

**VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN
VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2011
7:00 P.M.
FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CHURCH
26426 WELLINGTON, FRANKLIN, MICHIGAN**

INFORMATIONAL MEETING ON HEADLEE OVERRIDE PROPOSAL

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Mike Seltzer, Brian Gettel, Fred Gallasch, Bill Lamott, Jim Kochensparger
Absent: Lew Eads (excused), Steve Rosenthal (excused)
Also Present: Amy Sullivan, Village Administrator; John Staran, Village Attorney; Eileen Pulker, Village Clerk; Tom Morrow, Village Treasurer; Pat Browne, Village Police Chief; Tony Averbuch, Village Fire Chief

II. INTRODUCTION

President Gallasch welcomed the Villagers to the Special Meeting on the Headlee Override Proposal. He explained how the informational meeting would be conducted. Sullivan would give a power point presentation followed by a period for public comments and questions. Each speaker will be given 1-3 minute time limit for his/her comments/questions. The time will be closely monitored by Pulker.

III. POWER POINT PRESENTATION

Sullivan began her presentation by providing a brief history of the Headlee Amendment, an explanation of what a Headlee Override is, why it is on the upcoming Village ballot, and what impact it would have on each Villager if approved or failed. She introduced the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, and the Village Treasurer who were available to answer questions. She read the actual ballot language. Sullivan also explained a Partial Headlee Override. A Blue Ribbon Committee made up of Village residents reviewed the partial versus the entire Headlee override proposal and had recommended the full override as proposed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Joan Israel, Wellington, a resident since 1977, was in favor of preserving Franklin's unique character and appreciative of fire and police services but not in favor of the Headlee Override because she thought it gave the Council a "blank check" to take out as much money as it wished. She was in favor of a special legislation that would pay for the fire and police adequately. She claimed that the "Yes" signs are very misleading. The amount of money is not the issue. The "blank check" is the issue. She encouraged people to vote "No".

Laura Segal, Rosemond Lane, commended the Council and administration for taking very responsible and aggressive and pro-active measures in reducing costs adding that she was very impressed. She stated that she doesn't believe that they would act irresponsibly if they had a "blank check". She related her personal experience with the police and expressed her gratitude to them.

Chief Browne thanked Ms. Segal for her comments and explained that several years ago the Police Dept. was re-structured and it re-organized how staffing would be handled which enabled two officers to be on duty, even during overnight shifts.

Shelia Austin, Bruce Lane, echoed the sentiments of Ms. Israel. She believed that services of police and fire should be maintained and is positive that residents would be in favor of voting a millage to make up for the shortfall. Her concern was with the override where other people determine how your money is spent. There might be time to revise this proposal.

Morrow re-iterated how the Headlee Override worked and that it was not a blank check. The Village Council would be in control as it has always had control of the budget.

Dominick Schiano, Oakleaf Lane, believed the Override is an authorization for the Council to spend up to an additional \$400,000 (Morrow later corrected the amount to \$375,000). He also mentioned that although the power point presentation listed cost savings there wasn't a list of cost increases. He had questions for the Council: Why was it decided to combine the millage increase for the General Fund/Police Fund and Fire Fund into one? What would the Council reduce if the Override did not pass?

Gallasch stated that all questions for the Council can be asked at its next meeting on Monday, Sept. 12 in the Public Comment section.

Judy Weiner, Franklin Road, stated that if Headlee did not pass it would probably have a negative impact on our Village and its services.

Charles Dunn, Kirk Lane, stated that the Headlee would be an increase of approximately \$24/mo. He wanted to do the right thing, support the community, and would vote "Yes".

Phyllis Dimitroff, Carol, a resident of 53 years, was not in favor of any tax increases. She is on a fixed income and believed that if there isn't any money there shouldn't be any spending.

Carmina Brooks Tuksal, Rosemond Ct., a resident of 50 years, lauded the Police and Fire Departments for all their good deeds over the years. She stated that she was going to vote "No" on the Override. Her reasons revolved around the circumstances of single people in the Village living by themselves trying to hang onto their property.

