

**TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE**                      **Draft 3/1/2021**  
**COUNTY OF GREENE**                              **Adopted 3/22/2021**  
**PUBLIC HEARING ON WATERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**  
**FOR WATER DISTRICT NO. 2**  
**TOWN HALL, 3809 COUNTY ROUTE 51, HANNACROIX, NY 12087**  
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**OPENING OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Supervisor Ruso opened the meeting at 6:00 PM. Also attending Councilmembers Boehlke, Downes, Irving, and VanEtten; Deputy Supervisor Dellisanti; Town Clerk Finke; and 12 members of the public who signed the attendance book.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Good evening everybody. We're here for a Public Hearing on a proposed changes, repairs on Water District No. 2. So I'm gonna read the Public Notice and then we'll proceed. 'NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSAL FOR INCREASE AND IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES OF WATER DISTRICT NO. 2 SERVING THE SCHELLER PARK AREA Notice is hereby given that the Town Board of the Town of New Baltimore, Greene County, will meet at the Town Hall, 3809 County Route 51, Hannacroix, New York 12087, on the 25th day of January, 2021, at six o'clock p.m. (6 p.m.), prevailing time, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing upon a proposal by said Town Board to pay the cost of a waterline replacement for Water District No. 2 pursuant to Section 202-b of the Town Law as hereinafter described, at which time and place said Town Board will meet to consider such proposition and hear all persons interested in the subject thereof and concerning the same. The improvements proposed to be made consist of improvements to Water District No. 2 as described in the Engineer's Report prepared by Delaware Engineering, P.C. dated December 30, 2020. Such improvements include the costs for emergency and long-term repairs for the water main crossing beneath the Thruway between the Village of Coxsackie and Water District No. 2 and serving Scheller Park, and including original furnishings, equipment, machinery and apparatus required therefor. The maximum amount proposed to be expended for the improvements is \$330,000. The Engineer's report describing such improvements is on file in the Town Clerk's office for public inspection. All interested persons are invited to attend with a limit of twelve (12) at a time due to COVID-19 restrictions. Comments can also be emailed to the Town Clerk at [clerk@townofnewbaltimore.org](mailto:clerk@townofnewbaltimore.org), or submitted in writing via the Town Clerk's outdoor mailbox at Town Hall, or you may call the Clerk's office at 518.756.6671, ext. 5, prior to 4:00 p.m. on January 25, 2021. Dated: Hannacroix, New York January 11, 2021 By Order of the Town Board of the Town of New Baltimore, New York Barbara M. Finke Town Clerk Town of New Baltimore'

**Supervisor Ruso:** I see that there's gonna be quite a few people interested in speaking and we'll get to that in a moment. I think I'm going to do one thing first. I'm going to review some comments from people who could not come, their timing and such, they couldn't make it, so I'm going to read them. This is from Jean Pfeffer concerned because many residents and neighbors are on a fixed income and are not able to pay and she won't be able to attend the meeting. She said the informational meeting stated 35 residents were part of the Water District and the Tax Collector noted only 32. And then we have from Sharon Hillman, she is unable to attend the meeting, wondered what happens if we were to get grants later on, 32 residents and 13 are elderly and retired -- Mary Beth and I discussed that so we'll address that when that comes throughout the night -- supports a 30-year bond, payments quarterly, can some residents pay as one payment and pay their yearly amount rather than quarterly. I suppose we could probably set that up. Supported \$140 with a 30-year loan. And then we have Kendra Johnson, she is also unable to attend, but was concerned with the decision being made and doesn't want to miss the opportunity to share her thoughts, questioned about the responsibility of the Thruway to pay and were we going to let it go. She purchased her house in 2018 and how would she know she was in a Water District, was there a buyer-to-buyer deed? I can't speak for that. Has paid water bills in the past. That's the written ones that were submitted to us from people who couldn't attend. So anyway let's proceed with our meeting. Mary Beth, is there anything you'd like to say at the front end or maybe you'd like to do it at the end and maybe answer some of the questions that are presented.

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**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Well would it be valuable just to kind of go through the history and what happened?

**Supervisor Ruso:** I think so.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** And how we ended up where we are today.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I think so. I know that some us this was addressed and spoken of in our meeting in June at the Park, but that was a long time ago.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Right, right. So for everyone, I think I actually know almost everyone who's here, but my name is Mary Beth Bianconi. I'm a Partner at Delaware Engineering and we've been working here in the community for probably ten years now, it's been quite awhile doing various infrastructure work for the community. We also work for the Village of Coxsackie and the Town of Coxsackie as well. That has a lot of value to everybody because we can kind of help everyone, it saves money because we're not doing multiple things. So very quickly most of you know the history of Scheller Park and the Reservoir, but it goes back a long time ago. In 1919 it was the source of the Village of Coxsackie's water. There's a ten inch pit cast iron main that ran at the time in the 1920's through open farmland from the Reservoir down to the Village. Obviously a lot of things have been built since then and one of them being the Thruway. And in the 50's the plans for the Thruway do identify this water line as crossing the right-of-way. And so everybody I think is familiar where this happened. You go over the bridge over 9W in that vicinity, it was just south of there where the water main broke. In the 1940's there was two things that happened. One was there was drought and the second thing that happened was that the end of the reservoir has a dam. It's an earthen dam and the topography up at the reservoir is called karst topography. It's the same if you went up to Cobleskill and you went in the caves that are out there, Howe's Cavern and all that stuff, is the same geology. So that geology was being weathered and worn away and the dam was leaking. So it was losing a lot of water so the Village needed to find a better water source. So they dammed the Climax Creek and created a reservoir over on the Climax Creek over by the Quarry Steak House basically just up the way a little bit almost across from the Post Office. And that became the primary source of water in 1940. We have the records from the Thruway construction and we see notes that stated that the water main was originally intended to be relocated and put in a vault so that it would cross the Thruway inside, you know vault basically is a big tunnel and you put the water mains inside it so that you have access if leaking, there's valves in there to fix it. That's been done in a number of places, the closest one to here is Catskill. If you were like in Catskill or 23B, you're going out toward Leeds, on the south side of that there's a vault that brings the waterline into the Village of Catskill. So they did it there, they didn't do it here. We don't know why. There aren't any records, there's nobody left at the Thruway who remembers what was going on in 1952 when they made these decisions, but we suspect that it was because the new water transmission mains were already put on 81 and that was the primary source of water and this line was a backup. So they probably made the assumption that it didn't need to be replaced. We're making some guesses as to why they didn't do it. Long story short, they didn't do it. Fast forward a little bit and you folks know that in the '50s the Sportsmen's Club leased the property at the reservoir. Eventually it became owned by the Sportsmen's Club. In the '70's, Scheller Park was created as a residential housing development and there was a water system put in. The water system was, we're gonna call it temporary at best, it had one and two inch plastic pipes that ran over the ground. The original plan, I know this is maybe a little surprising, included 200 houses and apartments up there if anybody can imagine that. That obviously didn't happen. By 1974 there was some pretty significant problems with the system that was there and the residents petitioned the Town to create a Water District. The Town drew up plans and replaced the lines in Scheller Park with legitimate ductal iron pipe four and six inch lines and that is the water system today and the source of the water is now going through that pit cast, it was going through that ten inch pit cast line. So where the water used to come from the reservoir and down to the Village, now it comes from Climax. So it's down on 9W and back up to Scheller Park through that same pit cast

