

Regular Village Board Meeting
April 1, 2024

The regular semi-monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Menands held on Monday, April 1st, 2024, called to order by Mayor Brian Marsh at 6:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Brian Marsh, Mayor
Molly Harbour, Trustee
Seth H Harris, Trustee
Timothy Lane, Trustee
Donald Handerman, Village Clerk
William T Smith, Jr, Village Treasurer
David Ognan, Fire Chief

ABSENT:

Stephen Rehfuss, Village Attorney
Ryan St. Gelais, Police Chief
Kevin Schwebke, Police Lt.

Also attending: Bill Garvey, Michael Mackay, Paul Harbour, Katelyn Kelley, Jean Parker, Mark Carnegie, Susan Sweeney, Kyle Leonard, Julianne Armbrvster, Tom Leonard, Katherine Leonard, Cindy & Chuck Price, Courtney Jaskula.

Virtual attendance: Kathy Mosca, Beth Harbour, Val Parker, Steve Boulet, Bill Nevins, Peg Holland.

The Mayor led the Pledge of Allegiance and advised that this meeting is being recorded.

Mayor Marsh read and presented a proclamation to Thomas Leonard of the Audio-Video Corporation for being an active Stewart to the environment and to the Village of Menands.
The Board thanked Thomas for his service.



The Mayor opened the Public Hearing for 2024-2025 Village of Menands Budget at 6:04 PM.

The Clerk read the following notice:

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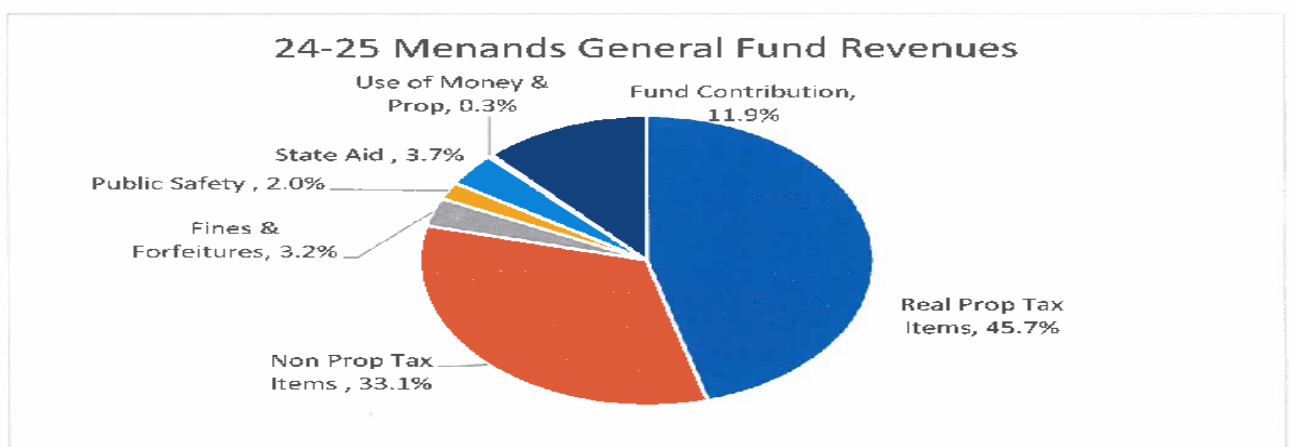
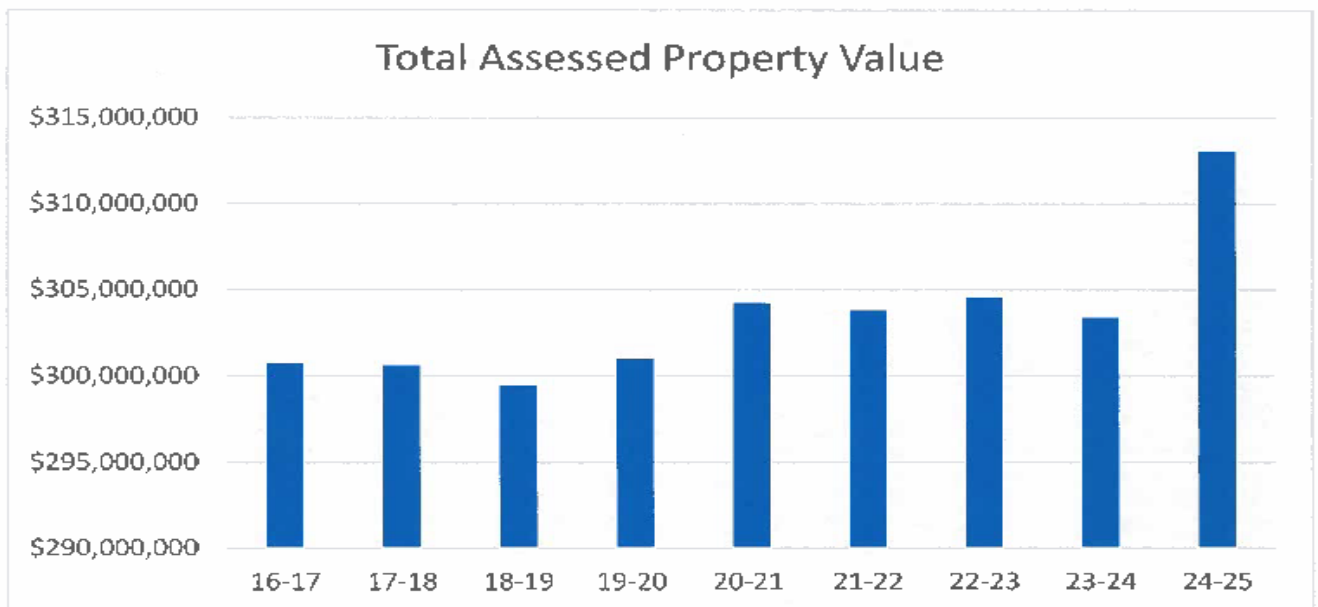
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the Village Law, the Preliminary Budget of the Village of Menands for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 2024, and ending May 31, 2025, has been duly filed.

