

Present: President Woodrow; President Pro-Tem Koss; Members: Berndt, Oen, Peddie and Pfeifer

Absent: Stearn

Also Present: Manager, Spallasso  
Assistant Manager, Marshall  
Finance Director, Wiszowaty  
Director of Public Safety, Woodard  
Village Attorney, Ryan

President Woodrow called the regular Council meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. Life Scout Daniel Mooney led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA/APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Oen, second by Pfeifer, that the agenda be approved as published.  
Motion passed(6 – 0).

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Kathleen Berwick of 31381 Kennoway Court obtained a copy of the 2007 Village Code Enforcement summary and was disappointed with the brevity of the report. She refuted the statement that all cases have been completed, because she was aware of homes where a trailer is stored in the side yard rather than the rear as specified by the code. Berwick suggested that selective enforcement is being practiced by the Village.

Norman Rubin of Rivers Edge Court commented that neighboring communities are looking for savings by combining police and fire departments. At its last meeting, Council voted to hire an additional public safety officer. While everyone recognizes the importance of public safety, Rubin did not think this was the time to increase the force. Council should be referring to five year financial forecasts when making fiscal decisions. The forecast for the next fiscal year distributed at the February Finance Committee meeting included the additional officer and showed expenses exceeding revenue. Rubin charged the Council member who cast the deciding vote to hire a 25<sup>th</sup> officer with being fiscally irresponsible.

Bob Borgon of 32340 Drury Lane, member of the Birmingham Area Cable Board, commented on recent Council discussion regarding televising municipal meetings. He informed Council that cable channel 15 is dedicated to municipal government programming for this area, and there is air time available for taping and broadcasting additional meetings. The cost involved would be minimal, and the Village could request a grant from the BACB for this expense. Borgon was in support of televising unedited municipal meetings that provide information to residents.

Borgon related that the Cable Board's contract with its municipal access supplier will expire in June when a new contract will be negotiated with Bloomfield Community Television. The Cable Board will need a list of meetings in addition to Council meetings that Beverly Hills would like to have broadcast on cable television. This will be a topic of negotiation with BCTV.

Borgon clarified that Southfield Township Board meetings could be televised on the municipal channel at their request. The fact that the Township is not part of the four municipality consortium has no bearing on whether Board meetings could be televised. Southfield Township encompasses three of the four communities in the BACB consortium, and their meetings would be relevant to area residents. The Cable Board will consider taping Township meetings if a request is received from the Southfield Township Board.

Hildreth Buterbaugh of Beverly Hills stated that the Birmingham Area Cable Board is in the process of purchasing an \$860,000 production van. He understood that PEG money cannot be returned to the communities, but he questioned the benefit of this equipment at a time when municipalities are trying to be financially conservative.

Woodrow responded that the Village has no say in how PEG funds are spent by the Birmingham Area Cable Board.

Borgon explained that the Birmingham Area Cable Board has been saving money for 15 years to purchase a production van and equipment at a cost of \$867,000 to replace the outdated truck and production equipment. Federal Law states that PEG fees received by the Cable Board can only be spent on capital improvements for PEG productions or grants to municipalities or schools to be used for PEG access upgrades.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Pfeifer, second by Oen, to approve the consent agenda as published.

- a. Review/consider approval of minutes of joint Council/Planning Board meeting held February 13, 2008.
- b. Review/consider approval of minutes of regular Council meeting held February 19, 2008.
- c. Review and file bills recapped as of March 3, 2008.

Motion passed (6 – 0).

#### **BUSINESS AGENDA**

##### **REVIEW AND CONSIDER REQUEST FROM KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CHURCH TO HOLD EASTER EGG HUNT AT BEVERLY PARK ON SATURDAY, MARCH 15 AT 1 P.M.**

Members of Kensington Community Church have requested to host the Village's annual Easter Egg Hunt in Beverly Park on Saturday, March 15 from 1–3 p.m. The event is open to all members of the community. A Certificate of Liability Insurance has been provided to the Village by the Church.