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line. On Monday, June 1, I got a nice phone call in the middle of the night, those are always fun to get, stating that the southbound travel lane of the Thruway had sunken somewhere around ten inches to twelve inches due to water undermining the line and wanting to know if there was a way to shut it off. So there's a lot of red flashing lights on, this is at mile post 123.3 if anyone is interested. So obviously immediate action had to be taken. Folks may be aware that in 1974 when the Water District was created, there was an Intermunicipal Agreement executed between the Village and the Town. The Town does have several Water Districts, but does not have the resources to maintain or operate those Water Districts so the Village does that on behalf of the Town and then charges the Town back the costs. That Agreement expired in about 2004 and was renewed in 2005 to continue so that the Village continues to provide support to the Town in that respect. So they are the manpower essentially to repair the problems. So the Village went out immediately and had to put shutoff valves because there were no valves. We had to install shutoff valves, shut the water off. The Town here working in concert with the County was able to get some temporary water trucks and things up for residents to be able to have water in the short term. That all happened on June 2. So the next day bulk water was up there and the Village contracted with Callanan, you see their trucks around here. The reason that they chose to do that is because Callanan is approved by the Thruway to work on the Thruway. You can't just pick anyone. You have to pick people -- they have safety plans and all those things in place, insurance. Basically cut the Thruway one lane at a time, remove the soil, backfilled it and put in a temporary surface. That occurred on June 4 and June 5 so the travel lanes could be restored, both travel lanes could be restored. Now it satisfied the Thruway in the short term. In the meantime, another contractor -- Bellamy Construction, who also is approved to work on the Thruway -- we worked with them to pull a two inch line through the ten inch line so that we could restore water service back to the users in the Water District. And that happened on Friday, the 5<sup>th</sup>. So you know I know that that was probably a really traumatic period for folks, but being completely objective to find out that you had a leaking water main on June 1<sup>st</sup> and have water service restored on June 5<sup>th</sup> is really pretty great and my understanding is that that water service worked pretty well for folks at least in the temporary situation. So going forward, obviously we need a permanent solution. So working with the Thruway, they really have jurisdiction over this in terms of what would happen there, we ended up with 300' of directionally bored water main encasing underneath the Thruway. That casing gets grouted in place then connections had to be made on both sides back, back to the main, and then back to the distribution system in the District and then the old main was left in place but it was abandoned and pressure grouted around it so that if groundwater gets in it, it can't make the Thruway sink again. A lot of negotiation with the Thruway, plans were finally approved on June 8<sup>th</sup>. The project was then subsequently put out to bid. We did do standard bidding procedures. So even though we did declare an emergency here, we did follow standard bid procedures. Bids were received on August 6. Construction happened from August 23 through early September and then there was some cleanup work that was done later on and we finally closed out the contract on December 12. Total cost of the repair was \$320,729.94. I will say for folks we did not charge a lot of our time for this because we knew it was an emergency and something that just needed to be done. Most of the work was done at night so there is extra cost associated with the (unable to understand) of traffic on the Thruway and other things doing that work at night. The other thing I'll mention is that on June 8, the Town of New Baltimore adopted an Emergency Declaration declaring this an emergency because it was. And also doing an evaluation under the State Environmental Review Act, which is an environmental impact, and determined that there was no significant environmental impact replacing or repairing the line. You'll see that the budget for this project is \$330,000. That's because there will be some additional legal costs and the cost of the bond of the project. Regarding a couple of tenets that we already have, the number of tax parcels in the district is whatever is in the district so that's who bears the cost. Unfortunately New York State, these special improvement districts -- water districts, sewer districts, just like school districts -- only those benefitted pay the cost. And that's difficult when you have so few users and such a big cost. But it is unfortunately unavoidable. There was a question about asking about grants. We are certainly, we have been since the very first day talking about what we can do to reduce the cost of this project to users. Someone asked about the Thruway's

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responsibility. The reality is the water line is owned by the Town. If you think about the length of the Thruway is pretty long and there's a lot of utility crossings. So they pretty much say if you own it, it's yours. That said, I mentioned that the existing line, that 10 inch line that was in there, that pit cast line, the pressure grouting of that, we got estimates, the early estimates were \$24-\$25,000. The end of the day it cost well over \$30,000 to have that work done. The Thruway Authority paid for that. So that's a cost that did not have to be paid for by the users. They also supported some of the paving costs as well. I don't have an exact estimate in terms of what they supported there, but they did contribute as much as they felt they could do so because they again have to be equitable with everyone across the entire length of the Thruway through the whole State. And that's it.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Well I guess we'll open it up to comments. I don't have a list of who wants to go first. How about if we start on my left here with yourselves and I prefer for you to speak as loudly as possible at the podium.

**Vince Cuzdey:** One of my concerns is that the Thruway in 1952 did not put it in a vault and I would think that with that issue of not doing that when it was planned to, they'd have some responsibility in this and that being that they should be absorbing a chunk of the cost and I know we've talked about that and I'll let somebody else talk about that. One of the other issues it was mentioned that those who use it get to bear the cost and my point is the Fire Department uses the hydrant system. That's a townwide thing and they have used it for houses. I was on the Fire Department for nonmembers of this district so I think a portion of the cost ought to be incurred by the Town and/or the Fire Department that have used it. Those Towns that have used it have been New Baltimore Fire District and also Coxsackie Hose 3 has been up to use it though they have not been on a regular basis and usually mutual aid. I was also interested and it's already been mentioned one payment versus multiple years. I would elect to do that if we had to end up paying for a portion which I imagine some of it would be incurred by us.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I think the question was one payment a year instead of a quarterly payment.

**Vince Cuzdey:** I am interested in paying it in full rather than having...

**Supervisor Ruso:** Just get it out of the way.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Get it out of the way.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I'm not sure we can do that, but we'll look into that. Carry on.

