

**Report on Functional Program Descriptions
Task 1 of Shared Municipal Services Study**

For The



Town and Village of Liberty, New York



Submitted By

THE HUDSON GROUP, LLC

Consultants

In Association With

Barton
& **L**oguidice, P.C.

Engineers • Environmental Scientists • Planners • Landscape Architects

And



March 28, 2007

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REC-11
TOWN OF LIBERTY
SUPERVISOR

March 28, 2008

Mr. John Schmidt
Supervisor
Town of Liberty, New York
120 North Main Street
Liberty, New York 12724

Dear Supervisor Schmidt:

I am pleased to submit our first deliverable report required by Task # 1 of our contract with the Town to conduct a study of opportunities to share or merge governmental services between the Town and Village of Liberty that could lead ultimately to reduction of the property tax burden confronting the citizens of your two communities.

Task # 1 calls for a comprehensive report presented in the organizational format of both the Town and the Village governments, itemizing and detailing all general and special program services, with budgeted costs and their sources of financing support. The information included in this report establishes the principal factual foundation for our later work under our agreement to examine and present opportunities for sharing or merging services between the two governments, and alternatively to dissolve the Village and relinquish all services to the Town government.

This report could not have been prepared without the willing help of many Town and Village elected officials, staff persons and employees. They gave freely of their time to assist us in assembling and compiling the information that constitutes the substance of our report. We take full responsibility for errors or misstatements that may be discovered during the review of the report. We will remedy those deficiencies promptly as they are brought to our attention.

I am making provision to have this report submitted to the Joint Study Committee. We will discuss with and receive comments and recommendation from that Committee at our meeting with them, now scheduled for April 3. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and the leadership of the Village government to address the difficult financing and property tax issues that confront local government. We look forward to our continuing joint efforts together.

Sincerely,



Dennis Rapp
Principal

Addendum No. 1 to:

Shared Municipal Services Study

Report on Functional Program Descriptions

For The

Town and Village of Liberty, New York

Submitted By

The Hudson Group, LLC

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and

Pattern for Progress

April 3, 2007

NEW PAGES TO INSERT

The following 2 pages were inadvertently left out of the report. They should be inserted in the report following page 14 and represent the attachment referred to in the next-to-last paragraph on page 14 describing the Liberty Community Development Corporation. New page 14-A is a tabular listing of *Liberty CDC/208 projects and activities for the TOWN of Liberty*. New page 14-B is a tabular listing of *Liberty CDC/208 projects and activities for the VILLAGE of Liberty*.

ERRATA

1. **Page 5:** At the bottom of the page **Program Features of Note**, the sentence there-under should read: *“The budgeted cost of Village Sanitation Service, \$ 625,748, is revenue generated by a user fee on the property taxes assessed to all Village residents. It is a Sanitation District.”*
2. **Page 11:** The title of the program function **Town Treasurer /Finance** near the bottom of page 11 should be changed to read **Town Director of Finance**.
3. **Page 26:** The last paragraph begins: *“Mr. Mark Van Etten is the Village’s full-time Code Enforcement Officer...”* It should read: *“Mr. Mark Van Etten is the Town’s full-time Code Enforcement Officer...”*
4. **Page 30:** The last paragraph should be modified to read: *“Al Picard is Chief Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator. Thomas Kehrley is Working Supervisor of this program, and reports to Picard. In addition, the Department employs one full time Account clerk, Joan Reddington, and four laborers.”*

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The Hudson Group and its associates, Barton and Loguidice and Pattern for Progress present this report to the Joint Study Committee representing the Town and Village of Liberty in fulfillment of *Task 1 Functional Program Descriptions*, the first stage of our study of Shared Municipal Services for the Town and Village of Liberty.

Task # 1 calls for a comprehensive report presented in the organizational format of both the Town and the Village governments, itemizing and detailing all general and special program services, with budgeted costs and their sources of financing support. The information included in this report establishes the principal factual foundation for our later work under our agreement to examine and present opportunities for sharing or merging services between the two governments, and alternatively to dissolve the Village and relinquish all services to the Town government

Under the terms of the contract between the Town of Liberty and The Hudson Group, the consultant will meet and work with a Joint Study Committee appointed by the Town and Village throughout the study. The Joint Study Committee has been appointed to oversee this consulting study, to provide assistance in obtaining information and agreement on all phases of the study and analysis, to receive interim reports and to provide guidance during the course of the study. The consultant will report to the Joint Study Committee, which after review and public meetings will report its recommendations to the Town and Village Boards.