FURTHER, TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing will be conducted at 250 Broadway, Menands, NY for the said Village on Monday, April 1, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Menands to consider the Preliminary Budget, at which time comments and suggestions of residents of the Village relative to such budget to be enacted will be received. You may attend the Public Hearing in person in the Village Hall second floor of 250 Broadway or via the Google Meets link: meet.google.com/mre-txbp-btk or Join by phone (US) +1 401-646-0768 PIN: 541 841 494#

The Preliminary Budget is on file in the office of the Clerk and may be inspected during office hours and is available on the Menands Village Website, www.villageofmenands.com.

The maximum compensation to be paid to the Mayor is \$16,063 and to each of the four trustees, \$9369.50.

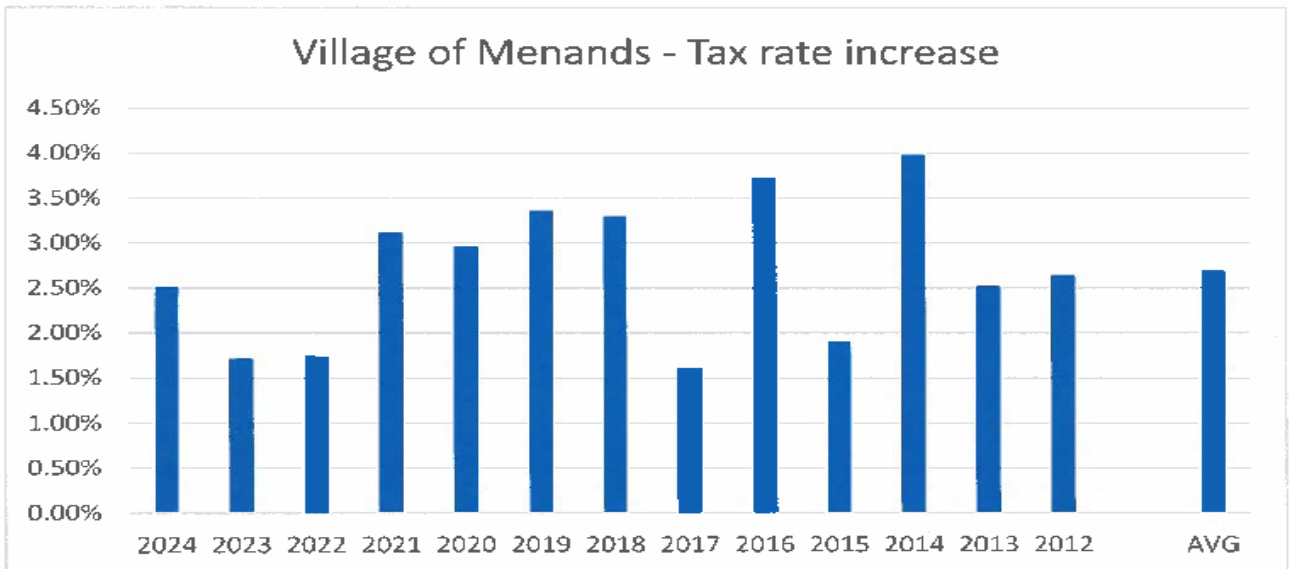
The Mayor and the Treasurer presented the 2024-2025 Annual Budget and Answered questions.



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The additions and subtractions - FY 23/24 to FY 24/25

Item description	Positive	Negative	Balance
REVENUE			
Increase in total taxable property assessments	\$ 86,337.90	\$	86,337.90
Cannabis revenue	\$ 75,000.00	\$	161,337.90
Utility receipts taxes	\$ 75,000.00	\$	236,337.90
Court fines	\$ 25,000.00	\$	261,337.90
Mortgage tax	\$	5,000.00	256,337.90
		\$	256,337.90
EXPENSES			
Salary - Court	\$	11,000.00	245,337.90
Salary - Police	\$ 4,554.00	\$	249,891.90