Kristie McCormick from Kensington Community Church stated that this is the third year that the Church has sponsored the Easter Egg Hunt in Beverly Hills. She related that Kensington Community Church now has a presence in the Birmingham area where they rent space at Groves High School. No funding is being requested for the event because donations have been received by members of the Church and through corporate support from the area. There will be activities planned for the whole family. The event was changed to Saturday this year to accommodate the

schedule of their 200 volunteers. A banner publicizing the Easter Egg Hunt will be hung on the park fence.

McCormick asked that the Village provide bathroom facilities for the event and suggested that it would be preferable if the Village could turn on the water to the pavilion restrooms. Woodrow responded that the cost to turn on the water in the pavilion and then have the system re-winterized for one day would be approximately \$850. The Village would be willing to provide the appropriate number of port-o-johns.

Motion by Berndt, second by Koss, to approve the request of Kensington Community Church to conduct an Easter Egg Hunt in Beverly Park on Saturday, March 15, 2008 from 1:00–3:00 p.m. Pavilion rental fees are waived, and the Village will provide port-o-johns for the event.

Roll Call Vote:  
Motion passed (6 – 0).

### **PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF AN EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT AT BEVERLY PARK**

Daniel Mooney of 19111 Devonshire introduced himself as a Life Scout active in Boy Scout Troop 1024 and an Eagle Scout candidate. He is a sophomore at Groves High School and a member of the baseball team. Mooney is a former Beverly Hills Little League player from the first to eighth grades.

Mooney proposed to improve the south ball diamond in Beverly Park as an Eagle Scout service project. He has provided Council with a handout that outlines his plan to demolish the old dugouts and rebuild new ones. He will be consulting with builders and architects to help with the project with labor performed by scouts and volunteers. The south diamond is the official Little League diamond where most of the kids in the community go to play baseball.

Mooney outlined why improvements are needed: The metal roofs of the existing dugouts provide no protection from lightning during storms; the dugout floors flood during rain; the east dugout entrance is unsafe; the fencing is rusted and there are gaps in the fence; the benches are worn. It will be an open design with a view into the dugouts. No problems are anticipated from neighbors because the new dugouts will replace and improve upon the existing dugouts.

Dan Mooney proposed to accomplish the work in four or five weekends, and outlined the work to be undertaken each weekend. He intended to complete this project at a cost of under \$5,000 in materials. All experts will be volunteers and all labor will be donated with the possible exception of demolition and concrete slab work. Mooney will be addressing the Beverly Hills Little League on March 8, 2008 to secure additional funds.

Mooney addressed questions from Council. Koss remarked that Dan Mooney made his presentation to the Parks and Recreation Board. They approved the expense for this project to come from the dedicated park millage for capital improvements.

Motion by Berndt, second by Oen, that the Village of Beverly Hills Council accept the Eagle Scout service project as presented by Daniel Mooney to rebuild the dugouts at the south baseball diamond in Beverly Park at a cost not to exceed \$5,000 for project materials. Funds are to come from the dedicated park millage, park site improvements, account 408-900-985.00.

Council thanked Dan Mooney for initiating this proposal for improving the south ball diamond. Jim Merritt of 32800 Lahser commended Dan Mooney for coming up with a brilliant project.

Roll Call Vote:  
Motion passed (6 – 0).

### **REPORT FROM CITY STUDY AD HOC COMMITTEE**

Pfeifer stated that ad hoc City Study Committee has been meeting for almost a year and is prepared to present a report of its findings. The committee researched how becoming a city might impact the Village of Beverly Hills. As chairperson, Pfeifer thanked the members of the committee who are Robert Borgon, Robert Bliven, Dennis Fassett, Jim Merritt, Vince Borowski, Renzo Spallasso and Ellen Marshall. Pfeifer introduced Bob Borgon, who will give a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the committee's written report.

