

Village of Old Bennington

*PO Box 1532
Old Bennington, Vermont 05201*

WARNING
VILLAGE OF OLD BENNINGTON ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING
May 14, 2019

The legal voters of the Village of Old Bennington are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Old First Church Barn in said Village on Tuesday May 14, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. to transact the following business from the floor:

- (1) To hear the reports of the Village Officers and to act thereon.
- (2) To discuss and approve the budget for fiscal year 2019-2020.
- (3) To set the taxes to be appropriated by the Village to pay the expenses of the ensuing year and to determine how and when the Village will collect such taxes.
- (4) To see if voters will authorize the Trustees to borrow monies in anticipation of taxes.
- (5) To elect the following officers:
 - a. Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer and Tax Collector, and Auditor for a term of one year.
 - b. Two trustees for a term of two years.
- (6) To determine whether the Village will provide notice of the availability of the Annual Report, including the Auditors Report, in lieu of mailing or otherwise distributing the report itself. Such notice of availability will be made by mail at least 30 days before the Annual Meeting.
- (7) To transact any other business that may come before us.

By order of the Trustees

April 2, 2019

James Gallen
Clerk, Village of Old Bennington

The Village of Old Bennington

2019 Annual Report

Presiding Officer's Report

Ronald Ravidou

The Village will hold its Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 14 at 7:00 pm at the Old First Church Barn on Monument Circle.

In addition to the usual business of hearing the reports of our village officers, approving next year's budget and tax rate, electing officers, and authorizing the trustees to borrow money in anticipation of taxes, voters will also decide how we will distribute our annual reports in the future. Instead of mailing or otherwise distributing future reports, we propose to notify residents by post card that the reports will be available on the village website or by request from the village clerk. This will save printing and mailing costs.

Some of the past year's highlights, as described below, include the successful application for a matching grant from the state for Phase 1 of the Monument Avenue sidewalk project, the completion of the Museum crosswalk, the launch of the Village website, and another year free of major incidents on our village roads.

Looking forward to next year, we propose to increase the tax rate by three percent to yield additional tax revenues of \$23,000 to partially fund the cost of Phase 2 of the Monument Avenue sidewalk project as well as provide additional revenue in subsequent years for long deferred maintenance of our village roads. Despite the increase in the tax rate, village residents will still have a lower overall tax rate than town residents. The proposed rate will

increase the tax bill about \$220 for a home with an assessed value of \$300,000.

Just a reminder that information about the village including contact information for officers, agendas and minutes of meetings, bylaws and ordinances, permit applications, and historical documents is available on the village website <https://oldbennington.org/>. In its first year, visitors logged over 2,200 page views and downloaded more than 400 documents.

Thanks to all our officers for their work over the past year, and a special thanks to resident Jill Jones for her work on the sidewalk project grant application and Road Commissioner Andy Buchsbaum for his efforts in managing the project.

Road Commissioner's Report

Andy Buchsbaum

The winter felt long even by Vermont standards with an early kick off to road and sidewalk plowing in late November. We had a number of snow events throughout the season, but nothing epic in terms of quantity or successive storms. In the end we exceeded our \$35,000 budget by approximately \$5,000. Jerome will repair lawn damage caused by their sidewalk plow.

Last summer's Rt. 9 repaving project included the completion of the long-awaited museum crosswalk. Additionally, the curb modification at the intersection of Monument Ave./Rt 9 was built, and has been working well. The "bulb" has shortened the length of the crosswalk, and has forced vehicles to slow down while making the right turn up Monument Avenue. This has

created a safer condition for pedestrians crossing Rt. 9.

Roads

Some cold patching of potholes was done on Fairview St. These are generally considered short term fixes, so we'll see about making more permanent repairs to the holes in that area with hot mix when things warm up enough.

In an effort to address the general condition of the roads in Village, we would like to engage MSK Engineers to complete a road assessment report. The report would evaluate each road segment for deterioration, propose a scope of work, and assign a cost to repair/rehabilitate things as needed. There would be a prioritized list, and a timetable specifying which things need the most attention (I think Bank St. will head the list). We feel the study will give the village a big picture view of what's ahead of us with regard to maintenance - a sort of master plan of priorities and cost. We will take a vote at the meeting to see if residents want to fund the \$5,000 report.