**Vince Cuzdey:** My concern with that would be that what if somebody's house burns to the ground and goes away and is removed from the district over the course of 10 or 15 years then you would no longer have that member on there then who's gonna absorb those costs?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** They actually will continue to pay. The piece of real property. So there's two charges. This is considered debt service because we did a capital project. So in a Special Improvement District, and I know we've had a question about how many parcels there are, if there's 35 or 32 or whatever. The annual cost is \$200,000, you divide it by the 30-how-many-ever and everyone pays whether there's a structure there or not. In terms of use, then that's if there's a meter or it's connected then they pay the use fees back to the Village to buy the water, but the number of parcels stays the same unless the District is changed by an action of this Board.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Is there a list of all the members on this District?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Parcels, yes.

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**Vince Cuzdey:** That we can have.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I don't have it with me, but Diane Jordan, our Tax Collector who does the billing, she has that.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Okay, I would like to get a list of that. I don't know if everybody in the District actually uses water. My neighbor, the main water line...

**Supervisor Ruso:** I believe there are a few parcels that are not users, yes.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Okay, but are they paying?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Yes, for debt service.

**Supervisor Ruso:** For debt service, yeah, or they will pay for debt service, yes.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Okay, and what happens if we put new people on the Water District?

**Supervisor Ruso:** They will be added just like we've done a number of years ago, we added someone and there would be 33 users. If it's a parcel that's outside of the currently-defined district, it would be added too. And so there would be now 35 or 33 or whatever divided into the remaining debt service at the time. So if it happens five years from now, they would have to pay back but they would pay forward and everyone would have a bit of a decrease I could envision.

**Vince Cuzdey:** We're also looking at with this old system future repairs going on. One of the other issues I looked at I think didn't have an answer to was there was talk of this line being a problem long ago. The Village of Coxsackie Mayor I believe has mentioned to you at a previous meeting that this, they've talked about repairing this maybe 10 or 15 years ago and nothing was done then.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I think Mary Beth would be the best to answer that because she has informed me that you did a study on this very line, presented it to at least this Town Board as well as the Village. I can't say both.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Yes, both.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Did you want to speak on that or...?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So the fact that this is a pit cast line. It was installed in 1919 means it's probably, and it was drawing reservoir water, so probably corroded. People are familiar, but pipes like this, they get what's called tuberculated, so tuberculosis like what happens in your lungs happens inside a pipe, it actually resides the diameter of the pipe. I can say that when we ran through it to draw the line through it, the pipe was full of material sediment and that's not uncommon, it's a very old line. We had talked about this a number of years ago. I think it was around the time perhaps when that extension to add the two properties was done.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I think you're right.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** We had talked about what the cost would be. Again the District users bear that cost and remember we only placed 300' of this line. There's a lot more feet of this line or there's a chunk more feet of this line to be done. So it was discussed, but I think and I don't know other than reporting on it's condition and recommending it be replaced, I don't know if it was...

**Supervisor Ruso:** Did you do a presentation to the Board or was it to the Supervisor?

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**Mary Beth Bianconi:** To the Board. If I remember it was a long time ago.

**Supervisor Ruso:** No one who is currently on the Board was here.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** I don't think so.

**Councilmember VanEtten:** No, we weren't.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Nevertheless I think I know a rough idea the year I believe it was about 2011, 2012.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** That makes some sense.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I know the property that was added to the district. I know the owner and I remember him getting water. We've got a lot of people here. We have a rule when we have a group of people we try to keep it to three minutes. Usually if it's only one or two people speaking we allow them to carry on and the opportunity to speak is not what I want to restrict, but if we can keep it as prompt or as quick as possible that would be great. Who would like to go next?

**Linda Rhoads:** Vince hit on what I was wondering about, about the people who have wells who aren't on the water line, but they benefit from the fire hydrants. Will they also be part of this? Like the guy next door...

**Supervisor Ruso:** It's only for parcels in the District. Mr. Cuzdey did ask about fire companies. I'm not sure how that could be accomplished. I'm not even sure of the legalities of it. They're users, they're considered users. Would they have a vote in this? I don't know.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** No, because the reality is the hydrant is there and they're drawing water from the hydrant, if we didn't do the project they wouldn't have water. So I guess there would be that.

**Ellie Alfeld:** No fire protection.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So there's isn't a way to capture that. Any real property inside the District so if someone is not connected but they're in the District, the District is on a map, it's got a boundary, then they pay the debt service.

**Louise Albertson:** First I have to gripe a little bit. I'm Louise Albertson. I live on Circle Drive. I've been here a good thirty years. Started out with a water problem hitting me in the face. Nobody wanted to cooperate. It went on and on. So when this happened needless to say what in the world, where it is gonna end. You know I mean I hope that that \$330,000 will take care of it. I'm curious why can't we go after the County to help us or the State? I understand somebody said something about grants. I know you've given it some thought. What about going to the media. I mean I could just see the headlines 'Help we Need Help Big Time.' Somebody may have an idea. Up north some of you may remember maybe ten years ago, one of the smaller towns had a major problem. They were dumping all their sewage right in the Hudson River. The Hudson didn't care because a lot of people were doing that, but they couldn't help it. The State kept fining them big time. It's building up to \$100,000. Finally a little town that adjoined them pretty close said 'we'll help you.' They hooked them up and took care of the problem through their own system. So somebody may be out there like 'hey, we're a small area.' And I don't understand why we are paying as a group. We're part of Greene County. We're part of the whole area. That's mean if nothing else. Really, I mean if it happened to them I bet they'd be like 'yeah, what can you do for us?' I mean this is gonna kill me. I'm no kid anymore. There's gonna be a debt here on thirty years. I could be long gone and then it goes with the

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house, you know the debt. I know how these things run. I've worked for lawyers for over thirty years and this is not good. I tried to get information on what went on in 1800 and all that stuff. I wound up with a bunch of papers that I paid to get printed and it started out in June, I don't know it wasn't that long ago so I still don't know who the person was. I know they're dead and gone, but I wanted to see the system and how it was handled. You have to look ahead not always back or the immediate thing. That's how I survived with ten kids.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Well, that's a good point.