Borgon prefaced his presentation by noting that Council directed this committee to gather information and present facts on the topic of the Village becoming a city without offering a recommendation. He noted that dollar amounts in the report are largely estimates.

The rationale for reconsidering this issue was due to pending State legislation that could shift most of the services provided by Southfield Township to the County. It was mentioned that this legislation is currently inactive. Borgon affirmed that consolidation of government services is a topic being discussed by Legislators and something that Beverly Hills should monitor.

The Village supplies 95% of services to its residents. It does not assess properties, collect school and county taxes or run elections. As a Village, Beverly Hills is subject to annexation but has no annexation powers of its own. Borgon discussed current Village budget numbers and staffing levels and listed services provided by the Village. Township of Southfield budget figures, employees, and services were set forth.

The financial impact of becoming a city was explored. The numbers presented in the report took into account the elimination of township taxes and the additional costs to absorb township services. Consideration was given to possible gains in state statutory aid, which would range from an increase of \$76,229 to \$131,649 annually from the amount the Village currently receives from State Revenue Sharing. It has been estimated that the additional funds needed to assume the Township's responsibilities and become a city would be \$143,271- \$87,851.

The timeline for incorporation encompassed a number of categories including obtaining approval for incorporation, referendum, and adoption of a Charter. The total time for incorporation could take up to two years.

Borgon presented the conclusions of the committee. The City Study Committee recognized that there is charm and quaintness in being known as a Village. In addition, becoming a city would require a great deal of time, effort, and some expense. The reality is that Beverly Hills is an urban area, and the manner used to deliver services needs to be redefined in order to survive. There seems to be merit in further investigation and consultation with residents on this topic based on potential State legislation affecting townships, the cost of maintaining the Township level of government, and efficiencies of delivering more direct government services to residents. Beverly Hills would have to develop a new Charter that would update current language and practices while retaining the same values as our founding fathers envisioned. It is anticipated that there would be gains in State Revenue Sharing and savings in terms of the tax burden to residents by eliminating the Township tax.

It was the suggestion of the Committee that Council schedule a meeting with all three villages and the Township of Southfield to communicate the committee's findings. It was proposed that town hall meetings be scheduled to inform residents of the report and receive their input on becoming a city. Consultation with Village legal counsel was recommended. Residents should be provided with as much information as possible through the Villager newsletter, the Beverly Hills website, and newspapers.

If the Village decides to proceed with the process, the first step is to initiate petitions. Signatures of at least 5% of the registered voters and property owners must be obtained. Petitions are then submitted to the State Boundary Commission. Once approved, the Village would schedule an election for city incorporation and to select a nine member Charter Commission.

Council questions and comments were addressed by Borgon and Pfeifer. Topics of discussion focused on cost savings and the financial impact of becoming a city.

Ryan thought that the City Study Committee did a great job. Beverly Hills provides 95% of the urban services. The Village does not provide assessing, but both small and large communities contract with Oakland County for assessing services. Beverly Hills already collects village taxes; it would need to collect county and school taxes. Additionally, the Village has conducted elections in the past. The Council will have to decide whether to go forward with this process. Another aspect of becoming a city is the fact that there are other villages within Southfield Township that would be impacted by this. If Beverly Hills incorporates but Bingham Farms and Franklin do not, there would still be a Southfield Township. If Beverly Hills became a city and withdraws from the Township, the Village would receive its share of the Township's assets on a percentage basis.

Hildreth Buterbaugh mentioned that the topic of city vs. village came up during his tenure on Council. He commented on points addressed in the presentation including annexation, the State Boundary Commission, the Township budget, and the financial impact of becoming a city. Buterbaugh questioned why Beverly Hills would want to become a city when it appears that the Village councils have been doing an excellent job of solving problems that arise. He suggested that Council consider the alternative of going to the voters for another 2 mills to operate and provide current services.