Sidewalks

Construction of Phase 1 of the Monument Ave. sidewalk project should begin in the next few weeks (perhaps even completed at the time of the meeting). The scope of this starts at the driveway of #11 where the current walk ends, and stops just south of the large maple at #29. As you know, the sidewalk plan included a Phase 2 which would then continue the sidewalk south to within the vicinity of the north island. At that point a new crosswalk would allow people to cross over to the east side of Monument Ave. There will be graphics at the meeting which describe this.

Last year's 50/50 grant from the state gave us \$29,400 to complete phase 1 (710' for a total cost of \$58,800). That proposal included graphics of an overall site plan showing how this new, continuous west side walk would enable pedestrians to cross over to the east side, gaining access to the Old First Church and the Bennington Museum. I believe it's this connectivity - along with the historical aspects of the village, and the Monument itself - that told a compelling story and made our proposal stand out amongst others.

We are now planning to submit a proposal to the state for Phase 2 grant funds sometime in late June or early July. Jerome is currently preparing a cost estimate to do this work, and we will have that in time for the meeting. The aim is to have Phase 2 constructed next spring.

It is a state requirement that the village's share to complete a project be accounted for in the upcoming village budget. The plan is to budget \$30,000 for our share, which we will vote on at the meeting (I believe that's a conservative number and I'm hopeful it will be less based on actual calculated length).

Police Commissioner's Report

Charles Edson

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. The police car has functioned well, but now needs occasional repairs.

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 help preserve their integrity.

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you again this past year.

Bennington County Regional Commission

Charles Edson

This representative of Old Bennington has attended 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.

Tree Commissioner’s Report

James Warren

This Spring’s persistent winds have made clear that many of the Village’s mature trees are in decline. Dead limbs and branches have littered our yards, walkways and streets raising concern for personal injury and property damage. I urge my fellow residents to take stock of their trees –

especially near sidewalks and roads – and consider professional attention to hazardous trees on your property.

The task of maintaining the Village’s street trees, those within the street right-of-way, is the responsibility of individual property owners, a proposition that may involve considerable expense. Without recommending specific firms, I would suggest that neighbors ask their chosen tree contractor whether scheduling multiple tasks at adjoining properties would result in a cost benefit by reducing the expense of mustering crews and moving heavy equipment.

The Village has set aside limited funds for the replacement of trees within Village rights-of-way; priority will be given to filling gaps in the tree lines that so magnificently contribute to the Village street’s defining visual character. The removal of mature trees within a Village right-of-way requires approval by the Village Trustees, by way of the Tree Commissioner. The removal of mature trees beyond the rights-of-way that contribute to the general arboreal ambience may need a zoning permit. Contact the Tree Commissioner or Administrative Officer if you have questions or just would like to talk about your trees.

Finally, assuming the additional title of Shrub Commissioner, I also ask residents to please prune vegetation that may impinge on our public walks or that may obscure stop signs and other informational signage.

Administrative Officer’s Report

Dennis McCarthy

The Village Administrative Officer issued six permits: One B&B rental – one fence – one renovation – two events – one tree removal. I

provided two Certificates of Compliance for properties in the village and answered seven letters/emails of inquiry from village citizens. Considerable time was also spent on a possible sub-division application and on a pending State application for an emergency generator at the Monument.

The estimated cost of all the permits issued is fifteen thousand one hundred dollars. The final amount added to the Grand List will be determined by the Board of Lister's following their inspection.

The Village Planning Commission granted one renovation permit and has been working on the revision of the Village Sub-Division Bylaws, which have not been updated since 1999. Once the sub-division bylaws are completed, there will be public hearings on the changes to the sub-division bylaws. The Commission has also been working on the State's pending emergency generator permit application.

The Village Plan, Zoning Bylaws, Sub-Division Bylaws, Ordinances and Bylaws, and contact information for all Officers (elected and appointed) are on the Village's web site www.oldbennington.org. You can also find the zoning forms and a fee schedule that you can download, fill in and mail to me for review.

Once I have received your permit application with the appropriate fee and determined it is complete, I will contact you to let you know if I can grant the permit or if your application needs to be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Should you have any questions whether you need a permit for your project (new building – new addition – renovation – tree removal) feel free to contact me at (802) 440 2896 or dcmplumber@hotmail.com

Auditor's Report

Dale Cobb

I have met with Kathy, the Village Treasurer, on several occasions and examined all the records for the accounting year of 2018-2019. Each month, Kathy files the bank statements, deposit slips, invoices, check stubs and the accounting software reports in a folder. I have reviewed all the documents within those folders and everything appears to be in order and within normal operating procedures for the village.

