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Sherman residents will see a decrease in the tax rate

By David Prenatt

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SHERMAN — Budget projections for the Village of Sherman indicate that residents will see a decrease in the tax rate; however, the overall tax levy will increase, board members learned at their regular meeting on March 3.

Village Mayor Colleen Meeder told board members that the tax rate should decrease by approximately \$.43 per \$1,000 assessed property value. The tax rate for the fiscal year from June 1, 2021 to May 30, 2022 is projected to be \$10.32 per \$1,000, which is a drop from the current rate of \$10.75 per \$1,000 assessed value, Meeder said.

Meeder is proposing a 2.75% increase in the tax levy. However, Meeder explained, due to a village-wide increase of \$1.4 million in property assessments residents who improved their properties will probably see an increase in taxes, while those whose assessment remained the same should see a decrease, she said.

The overall budget is projected to be \$995,553, Meeder said. This includes a general fund projection of \$516,557; a water budget of \$198,700 and a sewer budget of \$280,296.

On a bright note, Meeder

tax has provided more revenue than expected. "We assumed that we would lose the equivalent of one whole quarter in sales tax, but we did not," Meeder said. "Sales tax came out better than we expected."

Meeder said the Village may also receive revenue from the Cares Act, but this would be a one time occurrence. "The good news is our tax rate is stable and the budget is being handled," Meeder said. "The draft budget is coming up pretty solid here."

Board members scheduled a public hearing on the budget for April 7 at 6 pm via ZOOM. Information on the awarding of the drinking water construction bid and on additional project or grant status will also be shared at the hearing.

In a related matter, Village Clerk Jeanette Ramm gave board members an up-to-date financial report, showing receipts of \$77,033 for the past month. This includes revenue from sales tax, as well as several other sources.

In other business, Meeder updated board members on the status of several grant applications. Regarding Housing Rehabilitation Grants, the Village has submitted 20 applications from residents for the 2020 grant period, she said.

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Funds from these grants will be used to repair necessary structural issues, such as foundations, furnaces, windows and even siding, Meeder said. The funds are not intended for simple aesthetic improvement, she added. "A house could receive \$50,000 of work and we could drive by and never know it," she said.

Residents who apply for these funds must meet income requirements, own the home that they live in and follow the guidelines for use of the funds, Meeder said. There are currently four municipalities applying for this grant money, she said. However, Eileen Powers, the director of this program, said not to worry if Sherman residents do not receive the 2020 funds because "the 2021 grants should be right on the heels of 2020."

Meeder told trustees that with grant applications for

2020 and 2021 overlapping, it seems a whole year was lost. "You could completely remove the entire year," she said. "We're picking up right where we were a year ago."

In other matters, Meeder asked Irwin to explain the situation with new signage. "I think we're down to doing mobile signs," he said.

At their meeting on February 3, trustees approved the application to the USDA Department of Rural Development for money to provide marketing and promotional opportunities for Village businesses and to support the economic development of the area. At that time, Irwin explained that placing signage on Route 86 is not an option because of the cost, as well as the regulations set forth by New York State.

Irwin again explained that the Village is very

limited in its ability to display signs advertising local attractions. "All signs have to be put on private property, which is essentially impossible coming off I-86," he said. He told trustees that because of the expanse of property that is owned by the State, "we're not allowed to put any signs until we're well past Triple E."

Meeder noted that the State objects to signage because it distracts drivers. She said the Village wants

to promote the trail head, the Yorker Museum and local attractions, but right now the State is saying it will not be possible.

Irwin asked if it would be helpful to contact someone and request that the State-owned property coming off I-86 be narrowed down. "It narrows down pretty quickly at the Findley Lake exit," Irwin said. Meeder agreed, saying "It does appear to be wider and longer here." Irwin offered to further investigate the matter.

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