Salary - DPW	\$	15,126.00	234,765.90
Salary - Other	\$	14,865.00	219,900.90
Salary RELATED ALL - SS/NYSRS	\$	51,865.00	168,035.90
		\$	168,035.90
USE OF RESERVES	\$	89,700.00	78,335.90
TAX INCREASE	\$	70,043.00	9,292.90



Resident

Gen'l Fund '24-'25 FY		Expenditures		Revenues			
Gen'l Gov't Support	\$1,309,529	Gen'l Gov't Support	20.8%	Real Prop Tax Items	\$2,873,809	Real Prop Tax Items	45.7%
Econ Dev	\$15,000	Public Safety	33.2%	Non Prop Tax Items	\$2,080,000	Non Prop Tax Items	33.1%
Public Safety	\$2,088,264	Home & Comm Svcs	4.9%	Gen Gov't support	\$1,250	Fines & Forfeitures	3.2%
Culture & Recreation	\$99,802	Debt Service	2.8%	Public Safety	\$122,600	Public Safety	2.0%
Transportation (DPW)	\$918,176	Undistributed Costs	21.8%	Transportation (DPW)	\$500	State Aid	3.7%
Home & Comm Svcs	\$309,800	Transportation (DPW)	14.6%	Use of Money & Prop	\$21,250	Use of Money & Prop	0.3%
Undistributed Costs	\$1,368,100	Econ Dev, Cultural, Rec	1.8%	Fines & Forfeitures	\$200,000	Fund Contribution	11.9%
Debt Service	\$173,250			Fund Contribution	\$750,000	Total	100.0%
Total	\$6,281,921		100.0%	State Aid	\$232,512		
				Total	\$6,281,921		

Water Fund		Expenditures		Revenues			
Special Items	\$70,850	Special Items	4.9%	Home & Comm Svcs	\$1,434,000	Home & Comm Svcs	100.0%
Home & Comm Svcs	\$1,034,326	Home & Comm Svcs	72.1%	Use of Money	\$200	Use of Money	0.0%
Undistributed	\$99,900	Undistributed	7.0%		\$0		0.0%
Debt Service	\$228,920	Debt Service	16.0%		\$0		0.0%
Total	\$1,433,996	Total	100.0%	Total	\$1,434,200	Total	100.0%