**Louise Albertson:** You always plan ahead, always know. My one son said to me one time, 'Mom, you are the only one I know who has a parent who always tells me what could go wrong.' He said nobody else is doing that and he had a lot of friends. He was on the football team. So maybe we could look ahead a little bit. When I was working when I walked outside and saw the attorney's sign hanging, I got right back in I said 'who do we call' and they said 'well, nobody offered to ever fix those before.' Well, everybody wanted to get paid and not care. I care. So when we had the water problem and needed a grant, nobody was doing anything. I was getting told by the Town Board 'oh, no, we're not gonna get it, we're not gonna get it' and at one meeting the man from the Health Department, is it Oneida County we share it with?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Otsego.

**Louise Albertson:** Everybody on the Board's going 'no, no, no, we can't get it.' He said 'I think Mrs. Albertson is right. You know maybe.' It turned out it came to pass and nobody wanted to help take the survey. I said 'I'll take your survey.' I walked around in the dark and got all the information he needed. We all got to share to take care of this place and this mess. That's a lot of money to hit on us. I'm not a kid I freely admit it and I'm a widow.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Well, I think when we're done here maybe both I and Mary Beth can speak a little bit about outside funding. All of our outside funding issues are not assured at this moment. It doesn't mean that there won't be something, it's just that we don't have any absolute knowledge of anything.

**Louise Albertson:** I understand but maybe before we just say 'alright we'll pay it off' keep looking. Maybe next year something would pop up or go to the media. Really, I mean you're not insulting anybody but you're saying 'we're in trouble, we need help.'

**Supervisor Ruso:** I would like to see something.

**Tom Russo:** With all this that I'm hearing, I did buy one of the houses that burnt down and if I would have known at that time, 1) buying my house on 257 and now buying a second piece of property if I knew that, and I am speaking for some of the people here that have the same feeling of me, Vince my neighbor, Sean, there was no mention... I know about what you said, I know what you said, Water District No. 2 -- but it wasn't explained to us at closing or any time that there was 32 people that if anything happens to this Water District that we would be responsible for the cost. \$330,000 divided by them, \$10,000 now tonight. I just found out \$20,000 on me. I can't afford that. I work my ass off as a Physician Assistant. I have a sick daughter that my medical bills are unbelievable, \$20,000 every three weeks. I can't afford this and if I would have known this when I bought my house 30 years ago when I got into Med School, I wouldn't have bought my house and I wouldn't have bought that second piece of property that I was hoping to give to my daughter to build a house so she could have her horses. This is very upsetting to me tonight and it's upsetting to a lot of people here. Yes, I know about Water District No. 2 now, but when I closed and Kendra Johnson, the person that wrote that, is very upset too because they just closed in 2018 and there was no mention about Water District No. 2 and what the cost would entail if something broke. Do you understand that?

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**Supervisor Ruso:** No, of course, I do.

**Tom Russo:** This is very, very upsetting.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I know that in 2018 or how many years ago you bought yours...

**Tom Russo:** I bought mine in 1989.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I don't know if anyone would have known what the cost would be.

**Tom Russo:** I had no clue about water problems when I bought the house. I'm ready to sink a well but now I'm still responsible for it.

**Supervisor Ruso:** For the debt service.

**Tom Russo:** And now I'm responsible for two debt services. I can't afford this.

**Sarah Pilatich:** I just bought my house in November. The Water District was never explained to me or the debt. I own two lots, one's vacant. Am I gonna be held liable for both of those lots?

**Supervisor Ruso:** It seems so, yes.

**Sarah Pilatich:** Why wouldn't the previous owner be because I wasn't there when the water main break happened?

**Tom Russo:** That was another thing I didn't bring up, too. Thirty years ago or whenever this was done, we weren't the original people that signed this agreement, but it was never passed down to the new owners.

**Supervisor Ruso:** The new owners, yeah.

**Tom Russo:** Again she just bought her house. She just bought it. Was she told? No.

**Supervisor Ruso:** No, apparently not.

**Tom Russo:** This is not fair. We haven't known this stuff and it was never, ever, ever disclosed.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Who would be disclosure? Who would provide the disclosure?

**Tom Russo:** It should have been on the deed or something.

**Ellie Alfeld:** The previous owner.

**Supervisor Ruso:** The previous owner and/or whatever...

**Tom Russo:** No mention. None and now our property values are gonna go tanking because now we have this major debt and there goes our property values and I feel sorry for her. She just moved in.

**Supervisor Ruso:** To answer your question, the billing plan moves forward on a quarterly basis. In essence the total cost of the debt, divided by the number of years, divided by the number of users, properties...

**Sarah Pilatich:** I'd have to pay double.

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**Supervisor Ruso:** And divided by...

**Sarah Pilatich:** And that was never explained to me even for a vacant lot with nothing on it not using the water.

**Supervisor Ruso:** The previous owner is not gonna say nothing. I'm sure of that.

**Sarah Pilatich:** And I'm 25 years old. I haven't been around a long time to save all this money to pay for it and I just bought my house.

**Vincent Cuzdey:** I think your vacant lot doesn't have a water line on it.

**Sarah Pilatich:** It does.

**Vince Cuzdey:** And they won't let you build on it?

**Sarah Pilatich:** No, I think you can build on it.

**Supervisor Ruso:** And then it's divided quarterly.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** I know this isn't gonna help, but just like when you buy a house, you had to figure out what school district this was in because you're gonna pay school taxes and school taxes are different, Coxsackie-Athens versus Ravena versus right... This is a taxing jurisdiction. So there might be a Library Tax when you look at your tax bill, there might be Lighting. Some people have Lighting Districts, these different things. It's a tax. So, unfortunately, when you buy property that's one of those things about understanding the tax. Some people are not like where I live, I don't live in a Lighting District so on my property bill it says 'Lighting \$0' because my neighbors do but I don't, but I looked it up when I bought my property. I know this doesn't help.

**Sarah Pilatich:** No, this is the first house I've ever bought. I'm 25 years old. I'm obviously not your age so I wouldn't know to do that.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** I understand. I understand. But just in terms I know people are like 'how would I find this out? Where would you find this out?' So when you're buying a house, it's really talking to your realtor or however you got it.

**Tom Russo:** None of that was ever disclosed.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** I know it's very, very difficult. This is a really, really tough... We talked about this. The fact that there's so few users in this District. The Town of Coxsackie Water District has close to 1,000 users, 797 or something like that. There's Districts all over the state that are different sizes. This is a really, really small District and the problem is if we go back in time somebody was gonna build a lot of houses in Scheller Park, 200 of them is what the documents say from 1974. In 1974 the people who lived in Scheller Park petitioned the Town to do this because they had one and two inch plastic lines on the ground and they couldn't live in their houses. I think I have something here that says that there were nine families without water for over a year. So that's the history we're dealing with. It doesn't change what we have today, but this is one of those things. I've heard a bunch of people say we gotta look forward. In 1974 someone should have been looking forward and saying we're relying on a pipe, even in 1974 it was built in 1919. That's probably not super smart and that at the time, I think when the District was created, there were only about 20 houses. So it was even smaller area. The original debt, I do have that, the original debt on the District when they built it was \$80,000. Residents paid \$50 a year for debt service plus the cost of water which was at 180 percent. That's what the situation is. I know it's upsetting in terms of somebody was saying 'can't we go to the County or can't we

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go to other people,' and I will talk at the end about grants and financing and those kinds of things, but New York State, this is New York State law, New York State says that when you create a Water District in a Town, only the people inside the Water District pay those costs.