John Mooney of 19111 Devonshire thanked the committee for their efforts, noting that this was the fourth time the city/village issue was studied. He asked if the study analyzed the impact of becoming a city on property values or the psychological effect on residents residing in a village. Pfeifer responded that these points were not part of the study. Borgon interjected that the purpose of holding town hall meetings is to find out what the residents are thinking.

Mooney asked what has happened over recent years that led the Village to mistrust the conclusion reached in previous studies. Pfeifer answered that state legislation was proposed that would shift the duties that impact our township to the county. This topic is being discussed in Lansing. The State is offering additional funding to communities that are considering shared services or consolidating services.

Mooney commented that there are a number of avenues for saving money including consolidation of services. He cautioned that previous studies disclosed that there were risks involved in becoming a city. Mooney urged Council not to proceed with the process without exploring all the options.

Motion by Pfeifer, second by Berndt, that a copy of the Ad Hoc City Study Committee Report be forwarded to the Village of Bingham Farms, the Village of Franklin, and to the Township of Southfield and a determination made as to whether there is interest in holding a joint meeting with Beverly Hills to discuss this topic.

Ayes – Berndt, Oen, Peddie, Pfeifer, Woodrow

Nay - Koss

Motion passed (5 – 1).

The Ad Hoc City Study Committee Final Report is available for public review at the Village offices.

### **PRESENTATION BY FINANCE COMMITTEE REGARDING CALCULATION OF 2008 PROPERTY TAXES**

Pfeifer acknowledged members of the Village Finance Committee in the audience and introduced Pat Westerlund, who will give a PowerPoint presentation that will explain why the assessed value of homes are decreasing while property taxes are increasing.

Westerlund stated that he was present to answer two questions that residents may have: 1) If the value of my home is declining, why are my taxes going up; and 2) How does the Headlee Amendment affect the Village of Beverly Hills and every other community throughout Oakland County.

Westerlund referred to a sample notice of assessment that every homeowner receives in February. There are lines to indicate the Taxable Value, Assessed Value of property, and the State Equalized Value. The Taxable Value is multiplied by the millage rate to determine the amount of tax that is owed to the Village. Line #2 shows the Assessed Value, which is 50% of the market value of the property as determined by the assessor. The notice compares the previous year's Taxable Value and Assessed Value with the current year and indicates the change.

A constitutional amendment known as Proposal A was passed by Michigan voters in 1994. Prior to Proposal A, property tax calculations were based on Assessed Value. Proposal A established Taxable Value as the basis for calculating property taxes. Proposal A established formulas to control excessive increases in property taxes. Assessed Value remains at 50% of the market value of the property; Taxable Value is calculated by looking at the previous year's Taxable Value (making adjustments for additions or losses) and limiting the percentage of change to the rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is less. The limit on Taxable Value increase does not apply to a property in the year following the sale of the property.

Examples of a Notice of Assessment were displayed for a long-time residence (prior to 1994) and for a newer residence. Westerlund referred to a sample assessment notice showing the Assessed Value of a property decreasing from 2007 to 2008 due to poor real estate market conditions while the Taxable Value increased during that period by the rate of inflation. He then displayed a slide of another Notice of Assessment for a home that was recently purchased. When there is a transfer of ownership, the taxable value is set to equal the assessed value. In 2008, the property was assessed at a lesser amount than in 2007. Proposal A requires that the Taxable Value cannot be greater than the Assessed Value, so the Taxable Value has declined as well. Therefore, this property owner will have a lower tax bill.

Two graphs were displayed to compare the Taxable Value and Assessed Value of a home that has not changed ownership since 1994 with a similar home purchased in 2005. The example demonstrates a disparity between taxpayers. Properties that are valued the same in the marketplace can generate taxes that differ greatly.

