

Conversation with the Mayor - 21 March 2011
Vicky Daly

All Tied Up with a Green Ribbon

If this were a stock report it would be written in green because the news is good. It has been pointed out that you can do anything with numbers and that is true, but when the numbers, especially budget numbers are good, and true and consistent, then it is a time to celebrate – but not with taxpayer money.

On the 21st the Village of Palmyra had its Public Hearing on the 2011-2012 budget, our 10th public meeting dealing with budget. Two reporters, one village resident, and a visitor from out of town were present. Our financial advisor, Roy McMaster, Capital Markets Advisors, LLC, who has been working with the village for many more years than I, made a power point presentation of the budget. He had also prepared handouts for attendees of the budget basics. (We have some left over so if you want one, stop in. They will be available until they are gone.) There were no questions from the public and so, after 35 minutes, the Public Hearing was adjourned and we moved on to our regular meeting.

The news is good. The tax rate for the General Fund is down \$.11 per thousand because the levy, the determiner of the tax rate, is down \$12,987.00, from \$1,329,217.00 to \$1,316,230.00. Simply put, we will spend less money. And how do we do that? By paying attention and taking advantage of opportunities to save everywhere we can. A great example of that attitude and policy came up in the regular business meeting. Highway Superintendent Mike Boesel has at the Town Barns, which are used also for village trucks and materials, 1500 tons of concrete salvaged from earlier street and sidewalk projects. Mike requested the Board's approval to have the concrete crushed for future use on village projects. It turns out that it is less expensive to have what we already own crushed than to purchase it as needed. Storage is no problem and there is an additional cost savings by eliminating the time and fuel consumed to haul the stone from the purchase place to the village. What would happen to the concrete chunks otherwise? They would be thrown away. The Board, of course, approved the request and taxpayer money will be saved. The timing for Mike's request could not have been better as an illustration of money management in the Village of Palmyra.

A final note: neither personnel nor services have been reduced in this budget and water and sewer rates remain flat. What does this mean for the future? That depends on the status of the unfunded state and federal mandates, which continue to grow, and health insurance costs. We continue to build up our reserves because the future is uncertain. For this year, we have provided our taxpayers a bit of relief through wise money management.