**Sarah Pilatich:** So the Village doesn't pay for it?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So the other thing I do what to add and I forgot to mention this, so one of the things you have to realize everyone, and I know again tough situation, but the Village of Coxsackie has paid the \$330,000. The residents of the Village of Coxsackie paid that money, it's all been paid. The contractors are all paid, they have all gone home. So basically the Village of Coxsackie extended their money to help you guys out in a short-term basis right and you have to pay them back. Unfortunately, the Village was in a position to do that because I think you guys would have to chime in, but I don't think the Town had the ready cash, the District didn't, but to pay for that cost. So, again, I know this is difficult, but I just feel like if I explained as much as I can -- and I know it's a difficult situation -- but the fact that this District is so small is a big problem. If there were to be more houses built as Jeff said, if there were more people added to the District, it would reduce the cost to everyone because we take the same number and divide by more.

**Sarah Pilatich:** So I'm paying for milky water that you can't even drink. It stains the sink and now I've gotta pay for somebody else's.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So if you have a problem like that you need to let the Village know.

**Sarah Pilatich:** I have. They don't do anything. They look at me like 'oh, you're a female, you don't know what you're taking about. I'm a man so...'

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So afterwards give me your contact information, I'll make sure something gets checked out.

**Audience Member:** There's a lot of air in the water.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So that's actually, that's good to know.

**Sarah Pilatich:** And it makes me sick so my dog has diarrhea.

**Audience Member:** The water leaves a brown stain.

**Audience Member:** You can't do laundry.

**Audience Member:** We pay for this water that we can't drink.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** But we need to know this so that we can address it. Scheller Park is in a tough spot. So Scheller Park is up here, right you guys are way up high. So is the Village's water plant so that means that there's very little pressure but you're also coming down the hill and going back up the hill and we're still traveling through some sections of that 1919 pipe. So there's a good chunk of that pipe is still in play. So the water quality can be poor, the milkiness is from air getting in there probably because in the past that line underneath the Thruway, I said it was operating a ten inch line in some places, I wouldn't have been able to get my fist through it. It was that small. So it was increasing the pressure and not letting a lot of air to get bubbled in. Now that the line is bigger, that's probably where the air is coming from because it goes down, it actually kind of has a couple dips in it and then it comes back up so there may be some things we might be able to do to reduce the milkiness and address some of these other things. But we need to know.

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Many speaking at once.

**Jim Mc Manus:** Most of my questions were covered by everyone previously. Something that I would like to know is when Water District No. 2 was created, they were anticipating 200+ residents on Scheller Park Road. That has not happened. Is it possible to dissolve a Water District and combine it with Water District No. 1? So we said that there were close to just 780, just shy of 800.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** That's in a different Town.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Water District No. 1 is the water is fed from Ravena and it only proceeds down 9W to about where the Budget Motel is. That's the furthest extent of that line and a different provider of water.

**Tom Russo:** Who supplies the water to all the hotels?

**Supervisor Ruso:** They have a well.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** They have wells. So the only water supplies in the Town of New Baltimore you have the line that comes up 9W about where Slater's is, now goes up the hill to Scheller Park, crosses the Thruway and goes up the hill to Scheller Park, there's a line that comes south out of the Village of Ravena, down to about where the Budget Hotel is, and there is the chunk or small part of where the liquor distributor is on 9W, that big huge, giant building in the back, and the SERTA mattress, that's also on the water system, but other than that there's no public water supplies in the Town. Everything else you see that's built here is on a well. That includes the Holiday Inn Express, that includes the Truck Stop. They all have wells, they all have septic systems or small wastewater treatment plants. There's no public utilities there.

**James McManus:** Well, I would like to stay on the idea that originally there were supposed to be 200 residents on here. We may be stuck right now. How do we prevent getting stuck again in the future? If these lines are originally from 1918, there are going to be failures coming up okay. So we may pay this \$300,000 now. Next year if it happens are we going to be levied again \$300,000?

**Supervisor Ruso:** You've got some questions. First off the line under the Thruway is replaced so that's a 2020 addition. Other parts of the Water District that don't serve Scheller Park, those costs would be part of the Village of Coxsackie's water system and that's not a responsibility of yourselves. It's part of the entire Village of Coxsackie water system.

**Jim McManus:** Of the Scheller Park Road water, how much of the line has been replaced?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Very little of it aside from the main that comes under the Thruway. Your lines along your roads that service each house, those go to 1974.

**Tom Russo:** Was the line under the northbound side replaced or just the southbound?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** No, correct. One of the options that we looked at because we were thinking the same thing, if we're gonna do this. So we looked at what would need to be done to remove all of the 1919 line. The cost was somewhere in the \$1.5 m range so that pretty much ended that discussion very quickly because you don't have \$1.5 and doing it on such a short term basis. Now that doesn't mean that we won't talk at the end about planning and how do we plan, and how do we... The most expensive money you spend is the money you spend in an emergency because you can't plan it. To the person's questions about a grant, you can't go line up for low-cost financing of grants, that takes... Don't you remember the sewer system, we worked on it for, Shelly, three years, four years to get grants and zero-interest financing for the

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sewer system. It took us four years. So you ask a really, really good question about the future because that's out there.

**Jim McManus:** Because at a certain point we will be at a point of extremist where the burden will be too high for even those who are doing incredibly well to afford and why would it be worth it to even pay it and I believe we're closing in on that quickly.

**Vince Cuzdey:** So are you telling us they did not replace the line under the northbound line and we could have this problem next week?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Yeah.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** The cost. The cost.

**Vince Cuzdey:** The New York State Thruway should have a part paying for this. They didn't fulfill their end by putting it in a vault. They should have done that initially.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** We don't disagree.