A chart was displayed that illustrates the total Assessed Value of all properties in the Village compared to the Taxable Value of all Village properties from 1994 to the present. The slide demonstrates the effects of Proposal A on a community-wide basis. Homeowners have seen large increases in their home values, but their Taxable Value has been increasing at the rate of inflation. Now that Assessed Values are decreasing, that gap is beginning to close. The Assessed Value of homes decrease in a declining market; the Taxable Value cannot be greater than the Assessed Value. When the lower Taxable Value is applied to the millage rate, it will result in less tax revenue to the Village. This is a potential problem for communities.

Westerlund addressed how the Headlee Amendment affects a community's ability to collect tax revenue. Headlee was intended to limit the growth of property tax revenue. It requires that when growth on existing property is greater than inflation, the local government must "roll back" its maximum authorized millage rate so that the increase in property tax revenue caused by growth on existing property does not exceed inflation.

Municipalities benefited from a thriving real estate market because the increase in Taxable Value on a community-wide basis when multiplied by the millage rate increased revenue. The more homes sold, the greater the increase in assessed and taxable values, and the greater amount of money generated. Headlee restricted the tax revenue that the Village could collect to a factor based on the Consumer Price Index.

A chart was displayed that represents a comparison of the millage capacity under Headlee. The Village's General Operating millage of 11 mils was approved by the electorate in 1995. The Headlee Amendment rolled back the millage rate to a value that corresponds to the previous year's taxable revenue increased by the rate of inflation. Over years of Headlee roll backs, the Village millage rate is currently 9.3801 mills.

Westerlund remarked that the Village promised a certain level of services when the 11 mills was approved in 1995. The question is how to provide the same level of services 13 years later with 9.3801 mills when the cost of services has increased faster than the rate of inflation.

Westerlund stated that the Village has had an increase in tax revenue of 3% over the last few years, which equates to approximately \$154,650 of additional revenue each year. During the current downturn in the real estate market, the expected increase in tax revenue is essentially flat. This is compounded by the fact that Headlee does not allow the roll back to be reversed. Therefore, while costs are increasing due to inflation, the Village will see little or no increase in property tax revenue. That is important to note because the Village receives almost 75% of its total revenue from property taxes. Finding a way to pay for municipal services will be a struggle in the coming years. The Village needs to understand these issues in order to determine its future path.

Westerlund acknowledged Finance Committee members Don MacDonald, John Mooney, Bob Belaustegui, Jim Merritt, Jim Fasset, Neil Hitz and Finance Director Wiszowaty. He noted that there will be a link to the presentation on the Village web site. Questions and comments from Council were addressed by Finance Committee member Belaustegui.

Hildreth Buterbaugh commented that the short answer to the question of why taxes are going up is because Taxable Value is going up. The Taxable Value is going up because it has no relation to the Assessed Value on a house that has not changed ownership in some time.

Motion by Pfeifer, second by Koss, that Council accept and file the Finance Committee presentation on 2008 property taxes.

Motion passed (6 – 0).

### **SET PUBLIC HEARING DATE OF 3/18/08 TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE UPDATED PARK MASTER PLAN**

The Parks and Recreation Board has prepared a draft Five-Year Community Recreation Plan, which has been available for public review at the Village office and on the Beverly Hills website since February 15, 2008. The plan will help guide the recreational goals and improvements in the Village for the next five years. Eligibility for many state funded recreation grants requires a five-year plan on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR requires the plan to be available for public review and comment for one month and requires the governing body to hold a public hearing prior to adoption of the Community Recreation Plan.

Council set a public hearing date of Tuesday, March 18, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. on the Five-Year Community Recreation Plan.

**REVIEW AND CONSIDER AWARDING CONTRACT FOR 2008 DUST CONTROL SERVICES**

The Village opened sealed bids on February 21, 2008 for annual dust control needs on gravel roads for the upcoming season. Three contractors bid on calcium chloride and one contractor bid on asphalt emulsion. South Huron Industrial was the low bidder for calcium chloride at \$0.27 per gallon; Highway Maintenance Company was the low bidder for asphalt emulsion at \$3.19 per gallon. The Village paid \$.245 per gallon for calcium chloride in 2007 and \$3.00 per gallon for asphalt emulsion. Fifty percent of the cost for this service is assessed to the property owners with the balance paid through the Village Local Road Fund.