I commend Kathy on her outstanding job of being organized and the excellent handling of village finances.

Treasurer & Tax Collector’s Report

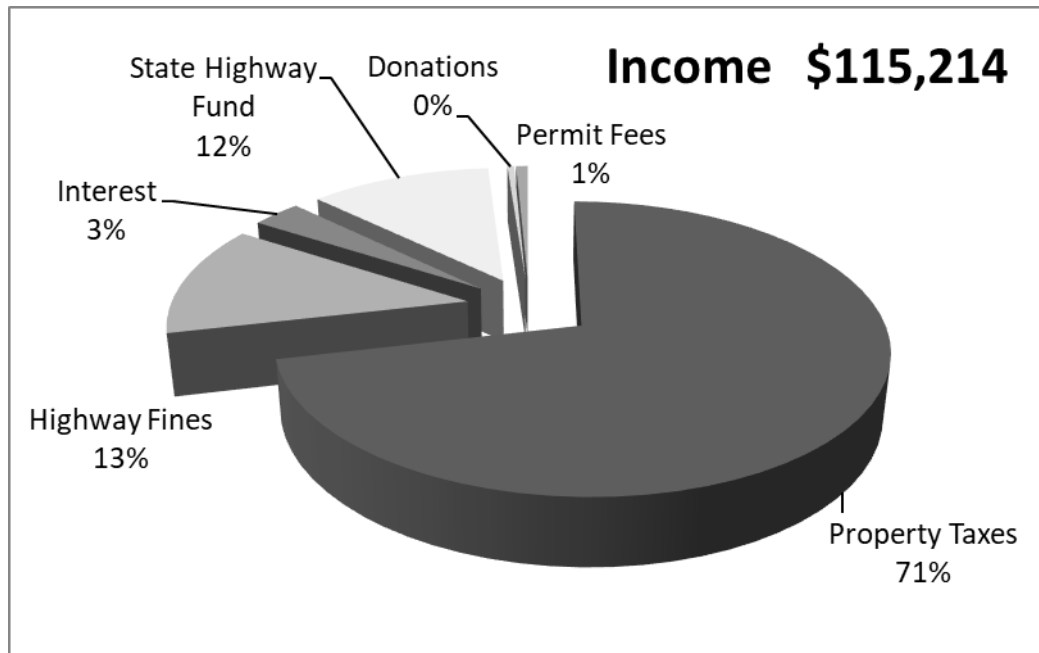
Kathy Wagenknecht

2018-2019 Tax Report

2017-2018 Property Taxes			
Total Property Taxed		\$32,297,300	
Total Tax Due	2018	\$75,830	
	2017	866	
		<u>\$76,696</u>	
Total Tax Collected	2018	\$73,819	
	2017	800	
		<u>\$74,619</u>	
Past Due	2018	\$2,011	2 Properties
	2017	66	1 Property
		<u>\$2,077</u>	

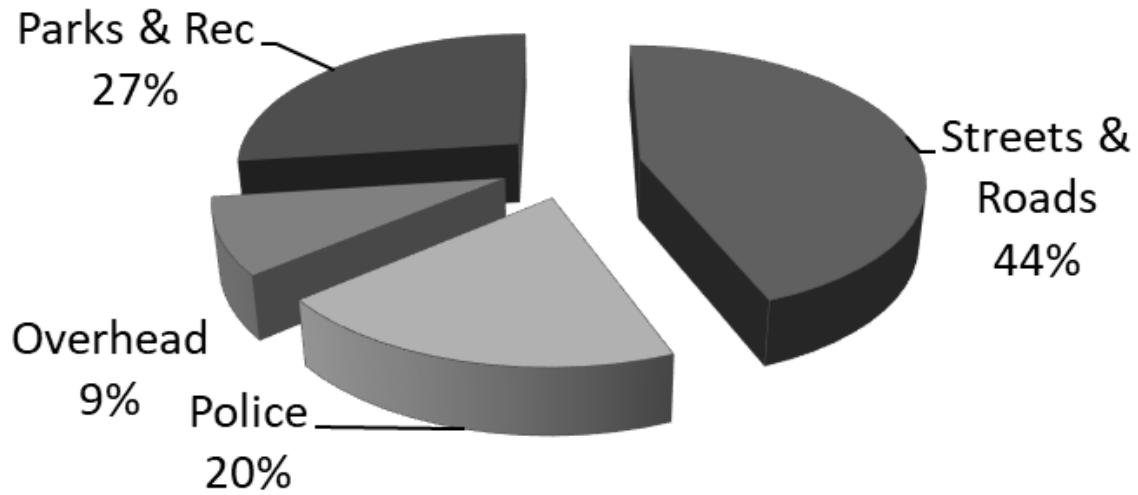
Additional “Property Taxes”	
Payment in Lieu of Taxes from the State	\$7,719
Total “Property Taxes Collected	\$82,239