**Audience Member:** So, are you suing the...?

**Supervisor Ruso:** No I am not.

**Audience Member:** We're being told to pay. I know Coxsackie's already paid it, but that portion ought to be going back to the Thruway and say 'hey...' It's their Thruway, it's their responsibility for maintenance. They collect tolls on it. They should be responsible for that. They can't expect anybody crossing it to pay for something. Nature or an act of god.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Unfortunately they do and it's the entire length of the Thruway. In Catskill, Catskill just put a sewer line under the Thruway. Catskill paid to put the sewer line under the Thruway.

**Audience Member:** That's a new construction. But this is something that they elected in 1950 to neglect to do the property thing.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** We understood and we looked and that's when we found the plans and went back to the Thruway and we said 'and what happened?'

**Louise Albertson:** But rules and guidelines can be changed, it's not an impossible thing. It's difficult but not impossible and I say we go fight them publicly.

**Audience Member:** Has anybody asked the Thruway and brought this up to them?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Absolutely.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Went all the way up to the head of the Thruway.

**Audience Member:** They just say 'no.'

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** What they say is they have 590 miles...

**Supervisor Ruso:** I've had that same comment.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Of the Thruway with a lot of utility crossings and they did what they could to support the project.

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**Louise Albertson:** And they're also saying how they're keeping our tolls going, they're not going to end.

**Supervisor Ruso:** They said the same to thing to me apparently or similar that they said to you. They said we have thousands, that's the way they said it, utility crossings under the Thruway and they don't own them. They are not responsible for them. Age of them, and this is their words to me, the age of them varies certainly by community by everything.

**Audience Member:** So we'll repair the pipe, let them repair the Thruway. We'll repair ours, they repair theirs.

**Supervisor Ruso:** That's in essence what we have here. They have taken on the cost of the repair of the Thruway.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** They did.

**Supervisor Ruso:** That they have done, however, the pipe, I believe it was in the \$30's maybe \$40's...

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** \$30-\$40,000.

**Audience Member:** I'd rather pay that than \$300,000.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Understood and I'm not defending the Thruway. I'm just telling you, obviously, that was the very first thing we did was we ran up the chain of the Thruway before we even knew what it was gonna cost or what was gonna be done to fix it. The other thing that we did just so everyone knows is we spent a fair amount of time, and we did this once before looking at it, is there another way to get water service to Scheller Park without crossing the Thruway because that's another logical thing to do. Could we abandon the line that we have, just cut it off and leave it in place and get you water some other way? And there just isn't a less costly more viable way. You know the geography.

**Councilmember Boehlke:** Not with 32 houses footing the bill for it.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Exactly. Anything that you do is too much money. If you touch it, it's too much money.

**Audience Member:** And we're the ones paying.

**Vince Cuzdey:** This line underneath the northbound section, is that a ten inch line?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** It's the same line.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Can we use that as a vault?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** So we'd love to use it as a carrier and that might be something that we could look at doing.

**Vince Cuzdey:** Better sooner than later.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** That's how we restored the line was we went a two inch line through a ten inch line.

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**Councilmember Boehlke:** You guys can correct me, but initially we heard when they put this temporary two inch line in that a lot of people experienced better pressure in their homes than what they had before. Is that true?

**Audience Member:** No, I think it was more just because we had no pressure and now we have pressure.

Many speaking at once.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Our challenge is that the Department of Health says that the minimum line size is six inches. So that's part of, again we're back to regulations. The other thing is you have fire protection up there. You can't have fire protection and have a smaller diameter line. You won't get the volume of water pressure through it to actually use it for fire protection. So this is all these competing interests right. It's a balancing. But, again, as we think about the future which is really smart to think about, you don't hopefully end up in this position again. The big thing that you think about is anything that's done is gonna have an impact on you guys as ratepayers and last we can plan it and go seek the funding that could be grant funding, grants you don't have to pay back, as we got a grant for part of the sewer project, and I think the lady was talking about the water project for the hamlet that didn't end up actually happening, but there was a grant associated with that as well. They're available right now. Unfortunately, with the budget deficit that everyone's probably listening to on the news, there have not been grants. There were no grants in 2020. There are a couple of grants available actually right now, but they're focused on sewer or installing water meters which is a great idea, but you guys don't need water meters you need a new water system to bond your cost. So it's a process. I know that doesn't help, but...

**Supervisor Ruso:** So moving forward we have a debt to the Village of Coxsackie, they have paid this bill. I spoke with the Village Mayor last Thursday and he said they have the money in their reserve right now. And we had thought that we may have to use Town monies, Town General Fund monies, to pay Coxsackie. The regulations are that Town monies used to pay something on behalf of a District, whether it's the Water District or the Sewer District, as Mary Beth pointed out, must be reimbursed back to the General within one year.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Within the budget year actually.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Within the budget year actually. Yes, you're absolutely right. So the only other options are a bond because it has to be paid within a year.

**Louise Albertson:** Will it cost us more if we wait until the very end?

**Supervisor Ruso:** I don't know that. In terms of the points that Mary Beth had spoken about with grants, this failure happened in the worst time. We said that back in June. The issue comes to mind is that we've had a cut for other issues already. There's a state funding, not significant but most of the operations of the Town itself, are through the taxes as you well know. However, the state funding that was coming was all cut. The Highway monies that come to us from the State that was an immediate 20 percent reduction. The uncertainty for 2021 still exists. So the state's already cutting their funding and asking for a grant. There's not many open doors. I have reached out to our elected officials. I have no promises. I can't say. If something does come up, whatever it would be, I think we would find ourselves in a position to accept it readily. How does that work? It would reduce. The length of the bond is the length of the bond. However, it would reduce your payments by whatever amounts were given to us. And that's in essence the law. I mean I can't say 'let's take off the last five years or...' We can't do that. The length of the bond is still the length of your bond. That's how that would work. I actually want to kibitz a little bit with Mary Beth in terms of some other strategies, but I know you've been on the phone looking for money and so have I.

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**Mary Beth Bianconi:** We have.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Again, the Thruway, it took a little bit of lobbying for them absorbing the costs of repairs. Initially that was going to be on the District as well. But, thankfully, they took that off. Still there's a \$330,000 bill. That's a lot.

**Louise Albertson:** A little bit of an aside can't our whoever is our tax collector for property or school or whatever, take every single tax bill from this whole area and type right on there what goes with it so when they do buy from somebody here they'll know. Nobody's paying attention. When I bought the property, I was paying two fire bills and had to kind of push them a little bit to take one off because I'm like 'you guys gotta pay attention.' They didn't care. So for two, three, four years, whatever it was, I'm paying twice. I mean somebody's gotta care.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Well, the tax bill does have your water bill on it. You get that quarterly. By the way I have to point out I know that I have had complaints from people about their water bill. And I can't say because I can't even see your faces, but I've had phone calls about the \$3.33 O&M fees that's for maintenance. \$3.33 a month. I've had a lot of complaints about that going back over the years -- not that if we raised it by twice it was ever gonna cover this kind of a cost -- but I recognize that there's some people just don't have the money and they are worried about it. By the way it comes out to be \$10 a quarter and that's on your bill, the O&M charges. Even if we had more time and had charged a higher level going back, I don't think it ever would have covered \$330,000. I'm trying to remember what's in our Reserve right now. I think it's only \$2,700.