Motion by Oen, second by Berndt, to award the 2008 Calcium Chloride Dust Control Program to South Huron Industrial at \$0.27/gallon and the 2008 Asphalt Emulsion Program to Highway Maintenance Company at \$3.19/gallon.

Roll Call Vote:  
Motion passed (6 – 0).

**REVIEW AND CONSIDER PROPOSAL FOR AN ACTUARIAL STUDY BY GABRIEL ROEDER SMITH**

Council is in receipt of a proposal from Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Co. to perform the actuarial valuation of retiree health care benefits for the Village of Beverly Hills. It is recommended that this study be initiated now that all union contracts have been ratified with the exception of the dispatchers. The valuation will provide the Village with a better understanding of the unfunded liability and projected annual contribution to the retiree health care fund. The total fee quoted for a valuation of the retiree health care plan is \$8,000.

GRS provided quotes on additional services including: 1) Sensitivity Analysis (\$1,500); 2) Twenty Year Benefit Projection for Intermediate Medical Inflation Assumptions (\$1,000); and 3) Contribution Based on Alternate Interest Rate Assumption (\$1,000). Spallasso was informed by the actuarial firm that they did not see a real need to conduct these additional valuation services.

Finance Director Wiszowaty stated that the Village has a better sense of its future health care costs now that labor contracts have been negotiated. This actuarial valuation is necessary because government accounting standards (GASB 43 and 45) will require that the Village determine whether it will fund retiree health care on a pay-as-you-go basis or fund the total liability. Wiszowaty and Finance Committee member Belaustegui have been working on an in-house study of the Village's actuarial liability based on a formula provided by Plante & Moran.

Motion by Woodrow, second by Oen, that the Village of Beverly Hills Council authorize administration to enter into a contract with Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Co. to perform an actuarial valuation of retiree health care benefits at a cost not to exceed \$8,000.

Roll Call Vote:  
Motion passed (6 – 0).

**DISCUSSION ITEM – 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

A member of the committee to organize the Village's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration attended the last Council meeting and described plans to hold a pancake breakfast in Beverly Park as the main event for the anniversary celebration. Because members of Council expressed interest at that time in exploring additional ideas for the celebration, it was suggested that this be a discussion item for a Council meeting agenda.

Members of the volunteer committee were not in attendance to discuss plans or address questions from Council. Council proposed a few alternate ideas for consideration including combining the anniversary celebration with the Memorial Day parade and carnival in the park. Minor items such as displaying banners would convey that the Village is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was questioned whether local area merchants have been contacted for their support. It was noted that the Village has allocated \$5,000 for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

Woodrow asked that members of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration committee be contacted as to their availability to attend a joint meeting with Council on a Saturday morning to discuss ideas for the event and receive input from Council members. Spallasso will coordinate a date for this meeting.

**DISCUSSION ITEM – INVESTMENT OVERSIGHT OF THE RETIREE HEALTH CARE FUND**

Woodrow stated that he initiated this discussion item after hearing a presentation from Cornerstone Municipal Advisory Group at last week's Retirement Board meeting. The company representative outlined the services their firm offers to meet the needs of municipalities as they battle increasing costs of providing benefits to their employees and retirees. This type of firm would recommend investment strategies for retiree health care funds being accumulated to meet the Village's unfunded liability.

The Village currently has \$1.3 million in an account designated for retiree health care. Woodrow suggested that there is enough money in that fund that the Village should designate a body to oversee the retiree health care money. He is proposing that the Retirement Board be requested to assume this oversight responsibility.