Sewer Fund		Expenditures		Revenues			
Special Items	\$50,000	Special Items	7.0%	Sewer Rents	\$717,000	Sewer Rents	99.9%
Home & Comm Svcs	\$588,500	Home & Comm Svcs	81.8%	Use of Money	\$1,000	Use of Money	0.1%
Undistributed	\$59,300	Undistributed	8.2%	Miscellaneous	\$0	Miscellaneous	0.0%
Debt Service	\$21,320	Debt Service	3.0%	Total	\$718,000	Total	100.0%
Total	\$719,120	Total	100.0%				

Resident Chuck Price:

1. The Executive Summary: Strengthening Communication

The executive summary serves as a vital introduction to the budget for both residents and board members. While the current summary outlines the proposed goals and financial strategies, additional details could further enhance clarity and understanding.

Here are some suggestions to consider:

- **Quantify Goals:** Where possible, quantifying goals can provide a clearer picture of desired outcomes. For example, Instead of simply stating a goal to "improve infrastructure:" the summary could specify a target number of road miles to be resurfaced.
- **Connect Strategies to Goals:** Expanding on how the proposed financial strategies directly link to achieving the outlined goals would be beneficial. This could involve outlining key initiatives or projects funded by specific budgetary allocations.
- **Acknowledge Economic Uncertainty:** While the summary highlights the ambitious nature of the goals, it could be strengthened by acknowledging the potential impact of economic challenges. Briefly outlining contingency plans or risk management strategies could provide reassurance to the board and residents.

By incorporating these suggestions, the executive summary can become a more informative and transparent document, fostering a deeper understanding of the

budget's intent and its potential impact on the community.

2. Navigating Uncertainties: The Budget's Revenue Forecast

The budget's revenue forecasts, while calculated outlooks, rely heavily on traditional sources like property taxes, state grants, and sales taxes. These sources are known to fluctuate with economic conditions. This dependence underscores the importance of developing robust contingency plans to mitigate potential downturns that could impact revenue streams.

Diversification and Risk Management

- **Managing Variable Sources:** While the budget leverages key, historically reliable revenue streams, the variable nature of sales taxes, in particular, highlights the need for a diversified approach to revenue planning. Recognizing the inherent ebb and flow of economic conditions, it's crucial to prepare for shifts that could impact these sources.
- **Planning for Varied Economic Scenarios:** The projections are based on balanced assumptions that consider both historical performance and potential economic variability. Acknowledging the inherent uncertainty in economic conditions, the budget emphasizes the need for adaptable financial planning that can accommodate a range of scenarios.

Stability of Property Taxes and State Grants

- **Evolving Dependence:** Property taxes and state grants, while historically consistent income sources, are not immune to broader economic trends and policy decisions. This perspective necessitates a strategic approach to leveraging these revenues, mindful of the potential for fluctuation in property values and the availability of state funding.

3. Expenditure Analysis: Prioritizing Investments Wisely

A thorough review of the proposed budget reveals a concerning trend in spending allocations. Here are some key observations:

- **Rise In Administrative Expenses:** The budget proposes a significant increase in administrative costs, particularly within municipal governance and legal services. While some growth may be warranted to support potential service expansion, a detailed breakdown and justification for these increases is necessary. Without clear explanations, it's difficult to assess if these investments are truly optimizing administrative efficiency.
- **Transparency in Spending:** A concerning lack of transparency surrounds specific allocations within administrative expenses. Further clarification is needed to understand the rationale behind these increases and ensure they align with community needs.

Underinvestment in Public Works and Community Services: The proposed budget appears to underinvest in crucial areas like public works and community services. These departments play a vital role in maintaining infrastructure and fostering resident well-being. A re-evaluation of spending priorities to ensure adequate funding for these essential services is recommended.

By addressing these concerns, the budget can be strengthened to ensure responsible and transparent allocation of resources.