Amie Saltzman, Woodside Dr., a life-long resident, supports the Fire and Police Departments. She thanked the Council for holding this informational session. She questioned the usage of the different benchmarks throughout the presentation, the list of cost-cutting measures the Council had taken to trim the budget and the rationale of some of the Council's spending, i.e. DPW expenditures, website and its unknown maintenance expenditures.

Randy McElroy, Woodside, had some questions about the DPW and Main Street expenditures and praised the Fire and Police Departments.

Brian Coyer, River Dr., a 20-year resident, served on Council for more than 16 years and the Fire Commission for 16 years as the Fire Liaison. He handled the budget for the Fire Dept. and Council. He is of the opinion that the presentation made a case "for" the Headlee as opposed to a more neutral approach. He assured the public that there was no evidence that the Fire Dept. would be unfunded in the 2011-12 budget. He also questioned the lack of evidence that the Village needed the increased millage. No one claimed that a police officer would be laid off if the proposal isn't approved. There had been no explanation as to why these two millages have been combined. He had exploratory questions that he felt should have been asked. He was of the opinion that due to all the uncertainties that maybe a partial increase with the possibility of coming back to the Village if the economic downturns continued as they are. He urged a "No" vote.

Morrow mentioned that the forecast coming from Oakland County is that the property values would stabilize in 2012-13 and would steadily rise the next several years. The forecast does take into account new construction and does indicate the need for this millage restoration.

Pat Burke, Franklin Ct., a 17-year resident, is on the HDC and Main Street Franklin and is "FOR" the Headlee Override. She gave a brief history of Main Street Franklin. Her concern is the lack of investment in the downtown area. She also expressed her admiration for the Fire and Police Departments, the support of the Village Office staff and is appreciative and proud of the quality of life in the Village.

Al Beke, Colony Hill, a 32-year resident, apologized for being late but had three (3) points he wanted to bring up. 1. He asked for a clarification of the different increase rates that the Headlee would provide for the Fire Fund (30%) and the Police/General Fund (60%). (Sullivan addressed this issue) 2. He was very disappointed that the Council ultimately combined the two (2) funds into one (1) proposal. It was his understanding that the Council had initially voted to have two (2) separate proposals. 3. With regards to Main Street, Main Street was a commitment that we all could share in. The issue is how long does a "new" enterprise require the funding of the Village? Originally it was a three (3) year commitment after which Main Street would be self-sufficient. When will that end? The FCA, Baseball League, Movies on the Green, or Music on the Green are all investments for the community and are funded voluntarily.

Bill Finnicum, German Mill Rd., was on the budget study committee and very impressed by the amount of work and the amount of background information Sullivan and Morrow provided. He came away favoring the Override. Spending the "Rainy Day" fund was not desirable. He mentioned that Main Street was not the reason for the shortfall but rather the drastic drop in revenues. He noted that he is a strong supporter of Main Street.

Rick Koslowski, Woodlore, a resident for 27 years, has been a 25-year member of the volunteer Fire Department and on the Board of Fire Commissioners, mostly serving as their treasurer, for 22 years. He is appreciative of the support the Fire Dept. has gotten from community members, irregardless of which side of the proposal they support. He explained what the daily costs for fire protection and medical services would be if the Override passed. He also mentioned that the Fire Dept. has to plan long range.

Stewart Weiner, Wellington, a 20-year resident has served as the President of the Baseball League and Treasurer of FCA, stated he wanted Franklin to prosper and grow. He was also on the budget committee which met 5 times. As a group we felt the Council, Treasurer, and Administrator did a very competent job at trying to keep costs efficient and maintain the service level at a high quality. He doesn't want Franklin to decline but a village we are all proud of. He believes that it is fiscally responsible to approve the Override. Get the facts. Become informed.

Felicia Molnar, Carol, was also on the budget committee. She is impressed with the stewardship of the Village Council and Tom Morrow, noted that costs for sewers and roads have all increased and asked everyone to do the responsible thing and vote "Yes".

V. COUNCIL COMMENTS
None

VI. ADJOURNMENT
Meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Beke

Eileen H. Pulker
Village Clerk

H. Frederick Gallasch
Village President