Wisowaty explained that a change in State law several years ago allowed retiree health care funds to be invested similar to pension funds. Village administration authorized Munder Capital Management to invest the bulk of those funds. The fund has been averaging an annual interest of 10.35 percent.

Wisowaty referred to a recent report prepared by the Finance Committee on the topic of Retiree Health Care. One of their recommendations was to establish an oversight committee to monitor that fund. The Finance Committee recommended that Council consider expanding the role of the Pension Board to incorporate financial oversight of Retiree Health Care Benefits.

Koss commented that she attended the Pension Board meeting and was impressed by the presentation by Cornerstone Group. The Retirement Board suggested that Council may want to seek proposals from other companies. This kind of advisory group would not only assist the

Village with developing an investment plan and solutions for healthcare savings, but they offer assistance with advocating benefit plan changes in a union setting. Koss suggested that Council wait for the results of the actuarial study before approaching the Retirement Board about providing oversight of retiree health care funds.

Council will be provided with a link to the Cornerstone Group's PowerPoint presentation. Woodrow concurred that it might be beneficial to bring in other companies that provide these services to make their pitch.

Sharon Tischler of 21415 Virmar Court commented that the Village may need to consider amending the ordinance creating the Pension Board if the membership or charge of that body was modified.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sharon Tischler of 21415 Virmar Court requested that Council members Woodrow and Pfeifer try to project their voices during meetings so they can be heard by the audience.

Assistant Manager Ellen Marshall wished Renzo Spallasso a happy birthday on Thursday.

### **REPORTS – MANAGER**

Spallasso reported that the water meter replacement program is 50% completed and appears to be working well.

Due to severe winter weather, the road crew has already gone through approximately 700 tons of salt. The amount of salt required for this season will exceed expectations and result in additional expense.

Spallasso reminded Council that this is the year that the Village recognizes its volunteers by hosting an appreciation dinner. He asked for suggestions as to the venue for this event to be held some time in June.

With regard to the water meter replacement program, Woodrow asked Spallasso how the Village is handling incidents where residents have large water bills due to discrepancies between the outside remote reading device and the inside meters.

Spallasso responded that a good deal of staff time has been spent on explaining this issue. Large water bills received by residents due to these discrepancies are being handled on an individual basis. In some cases, payments are being scheduled. There have been no major issues.

Koss reviewed that the Township of Southfield allocated a portion of its Metro Act Funds to the Village to remove dead trees in the rights-of-way. This work is being done by contractor J. H. Hart. Koss was reminded by the Township Clerk that the Township has not received the bills for this work. Spallasso will follow up on this.

**COUNCIL REPORTS**

Berndt announced that the Zoning Board of Appeals will meet in the Council chamber on Monday, March 10 at 7:30 p.m. One of the cases to be heard is the request from Detroit Country Day School for interpretation and, if applicable, variance from ordinance requirement regarding construction of new sidewalks.

Pfeifer commented that she does not normally feel compelled to justify her vote on an issue. She does not make her decisions lightly. In response to a remark made by a resident earlier in the meeting, Pfeifer listed her reasons for voting to hire a 25<sup>th</sup> public safety officer: 1) Council had funded that officer in the 2007/08 budget; 2) She supports networking between communities; and 3) This was a staffing level recommended in the Mercer Group's Public Safety Department Operational Study.

Koss reported that she has switched her telephone, Internet, and cable television service from Comcast to the AT&T Uverse product. She described it as a phenomenal product and recommended that people look into this service.

Woodrow apologized that he did not stop the personal attack on Ms. Pfeifer. He asked speakers to address their comments to the chair and not to individual Council members. Although Pfeifer was the last to vote on the issue in question, she was not the only deciding vote on that issue.

Motion by Pfeifer, second by Oen, to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Motion passed (6 – 0).

**Hugh Woodrow**  
**Council President**

**Ellen E. Marshall**  
**Village Clerk**

**Susan Bernard**  
**Recording Secretary**