2018-2019 Financial Report



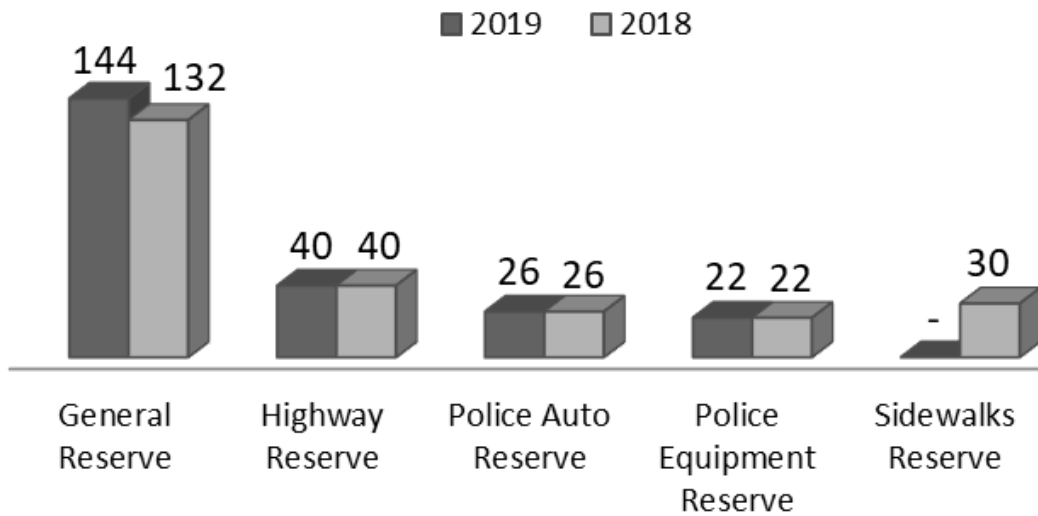
How We Spent Your Money

Expense \$97,283



Effect on Reserves

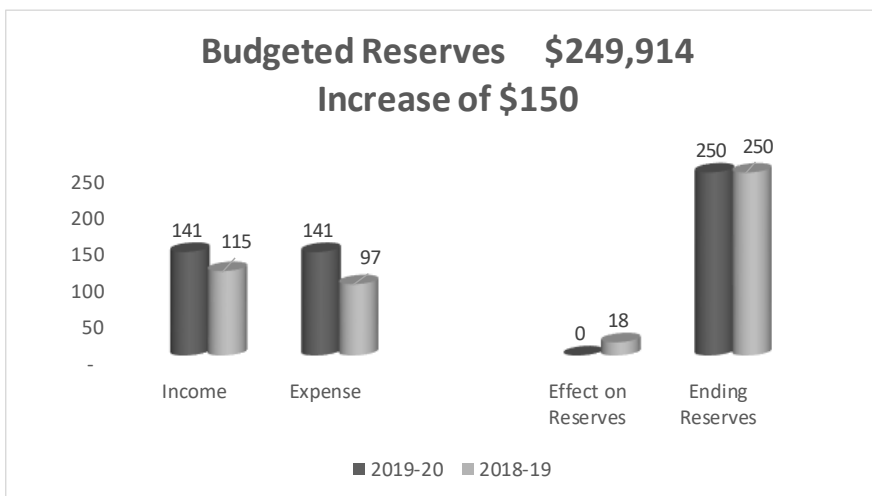
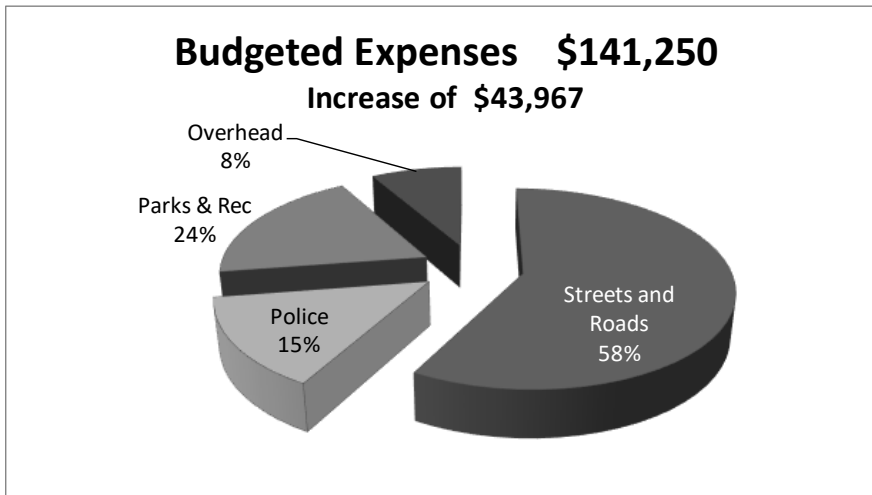
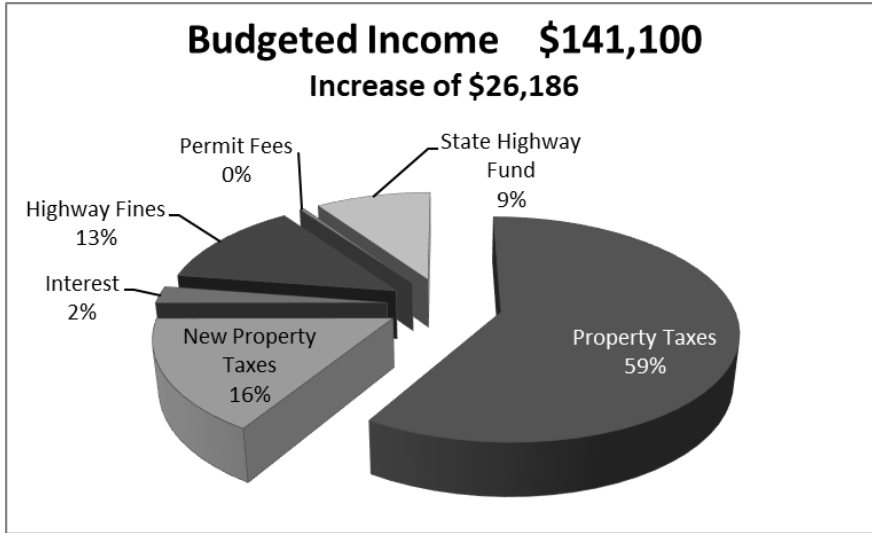
\$17,931



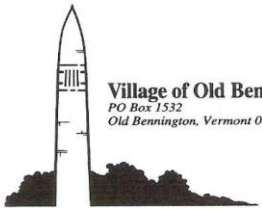
2018-19 FINANCIALS			
	APPROVED 2018-19 BUDGET	ACTUAL 2018-19	Variance
INCOME			
Donations		500	500
Highway Fines	23,000	14,605	(8,395)
Interest	2,300	3,628	1,328
Permit Fees	200	859	659
Property Taxes	76,600	82,239	5,639
State Highway Fund	13,400	13,383	(18)
TOTAL INCOME	115,500	115,214	(286)
EXPENSE			
STREETS & ROADS			
Capital Construction--Highway			
Road Survey/Plam	3,100	178	(2,922)
Lighting Fixtures	1,200	1,800	600
Sidewalk Repairs	30,000	240	(29,760)
Highway Maintenance (Salt & Plowing)	35,000	39,375	4,375
Highway Repair	3,000	1,340	(1,660)
TOTAL	72,300	42,932	(29,368)