Prioritizing Investments that directly benefit the community and fostering a clearer understanding of how taxpayer dollars are used are crucial steps towards achieving a more sustainable and efficient financial plan.

4. Reserve Funds and Debt Management: Building Long-Term Stability

The proposed approach to reserve funds and debt management requires careful consideration. Here are some areas for improvement:

- **Insufficient Reserve Levels:** The proposed budget allocates minimal resources to reserve funds. Maintaining healthy reserves is critical for the municipality's financial resilience. Ideally, reserves should be sufficient to cover unexpected expenses or weather economic downturns. A plan to increase reserve levels to a more secure level is necessary.
- **Lack of Long-Term Debt Sustainability Plan:** While the budget outlines a debt management strategy, it lacks a clear vision for long-term sustainability. A comprehensive debt management plan should include projections for future debt obligations and strategies to reduce overall debt. This plan should demonstrate the municipality's commitment to responsible borrowing practices and its ability to manage debt without compromising future financial stability.

By addressing these concerns, the budget can be strengthened to ensure the municipality's long-term financial health. Building adequate reserves and implementing a sustainable debt management plan will enhance the community's ability to weather unexpected challenges and invest in future growth.

5. Comparing Budgets: Ensuring Alignment with Community Priorities

A comparison with previous budgets reveals some key trends in spending and revenue projections:

- **Increased Revenue Optimism:** The current budget forecasts more optimistic revenue projections compared to past years. While a positive outlook is commendable, a thorough analysis of the underlying assumptions behind these projections is crucial. Understanding the factors driving this optimism will help ensure the budget remains grounded in realistic expectations.
- **Growth In Administrative Spending:** The proposed budget allocates significantly more resources to administrative functions compared to previous years. While some level of growth may be necessary, a detailed breakdown of these increases and their justification is essential. Scrutiny is needed to ensure these investments are truly optimizing administrative efficiency and delivering tangible value to the community.
- **Alignment with Community Needs:** A critical evaluation is necessary to determine if the proposed budget allocations reflect the community's current priorities. Citizen engagement and feedback mechanisms should be utilized to ensure the budget aligns with the community's vision for the future.

By addressing these concerns, the budget can be strengthened to ensure it effectively reflects community needs and fosters long-term sustainability.

Transparency in revenue projections, responsible allocation of administrative resources, and alignment with community priorities are key elements for a sound financial plan.

6. Performance Metrics: Enhancing Transparency and Accountability

The absence of clear performance metrics within the budget is a significant concern. Performance metrics are essential tools for

measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of government spending. Here's why they are important:

- **Transparency and Accountability:** Clearly defined performance metrics allow taxpayers to understand how their tax dollars are being used and the impact of government programs. By outlining specific goals and tracking progress towards those goals, metrics foster transparency and accountability within the budgetary process.
- **Improved Decision-Making:** Data-driven decision making is crucial for effective resource allocation. Performance metrics provide valuable insights into the performance of various programs and initiatives. This information can be used to identify areas for improvement, optimize resource allocation, and ultimately deliver greater value to the community.
- **Demonstrating Results:** Performance metrics enable the government to demonstrate the tangible results achieved through its programs and initiatives. This not only fosters public trust but also allows for a more data-driven approach to future budget planning.

By incorporating clear performance metrics into the budget, the municipality can significantly enhance transparency, accountability, and ultimately improve the effectiveness of its programs and services.

7. Strengthening Transparency and Fostering Deeper Citizen Engagement

While the current budget development process includes public hearings, there's an opportunity to further enhance transparency and citizen engagement. **Here's** how:

- **Detailed Expenditure Justifications:** Providing clear and detailed justifications for budget allocations, particularly for areas with significant increases, would improve transparency. This could involve breakdowns of spending by program or department, along with explanations for how these expenditures align with community needs.
- **Accessible Budget Information:** The budget document and related materials should be presented in a clear, concise, and easily understandable format. Utilizing user-friendly language, visuals, and online resources can make the budget more accessible to a wider audience.
- **Expanded Engagement Opportunities:** Public hearings are a valuable component of the process, but exploring additional avenues for citizen engagement could further strengthen the connection between the budget and the community. This could involve interactive online forums, targeted town hall meetings, or citizen advisory committees focused on specific budget areas.

