            | (84)     |  |
| Permit Fees                               | \$ | 350          | \$                            | 500     | \$                            | 150      |  |
| Property Taxes                            | \$ | 76,583       | \$                            | 76,600  | \$                            | 17       |  |
| State Highway Fund                        | \$ | 13,413       | \$                            | 13,400  | \$                            | (13)     |  |
| TOTAL INCOME                              | \$ | 111,579      | \$                            | 111,100 | \$                            | (479)    |  |
| •   |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| EXPENSE                                   |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| STREETS & ROADS                           |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| Capital ConstructionHighway               |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| Bank Street Drainage                      | \$ | -            | \$                            | -       |                               |          |  |
| Crosswalks                                | \$ | 4,464        | \$                            | 5,000   | \$                            | 536      |  |
| Lighting Fixtures                         | \$ | 2,734        | \$                            | 2,700   | \$                            | (34)     |  |
| Sidewalks                                 | \$ | 19,510       | \$                            | 2,500   | \$                            | (17,010) |  |
| Highway Maintenance (Salt & Plowing)      | \$ | 43,119       | \$                            | 35,000  | \$                            | (8,119)  |  |
| Highway Repair                            | \$ | 5,105        | \$                            | 13,000  | \$                            | 7,895    |  |
| TOTAL                                     | \$ | 74,932       | \$                            | 58,200  | \$                            | (16,732) |  |
| POLICE                                    |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| Police Auto Expense                       | \$ | 2,997        | \$                            | 4,000   | \$                            | 1,003    |  |
| Police Coverage                           | \$ | 16,523       | \$                            | 18,000  | \$                            | 1,477    |  |
| Police Equipment                          | \$ | 159          | \$                            | 2,000   | \$                            | 1,841    |  |
| TOTAL                                     | \$ | 19,679       | \$                            | 24,000  | \$                            | 4,321    |  |
| PARKS & RECREATION                        |    |              |                               |         | \$                            | -        |  |
| Parks                                     | \$ | 10,689       | \$                            | 17,000  | \$                            | 6,311    |  |
| Street Lighting (Power)                   | \$ | 4,433        | \$                            | 4,500   | \$                            | 67       |  |
| Trees                                     | \$ | 2,432        | \$                            | 4,000   | \$                            | 1,568    |  |
| TOTAL                                     | \$ | 17,554       | \$                            | 25,500  | \$.                           | 7,946    |  |
| OVERHEAD                                  |    |              |                               |         | \$                            | -        |  |
| Clerical                                  | \$ | 603          | \$                            | 800     | \$                            | 197      |  |
| Financial Audit                           | \$ | 4,000        | \$                            | -       | \$                            | (4,000)  |  |
| Flowers                                   | \$ | 61           | \$                            | 500     | \$                            | 439      |  |
| Insurance                                 | \$ | 1,951        | \$                            | 2,000   | \$                            | 49       |  |
| Legal & Zoning                            | \$ | 262          | \$                            | 1,000   | \$                            | 738      |  |
| Memberships                               | \$ | 2,713        | \$                            | 2,700   | \$                            | (13)     |  |
| Planning Commission                       | \$ | 58           | \$-                           | 2,000   | \$                            | 1,942    |  |
| Rent                                      | \$ | 620          | \$                            | 600     | \$                            | (20)     |  |
| Zoning Administration                     | \$ | -            | \$                            | 1,500   | \$                            | 1,500    |  |
| TOTAL                                     | \$ | 10,269       | \$                            | 11,100  | \$                            | 831      |  |
| TOTAL EXPENSE                             | \$ | 122,434      | \$                            | 118,800 | \$                            | (3,634)  |  |
|   |    |              |                               |         |                               |          |  |
| NET INCOME (LOSS) transferred to Reserves | \$ | (10,855)     | \$                            | (7,700) | \$                            | 3,155    |  |

| RESERVE ACCOUNTS | ,  | Actual as of<br>4/1/17 | Projected<br>et Income<br>(Loss) | Projected as of 3/31/18 |  |  |
|------------------|----|------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| General Fund     | \$ | 146,754                | \$<br>(10,700)                   | \$<br>136,054           |  |  |
| Highway          | \$ | 40,000                 | \$                               | \$<br>40,000            |  |  |
| Police Auto      | \$ | 25,500                 | \$<br>3,000                      | \$<br>28,500            |  |  |
| Police Equipment | \$ | 22,090                 | \$                               | \$<br>22,090            |  |  |
| TOTAL            | \$ | 234,344                | \$<br>(7,700)                    | \$<br>226,644           |  |  |