POLICE			
Police Auto Expense	2,500	2,895	395
Police Coverage	18,000	16,269	(1,731)
Police Equipment	1,000	45	(955)
TOTAL	21,500	19,209	(2,291)
PARKS & RECREATION			
Parks	17,000	20,466	3,466
Street Lighting (Power)	4,500	4,019	(481)
Trees	4,000	1,900	(2,100)
TOTAL	25,500	26,386	886
OVERHEAD			
Clerical	800	810	10
Flowers	800	36	(764)
Insurance	2,000	1,376	(624)
Legal & Zoning	1,000	602	(398)
Memberships	3,000	2,854	(146)
Planning Commission	250	-	(250)
Rent	500	460	(40)
Zoning Administration	1,500	2,618	1,118
TOTAL	9,850	8,756	(1,094)
TOTAL EXPENSE	129,150	97,283	(31,867)
Net Income (Loss) Xfer to Reserves	(13,650)	17,931	31,581
RESERVE ACCOUNTS			
	Approved Budget 3/31/19	Actual 3/31/19	Actual 3/31/18
General Fund	130,593	132,264	144,243
Highway	40,000	40,000	40,000
Police Auto	25,500	25,500	25,500
Police Equipment	22,090	22,000	22,090
Sidewalks		30,000	
TOTAL	218,183	249,764	231,833