By implementing these suggestions, the municipality can demonstrate a commitment to transparency and create a more inclusive environment for citizen participation. This will empower residents to understand the budget's impact and provide valuable feedback that informs future budgetary decisions.

8. Conclusion: Charting a Course for the Future Together

Several critical questions emerge in light of these concerns. We need answers on risk management strategies, the rationale behind administrative spending increases, and measures to enhance public participation. Addressing these issues through collaborative workshops and citizen advisory committees can pave the

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way for a more informed and inclusive budgetary process.

By fostering a *dialogue* that aligns fiscal planning with citizen aspirations, we can ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our community. Building financial security through responsible practices, enhancing trust through transparency, and investing in areas that matter most to residents are all crucial steps on this shared journey.

Trustee Harris thanked Mayor Marsh and Treasurer Smith for their hard work on the Budget.

Trustee Harbour asked if the Events Coordinator could have a separate line item rather than in Celebrations.

Resident Paul Harbour

- Suggested changing the Budget process to multiple sessions to streamline the process. A discussion followed.

- Where did the savings from losing the Dispatchers go?

Treasurer Smith, it was moved throughout the Budget.

- Why are there so many Court Officers?

Mandated by the Office of Court Administration.

- Why so man Misc. Expenses in each department.

Treasurer Smith advised it's for expenses that have no line items. A discussion followed.

Resident Bill Garvey thanked the Board for their hard work on the Budget.

Resident Michael Mackay asked the Mayor to clarify Court Fines increasing.

The Mayor explained there is as much as \$400,000 in uncollected fines and the Court is sending out reminder letters. A discussion followed.

After hearing no further questions or comments the Mayor closed the public hearing at 6:52 P.M.

Resolution Number 240188

Trustee Harris made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 18th, 2024, Board Meeting, seconded by Trustee Harbour.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Resolution Number 240189

Trustee Lane made a motion to approve payment for the following, seconded by Trustee Harris.

WARRANT # 20X:

GENERAL	totaling	\$36,716.47
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WARRANT # 21:

GENERAL	totaling	\$ 45,968.51
WATER	totaling	\$ 77,101.90
SEWER	totaling	\$151,745.41
	TOTALS	\$274,815.82

Payroll #22: totaling \$110,509.50
(03/08/24-03/21/24)

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Resolution Number 240190

The Treasurer requested a resolution authorizing him to transfer \$60,300. from the ARPA Savings Account to A.0000.0200 General Checking to cover the cost of the new Springbrook Accounting System the Village purchased by Resolution #23. After a discussion Trustee Harris moved the following resolution which was seconded by Trustee Harbour; a resolution authorizing the Treasurer to transfer \$60,300. from ARPA savings to A0000.0200 General Checking and to amend the 2023 – 2024 Village Budget - Account # A.1325.0201 Computer and Software by \$60,300. the cost of the new Software.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Resolution Number 240191

Trustee Lane moved a resolution to amend the 2024-2025 Preliminary Village Budget by moving \$25,000 from Account A.1990.0400 Contingent Account to Account A.3120.0213 Services from Albany County. After a discussion Trustee Harris seconded the motion.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Resolution Number 240192

Trustee Harris made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Village of Menands Budget as amended, seconded by Trustee Harbour.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

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Mayor Marsh led a discussion regarding the need to raise sewer rates. Currently the rate is 45% of the water bill. The proposed increase would go up 5% to 50%. Discussion followed.

Resolution Number 240193

After a discussion Trustee Harris made a motion to hold a Public Hearing on April 15, 2024, at 6 PM for the proposal of raising the Sewer Rate to 50%, second by Trustee Lane.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Mayor Marsh and Treasurer Smith led a discussion regarding investing with NYCLASS. Discussion followed.

