

May 18, 2026

To: Village Council

From: Linda Lavey

Re: Draft 2027 budget

Hi, Council:

Just a few questions about the draft budget. I was working from the one that was posted last week for the public hearing, and not necessarily the one that was posted at 4:30 this afternoon.

- Looking at projected legal fees: five budget lines total \$81,500 for legal fees. Ouch. Talk faster. Although the totals are shifted, the amended budget lists \$79,436 for legal fees. According to last year's spending, the \$50,000.00 amount is too much, the others are too little. And it's all too much. That's six hours/week @\$250/hr.
- Looking at the wages, they are mostly stagnant except the Treasurer, from \$41,808.00 to \$60,060.00. A good treasurer is worth an investment. It would be nice to see more financials in the packets. Is this a full-time job?
- Next is the Village President, from \$10,000.00 to \$18,742. If President Buerman maintains his conflicts of interest, I mean, salaried positions as Village Manager and Zoning Administrator, he sees an estimated bump from \$50,000.00 to \$57,124.00.
- DDA Budget: they have their own money. I saw an agenda item that they were going to discuss next year's budget, but I could not find the minutes for whether they were approved. One curiosity is line 248.728.880, COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION budgeting \$550,350.00. This puts this fund in the red. I looked, again, for minutes of what they might be planning. I did find something mentioned, "Tree Beautification," but the cost in the minutes for this item was \$80,000.00. What is the additional \$470,000.00 to be used for?
- Finally on the documents entered today re: in lieu of insurance stipend. The November 2024 packet materials are not available online, but the clerk had made a very good argument on behalf of this increase, and it is still a significant savings over the insurance. That said,
 - Be careful of stressing the employees with the low-hanging fruit of cutting their benefits. The Village's employees are its greatest assets. All of you sitting on Council come and go, but they remain (we hope), providing professional service and continuity to keep the Village operating as seamlessly as it does.

*Thank you for your
time and attention!*
Linda Lavey