PROPOSED 2019-2020 TAXES						
2018 RATES						
TAX TYPE	<i>GENERAL</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>HWY</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>School -H</i>	TOTAL
Bennington Tax if you live in Bennington	0.6747	0.0031	0.3848	0.0802	1.4927	2.6355
Bennington Tax if you live in Old Benn	0.6747	0.0031		0.0802	1.4927	2.2507
Old Bennington Tax	0.0400		0.1950			0.2350
Total for Old Bennington Residents	0.7147	0.0031	0.1950	0.0802	1.4927	2.4857
Variance	0.0400	0	-0.1898	0	0	-0.1498
Proposed Increase to Highway Tax for S 0.0724						
WITH PROPOSED INCREASE						
TAX TYPE	<i>GENERAL</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>HWY</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>School -H</i>	TOTAL
Bennington Tax Bill if you live in Bennington (2018 RATES)	0.6747	0.0031	0.3848	0.0802	1.4927	2.6355
Bennington Tax Bill if you live in Old Bennington (2018 RATES)	0.6747	0.0031		0.0802	1.4927	2.2507
Old Bennington Tax Bill (2019 RATES)	0.0400		0.2674			0.3074
Total for Old Benn (2019 RATE)	0.7147	0.0031	0.2674	0.0802	1.4927	2.5581
Variance	0.0400	0	-0.1174	0	0	-0.0774
Example Home Value			200K	300K	400K	
Old Bennington Total Rate (2018)	2.4857		4,971.40	7,457.10	9,942.80	
Old Bennington Total Rate (2019)	2.5581		5,116.20	7,674.30	10,232.40	
	INCREASE		144.80	217.20	289.60	
	Current Tax Base		32,297,300			
	Tax Rate Increase		0.0724			
	Increased Taxes		23,383.25			

2019-20 PROPOSED BUDGET



2019-20 BUDGET PROPOSAL			
	PROPOSED 2019-20 BUDGET	ACTUAL 2018-19	Variance
INCOME			
Donations		500	(500)
Highway Fines	18,000	14,605	3,395
Interest	3,500	3,628	(128)
Permit Fees	500	859	(359)
Property Taxes	83,000	82,239	761
New Property Taxes	23,000	-	23,000
State Highway Fund	13,400	13,383	18
TOTAL INCOME	141,400	115,214	26,186
EXPENSE			
STREETS & ROADS			
Capital Construction--Highway			
Road Survey/Plan	5,000	178	4,822
Lighting Fixtures	2,000	1,800	200
Sidewalk Repairs	30,000	240	29,760
Highway Maintenance (Salt & Plowing)	40,000	39,375	625
Highway Repair	5,000	1,340	3,660
TOTAL	82,000	42,932	39,068
POLICE			
Police Auto Expense	3,000	2,895	105
Police Coverage	17,000	16,269	731
Police Equipment	500	45	455
TOTAL	20,500	19,209	1,291
PARKS & RECREATION			
Parks	21,000	20,466	534
Street Lighting (Power)	4,000	4,019	(19)
Trees	2,000	1,900	100
TOTAL	27,000	26,386	614
OVERHEAD			
Clerical	3,000	810	2,190
Flowers	500	36	464
Insurance	1,500	1,376	124
Legal & Zoning	500	602	(102)
Memberships	3,000	2,854	146
Planning Commission	250	-	250
Rent	500	460	40
Zoning Administration	2,500	2,618	(118)
TOTAL	11,750	8,756	2,994
TOTAL EXPENSE	141,250	97,283	43,967
Net Income (Loss) Xfer to Reserves	150	17,931	(17,781)
RESERVE ACCOUNTS			
	Projected as of 3/31/20	Actual 3/31/19	Actual 3/31/18
General Fund	132,324	134,264	144,243
Highway	40,000	40,000	40,000
Police Auto	28,500	25,500	25,500
Police Equipment	19,090	20,000	22,090
Sidewalks	30,000	30,000	
TOTAL	249,914	249,764	231,833



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