**Audience Member:** It's a start.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Not much, not even 1 percent unfortunately. Well, we've had the Public Hearing and we've given everyone an opportunity, the purpose of that is so you can come forward and give us your points, express your comments to us. Mary Beth is there anything else you'd like to say to close out this Public Hearing?

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Just a couple of quick things. One thing to know so this would be a bond. So bonds carry interest rates. This bond at \$330,000, the good news is you have local banks that are very good partners to your communities. Greene County, National Bank of Coxsackie, these local banks do this type of borrowing routinely. That's a good thing. If you had to go to New York City, if you had to go somewhere else, your interest rates would be a lot higher. Interest has a huge impact on what you guys pay back. So if you think about it that way, it's just like if you're doing a mortgage and you can get a mortgage at 2.5 percent or a mortgage at 2.3 percent, that .2 over 30 years makes a huge difference in terms of what you pay back. So right now, interest rates are very, very low. That's a really good thing. It's still going to have an impact on this cost. The bonded debt, kind of like a mortgage, so there's a chunk of what's being paid back that's principal and there's a chunk that's being paid back as interest. To the Supervisor's point about any future grants, how that would work is grants are monies that are given by an entity -- state, federal government, someone like that. That's dollars you don't have to pay back. So the grant value would be taken off the principal of the loan which reduces, as Jeff said, not the term, it's the same number of years, but reduces the principal so it reduces the amount of interest you're paying. It won't change the interest rate, but it reduces the overall amount of interest. So that's a good thing. That's the best way to directly reduce what everyone's paying in terms of the costs. We have been looking extensively at grants for this. The State does offer grants for water systems. So we are looking at that. Like I said they did not run, they did not operate in 2020. The Governor's 2021-22 budget that he just put out last I believe it was Wednesday, includes funding for projects like this at the same amount of money that was available in 2019. So we're all familiar with the cost of money over time and your ability to pay for things with a dollar. So that's really a negative. That actually means there's really in fact less money available and we won't know what ends up in the real budget when they

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actually get the job done on or around April 1. Until about that time, if folks are budget watchers you know the process is the Governor puts out his budget in his aspirational we'll call it. The two Houses of our Legislature will each put out budgets in early March saying what they want to spend money on, what their priorities are. Then you have two guys and a lady who get together in a room and hash it out and around April 1 the State adopts a budget. That will tell us a lot about what our ability is to look for funding for this project. It's good that the Supervisor has been in touch with our elected officials. They can make a big difference in our ability to access grant funding. Unfortunately, a number of years ago legislation was passed to take direct payments from legislators to communities out because it was considered to be abused by a lot of people. So that's not really an alternative for us anymore. But there are some opportunities and certainly it's gonna be a number one priority to be continuing to seek a way to reduce the cost and that will go on as long as possible for sure. So that's kind of the big picture in terms of that. It's probably not as good as we'd like it to be, but I gotta tell you the truth. I have to tell you what I know and I don't tell you what I don't know, but that's what we know and we'll certainly continue to look for... and we're not giving up on continuing to press the Thruway. But just so everyone knows, this did go all the way through the Thruway chain up to the top and the response that I got was very similar to the response the Supervisor got and they did absorb some of the cost of the project and we were pleased that they did that. We were sort of happy they did something to support you.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I do think it wouldn't be unwise because hearing from me is one thing, but I think that our elected officials -- our State elected officials that represent our area -- do listen to their constituents and I would recommend contacting them in every way, shape, or form. Hearing from one person such as me, yeah great, hearing from 30 people is a much better process. And their names in case you don't know who they are -- our Assemblyman's name is Christopher Tague, our State Senator is Michelle Hinchey, and she's brand new in there. So this is new stuff for her and she would probably want to have some outreach with as many of you as possible. At least I would hope she would.

**Louise Albertson:** And we could give her your number?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Yeah, I think you need to give her your name. That's the point of that.

**Vincent Cuzdey:** So what's the process of deciding what interest rate and how many years we're paying for this?

**Supervisor Ruso:** A couple things. We've reached out to the two banks that are official repositories for the Town of New Baltimore and they are the National Bank of Coxsackie and they are The Bank of Greene County. The Bank of Greene County has submitted an offer with interest rates and so forth and have a schedule. The National Bank of Coxsackie has chosen not to submit so we have one. But our outreach was to both because we wanted a little competition and so forth. The Bank of Greene County did give us a fair rate so I don't want to dismiss them in any way, shape or form. They were actually very good to us.

**Vincent Cuzdey:** 1.69 is pretty decent.

**Supervisor Ruso:** It's pretty decent and if we could have gotten anything different, I would like to have heard from National Bank of Coxsackie.

**Vincent Cuzdey:** My thought is the shorter years and lower interest rate is much better. It would be about \$50,000 in interest as opposed to the 30 years at 3.49 which is over \$200,000 in interest alone.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Interest has a huge impact.

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**Vincent Cuzdey:** And if some of us want to pay it up front, that would lower the principal for the rest of them, too, so if you could make that happen.

**Supervisor Ruso:** The interest rather. It would lower the interest.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Well, it reduces the principal which in turn...

**Vincent Cuzdey:** It would be much lower, the principal, and that will benefit everybody.

**Supervisor Ruso:** One thing I haven't heard from anyone here because we're gonna have to pay Cossackie. There's no way to wiggle out of this. The length of the bond, I've not really heard much conversation about here. I suppose people when you buy a car people like to get six years, some people wanted it three years because they want to get the payments over with. But I've not heard much from yourselves regarding the length of this except what you said. Anyone want to express a point?

**Louise Albertson:** One idea would be (unable to understand) and when you remember that probably half of the residents will never see the better side of 80 again.

**Vince Cuzdey:** The difference in payment is very small.

**Louise Albertson:** (Unable to understand) small if you don't have it.

**Rob Pilatich:** What is the total per resident?

**Councilmember Downes:** Are we talking about for the 15 year?

**Ellie Alfeld:** Can you give him all three?

**Councilmember Downes:** So the annual payment for 15 years is \$25,090 so if you divide that by 32, for each individual it's \$784 a year.