Resolution Number 240194

Trustee Harris entered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, New York General Municipal Law, Article 5-G, Section 119-o (“Section 119-o”) empowers municipal corporations [defined in Article 5-G, Section 119-n to include school districts, boards of cooperative educational services, counties, cities, town and villages, and districts] to enter into, amend, cancel and terminate agreements for the performance among themselves (or one for the other) of their respective functions, powers and duties on a cooperative or contract basis;

WHEREAS, the Village of Menands wishes to invest portions of its available investment funds in cooperation with other corporations and/or districts pursuant to the NYCLASS Municipal Cooperation Agreement Amended and Restated as of April 1, 2024;

WHEREAS, the Village of Menands) wishes to assure the safety and liquidity needs of their funds;

Now, therefore, it is hereby resolved as follows:

That Brian Marsh Mayor of the Village of Menands is hereby authorized to participate in the NYCLASS program under the terms of the NYCLASS Municipal Agreement

Amended and Restated as of April 1, 2024.

Seconded BY Trustee Harbour

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Mayor Marsh led a discussion regarding the renovations to the bathrooms at Ganser Smith Park. Tony Lapari and a group of volunteers have agreed to complete the renovation and the Village would purchase the materials. The cost of the materials is approximately \$20,000.00. The monies to pay for the renovations would come from the SAM Grant. Discussion followed.

Resolution Number 240195

After a discussion Trustee Lane made a motion to purchase the materials for the renovation up to \$ 30,000.00, second by Trustee Kalogridis.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

The Clerk led a discussion regarding adding the following item on the surplus list plate readers that the Police Department no longer use. The Clerk asked permission to sell the Plate Readers to East Greenbush Police Department for \$4,000.00. Discussion followed.

Resolution Number 240196

After a discussion Trustee Harbour made a motion to surplus the Plate Readers, second by Trustee Lane.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Resolution Number 240197

Trustee Harris made a motion to sell the Plate Readers to East Greenbush Police Department for \$4,000.00, second by Trustee Kalogridis.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

Mayor's Report:

1. Donate Life Month April 11th, 2024, at 1:00 P.M.

Trustee's Report:

Lane: Earth Day April 21, 2024, at 1:00 P.M.
Solar Farm but there is not enough square footage in the Village.
Gave an up data on the Little River Grant

GENERAL COMMENTS:

TO: All Menands Village Board Members
FROM: Bill Garvey Jr

I got several important Village items as follows:

- 1 He's happy that 6 Villa Road is being repaired.
- 2 He's happy that Midland Farms is using bldg. 8 as a warehouse and distribution store for its dairy products.
- 3 He proposes a small bleacher for the T Ball Field to be purchased from donations, selling surplus baseball items, state, or federal grants.
- 4 He would like to know where 4 charging stations will be located. Will the Village get state grant money for building the charging stations.
- 5 He supports the standard workday resolution for most employees.

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- 6 He is requesting a new Dead-End sign on its own post for E Kenmar and remove the old one.
- 7 He supports Village decision to replace Stop signs on several Village streets.
- 8 He is concerned about the high voltage towers needing repair or replacement requesting the Village Board pass a Village Law requiring National Grid to correct the problem.
- 9 He is ready to continue cleaning up the Little League Field for the 2024 season.
- 10 He is requesting the Village have DOT repair the signal light on Broadway & Menand Rd.
- 11 He observed a streetlight on Broadway not on at night.
- 12 In late March or early April, he will begin his litter pickup project for 2024.

Chuck Price can the plate reader be stationary. A discussion followed.

Cindy Price advised that there is a lot of grass along Broadway. A discussion followed.

Courtney Jaskula PTA is always looking for volunteers.

At 7:30 P.M. Trustee Harris made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue, seconded by Trustee Harbour.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

The regular meeting reconvened at 7:55 P.M.

Trustee Harris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Harbour.

ADOPTED:

Trustee Harbour	voting	AYE
Trustee Harris	voting	AYE
Trustee Kalogridis	voting	AYE
Trustee Lane	voting	AYE
Mayor Marsh	voting	AYE

The meeting duly adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

Donald Handerhan
Village Clerk