

**Budget Statement Response**

**PUBLIC OFFICERS LAW – ARTICLE 7  
Section §106. Minutes.**

1. Minutes shall be taken at all open meetings of a public body which shall consist of a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and any other matter formally voted upon and the vote thereon.

Just for clarification, the legal definition for "minutes" was included with this statement. As you can read, the minutes are not for expressing one's personal opinions or to be used as a platform to promote your personal political agenda. The minutes are a record for the public summarizing the decisions made by the board.

That said, a village trustee is certainly entitled to their own opinion. They are however not entitled to their own facts. It would be expected that not everyone would or can agree on specific line items when a budget is presented. This years budget is no different. In the past few years, these disagreements only ever concerned the costs associated with the police department. From that experience, I know to expect resistance at any cost level from those trustees that oppose the department. Over the past few years, the Chief's salary had been heavily subsidized with revenue from the SRO position. Even so, the police department continued to be the ONLY focal point for budget reduction. Like previous years, no other village department has continued to cut costs except the police department, and this year is no different.

I will address each line item in order, specific to the Mayor in Trustee McGuire's statement.

- Bill McGuire knew or should have known the 2018-2019 Police Budget is actually less than the previous year and will continue to drop significantly the following year 2019-2020. His statement is not only misleading it's 100% false.
- The second statement is true. Initially I had anticipated a reduction in part time help, but after reviewing the numbers and the possibility that a separate code enforcer might be required, a code enforcement line item was added to the budget. As you will see it did not increase the overall budget as compared to the previous year.
- Continuing to subsidize the police department does not allow us to have the option to eliminate the SRO position. Also Bill McGuire knew or should have known "double dipping" in reference to the SRO position, would require an employee to receive income from two sources for working the same hours. The school pays the village, not the employee. This statement is not only misleading it's 100% false.
- Bill McGuire knew or should have known that Chief Anderson did not have a pay increase as that would have to have been board approved. This statement is not only misleading it's 100% false. There is approximately \$1248 contingency in the labor budget for the Chief's pay which is 6.5%. This money was included as a buffer in the event there were any unforeseen costs in the transition from full-time to part-time. In contrast, the other village labor budgets have a 10% labor contingency. The police department is the only department that did not receive raises this year.

To include any statements like these means nothing without the actual supporting costs to the village taxpayer:

Public Safety Budget	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2018-2019</u>	<u>2019-2020</u>
A3120.10 Chief Personnel Services	27,800	32,500	25,000
A3120.14 Part-Time Personnel Services	4,000	4,000	4,000
A3120.15 Crossing Guard Services	3,400	3,400	3,400
A3120.17 Code Enforcement	0	2,500	2,500
A3120.20 Equipment	2,000	2,000	2,000
A3120.40 Contractual	8,000	8,000	8,000
A9060.80 Health Insurance	10,368	2,491	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55,568</b>	<b>52,891</b>	<b>44,900</b>

The facts speak for themselves. Trustee McGuire voted NO on an ENTIRE budget based on only the Police Department.

The past 3 years the Police Chief's salary was \$50,000. This year that salary drops from \$50,000 to \$32,500 as we transition from full-time to part-time, and it drops again the following year to \$25,000. A net savings of \$25,000 per year. Since it's inception, the Chief's has been taking the lead position as the SRO, which left little to no police coverage in the village. Once the Chief took that SRO position, it also required the village to hire a crossing guard. This year the Chief will have more time for the coverage in the village as the other officers will be tasked with the majority of the duties of the SRO position (at no cost to the village taxpayers). Another notable fact is that revenue generated from the SRO position put a surplus of approx. \$17,000 into the general fund to date.

In response to Bill McGuire's statement "Keith understands the issues we are facing in the Village better than the other three." That statement could not be any further from the truth.

You cannot pretend to understand the issues when you don't attend the meetings with the engineering teams. You cannot pretend to understand the issues when you don't respond to emails, or even speak about the issues at board meetings. You cannot pretend to understand the issues when your entire focus for the village lies in one village department. You cannot pretend to be doing what's best for the village when you allow your personal grievances to affect your decisions for the entire village.

There are no "party lines". Unless YOU decide there are party lines. Each member of this board is an individual, and we are all local business owners. The village board is supposed to act as a team. Right now the majority of the duties are being addressed by just a few members. We all understand the economic situation of the community, and should be participating as a full team to resolve the issues we currently face as a village.

Rather than exhibit continued divisive behavior, why not instead work together to make each department in the village something you can be proud of. Instead of focusing on the negative aspects and picking things apart, how about some positive reinforcement. Acknowledgment for good decisions, helping all of our departments by supporting them and giving constructive criticism that they can grow and learn from. I'm not here to tear apart the fabric of our village, but to lead us through the times ahead so that we might look back and be proud of our accomplishments, the decisions we made, and the work we left behind.

The challenges we face with our water and sewer systems are not unique to Interlaken. This is part of a growing epidemic across the state. There certainly could have been a more proactive approach to preparing for these inevitable issues by previous administrations, but reflecting on the past will not help us build our future. Instead we will make the best decisions we can for the betterment of the village. As money is spent for new infrastructure ALL departments will be streamlined to be as cost effective as possible.

I'm asking all of you to put away your differences and instead focus your efforts in helping to address our current needs, to promote a healthy, stable work environment, to respect our village employees, to respect not only the agenda you were elected to, but also to respect the agenda of the elected trustees seated next to you. Our best interests will always be better suited as a full team. Our strength lies in teamwork, we need to work together to overcome the challenges that lie ahead.

You need to decide if you want to work together as a team, to make compromises where necessary, to continue moving forward. It's too small a community to make divisive decisions that draw lines in the sand. How we move ahead is a decision you need to make for yourselves. Your future actions and your contributions to the village rest solely on your own shoulders.

I appreciate you giving me a chance to speak and I look forward to moving ahead.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Mayor Richard Richardson