**Audience Member:** You need to add the interest to that.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** No, the annual payment embeds the interest.

**Councilmember Downes:** If we're just looking years, I'm not talking about the total, I'm talking about a year. We have \$25,090.59. I divided that by 32. Each individual plot or I can't say resident because some of you have two plots. It would be \$784 a year or \$65 a month.

**Audience Member:** Is that going to be added to your water bill?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Yes.

**Councilmember Downes:** Okay, so if we go out to 30, same thing it's \$17,920 a year is our annual payment, 32 plots, that \$560 a year. If I divide that by 12, it's \$47.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Please note that the interest rate for the 15 is 1.69%. The interest rate for the 30 is 3.49%. So it's more than double.

**Audience Member:** Who makes the decision on which route to go?

**Supervisor Ruso:** We do. The Town Board.

**Audience Member:** But you're not paying for it, we are.

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**Ellie Alfeld:** So that's why you gotta speak up.

**Supervisor Ruso:** That's why we're here, yeah.

**Deputy Supervisor Dellisanti:** So how many years do you want?

**Audience Member:** 15.

**Audience Member:** I'm looking for 15.

**Audience Member:** 15.

**Supervisor Ruso:** We have the ultimate responsibility, unfortunately. Some of these circumstances perhaps tonight, I'd like to trade places with you and you come on up here, but, unfortunately I'm sitting up here. But, hearing what you want is important for me because I would have thought that perhaps let's try to lighten it a little bit, \$65 a month to \$47.

**Councilmember Downes:** We're looking at \$18 more a month if we go the 15 years, but you're just gonna save so much on the interest.

**Audience Member:** That's before we contact our Congressman.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Whomever, yeah.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** This is the worst case scenario.

**Supervisor Ruso:** This is what we have before us is the worst case scenario. If there's monies to be had, I don't have any idea how much, that will just reduce that by whatever that percentage might be -- if they give us 10%, they give us 50%.

**Sarah Pilatich:** So why would I pay for two lots? My one lot's not used at all. There's nothing on that lot, a water spout, but...

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Because so in New York State, and again this Board did not make this decision, I did not make this decision, this is New York State law. So water service, sewer service is provided on what's called a benefit basis. And it's if the real property -- so not a house, not a building -- but the real property is benefitted because it has the ability to connect. So not an actual connection, but the ability to use it is considered benefit, the property's considered improved, so there's a charge.

Unable to understand.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** If you own multiple real property, pieces of real property, and they are considered building lots. So if it's like some little the square that's the size of this desk, right, no one could build on that. It's not benefitted, but if you own pieces of real property and they're building lots, and they have access to the system, whether they're connected or not, they are considered benefit under New York State Law. Again I didn't make this decision, they didn't make this decision, this is State Law, it's Article 12 of the Town Law if anyone wants to spend some time with it and it says that they are benefitted and that's why there's a second charge there because the philosophy is that the property has access. You would otherwise have to drill a well.

**Audience Member:** It would be cheaper.

**Mary Beth Bianconi:** Maybe so, but that's again these laws, most of these laws like this law is this is right after World War II. It was adopted in the late 40's early 50's when there was a lot of

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construction going on. If you think about it before that time there weren't really suburban communities. People either lived in a village or a city or they lived on a farm out in the middle of nowhere. After World War II we start building a lot of stuff. You build suburbs. They demand services. The situation here is not unlike so many other places where you had a village that provided all the services. The town grew and the services got extended to the town. The Legislature, and I've read a lot of stuff about this because I wanted to understand it, said, well, you know like even here in New Baltimore if you're way up on a hill and you're really, really far away from these services, you shouldn't be responsible to pay for them, you don't benefit from them so they created these Special Improvement Districts – that's what they're called -- and it's a Water District or a Sewer District and said everybody who's inside the district who's benefitted, pays for it. And that's, again, these laws go back to the late 40's or early 50's.

**Supervisor Ruso:** We have multiple districts of different sizes, shapes, and forms.

**Rob Pilatich:** I apologize, I'm new to the area and actually my residence is in Catskill, but the vacant lot that's next to my daughter's property which I don't believe has an address yet because it's a vacant lot. How do I find out if that's a buildable piece of property?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Call and ask for Marjorie. She can tell you. Marjorie is our Building and Planning Clerk.

**Rob Pilatich:** Do you have a Planning Board in New Baltimore?

**Supervisor Ruso:** Of course, but she takes care of the technical details as it comes to building lots or properties.

**Rob Pilatich:** I figured after the COVID was over, hopefully, that didn't happen yet anyway.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Marjorie, she can take a call, she would be glad to.

**Louise Albertson:** I happened to have five acres of land. I bought it as part of the whole unit, it's never been separated out of there. That's still one unit right?

**Supervisor Ruso:** I expect so, yeah. I'd have to look at your...

**Louise Albertson:** I never cut it up, I was told 'well you could if you have three acres.'

**Supervisor Ruso:** If you have multiple lots, I think this is how it would work, you would get a tax bill for each lot.

**Louise Albertson:** Yeah, I don't get that, I get one.

**Councilmember VanEtten:** It would have to have been subdivided.

**Supervisor Ruso:** You get one. If they were subdivided, that would be two lots.

Many speaking at once.

**Supervisor Ruso:** Alright, thank you everybody.

**Deputy Supervisor Dellisanti:** I hear a lot of people talking about 15 years and I would just like to see a raise of hands on how long would you like to go out on this particular bond?

**Councilmember VanEtten and Supervisor Ruso:** How many people want 15?

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**Supervisor Ruso:** How many people want 20?

**Councilperson Downes:** That should be only if you own the property per house. So for 15 years, eight out of ten for fifteen, that's a majority.

**Councilmember VanEtten:** Most of them want fifteen.

**Supervisor Ruso:** I think that we gain your sentiment as best as could be done.

Many speaking at once.

**Supervisor Ruso:** There's not been any debt service on the Water District in a number of years and if you're not a user, you're not getting billed for water that you're not using. We have a bad decision to have to make, worse time it could have happened with the failure with this line, and we've got lots more conversation to have with elected officials, with engineering people, and yourselves certainly and we will keep you apprised of things as they develop if we have any monies come in or what have you, but please do contact your elected officials.

On a Motion by Councilmember Downes and seconded by Councilmember VanEtten, the Public Hearing was closed at 7:23 PM.

AYES: Ruso, Boehlke, Downes, Irving, VanEtten

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

**Motion Carried**

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara M. Finke RMC  
Town Clerk