Following an initial meeting with the Joint Study Committee on January 24, 2008, the consultant undertook the completion of **Task 1: Functional Program Descriptions** which requires developing a comprehensive, detailed description of the governmental program functions and services administered by the Town and Village. This task entails collecting, compiling, and organizing information from the latest annual reports and budgets of the Town and Village about all of the services provided and financed by the Town and Village, by functional areas. Information to be developed includes the most recent budgeted annual costs of each program function and service, and the source of revenues i.e. property taxes, user fees and charges, Federal, State or County assistance payments or loans, locally issued debt, etc., which are used to finance those costs. In addition, employment and related costs will be itemized by program function and organizational placement, supported by a written description of the type and quality of duties and services provided. An operational, facilities and engineering analysis will be presented for each functional area, including water and sewer services, solid waste management, transportation and major public works functions.

This report is based on a detailed review of the Town's 2006 and 2007 budgets and the Village's 2007 budget, annual reports and related information provided as well as interviews with selected local officials and key staff.

This report will be the subject of discussion at the second meeting of Joint Study Committee scheduled for April 3, 2008, and the consultant is particularly interested in receiving feedback on the following:

- The accuracy and completeness of the information detailed in the report
- Identification of information needed but not yet provided
- How to obtain any missing information
- Guidance on the next steps in the study: **Analysis of Data and Information and Preparation of Recommendations**

HIGHLIGHTS OF TOWN AND VILLAGE 2008 BUDGETS

TOWN OF LIBERTY

Fiscal year January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008

Budget

The total budget adopted is \$7,887,538, of which \$2,506,202 is for the General fund Town-wide, and \$239,268 for the Town outside the Village, or 35 % of the total amount budgeted.

Approximately 29 % of the budget, or \$2,263,241, is for the Highway fund Town-wide, the Town outside the Village, and the Highway CHIPS fund combined.

About 14 % or approximately \$1,147,628 is budgeted for Water District operations and 8% or \$614,427 for Sewer District operations.

Taken together, these four classes of approved expenditures constitute 86% of the Town's current year operating budget.

Inter-fund transfers account for 11% of the total budgeted and 3% for payment of Sewer District debt.

Revenues

Of the revenues required to finance the budget, 62 % or approximately \$ 4,890,274 will be generated by property taxes; 11 % or \$ 867,629 by water and sewer rents; 14 % by fees and interest; 2 % by State and Federal aid; and 11 % by inter-fund transfers and unexpended balances carried forward from the adopted 2007 budget.

Program Features of Note

Solid waste management services to residents and municipalities outside the Village are provided by seven private haulers licensed by the Town for this purpose. Rates are

negotiated between private haulers and customers served. There is no budgeted cost to the Town for these services.

Shared or Merged Services

Of those functional program services provided its residents by the Town, two are provided also to residents of the Village and are financed exclusively by the Town: Property Assessment and Parks and Recreation. Data processing management and computer operations services are provided to the Village by the Town on a partial reimbursable basis. In addition, the Town shares Community Development Services jointly with the Village, as well as Code Enforcement and pay-roll operations. Public safety services are provided to the Town outside the Village by the County Sheriff's department and the State Police on a non-reimbursable basis.

VILLAGE OF LIBERTY

Fiscal year June 1, 2007 to May 31, 2008

Budget

The total budget adopted is \$6,277,731, of which \$ 3,576,462 is for the General Fund; \$1,706, 210 is Water and Sewer Fund; \$ 625,748 is for the Sanitation Fund; and \$369,311 for Debt Service.

Of the General Fund budget, approximately 53%, (\$1,845,911) is allocated to Police / Public Safety services; 28% (\$932,525) for Highway operations; and 17%, (\$ 584,080) for supporting services. These constitute 98% of the General Fund budget.

Revenues- General Fund

Revenues committed to finance the General Fund budget include: Property taxes \$2,586,916 (78%); Fines and forfeitures \$201,000 (7%); State aid \$143,661 (4%); other taxes \$128,454 (3%); non-tax revenues \$653,753 (6 %), and appropriated fund carried forward balance \$150,000.

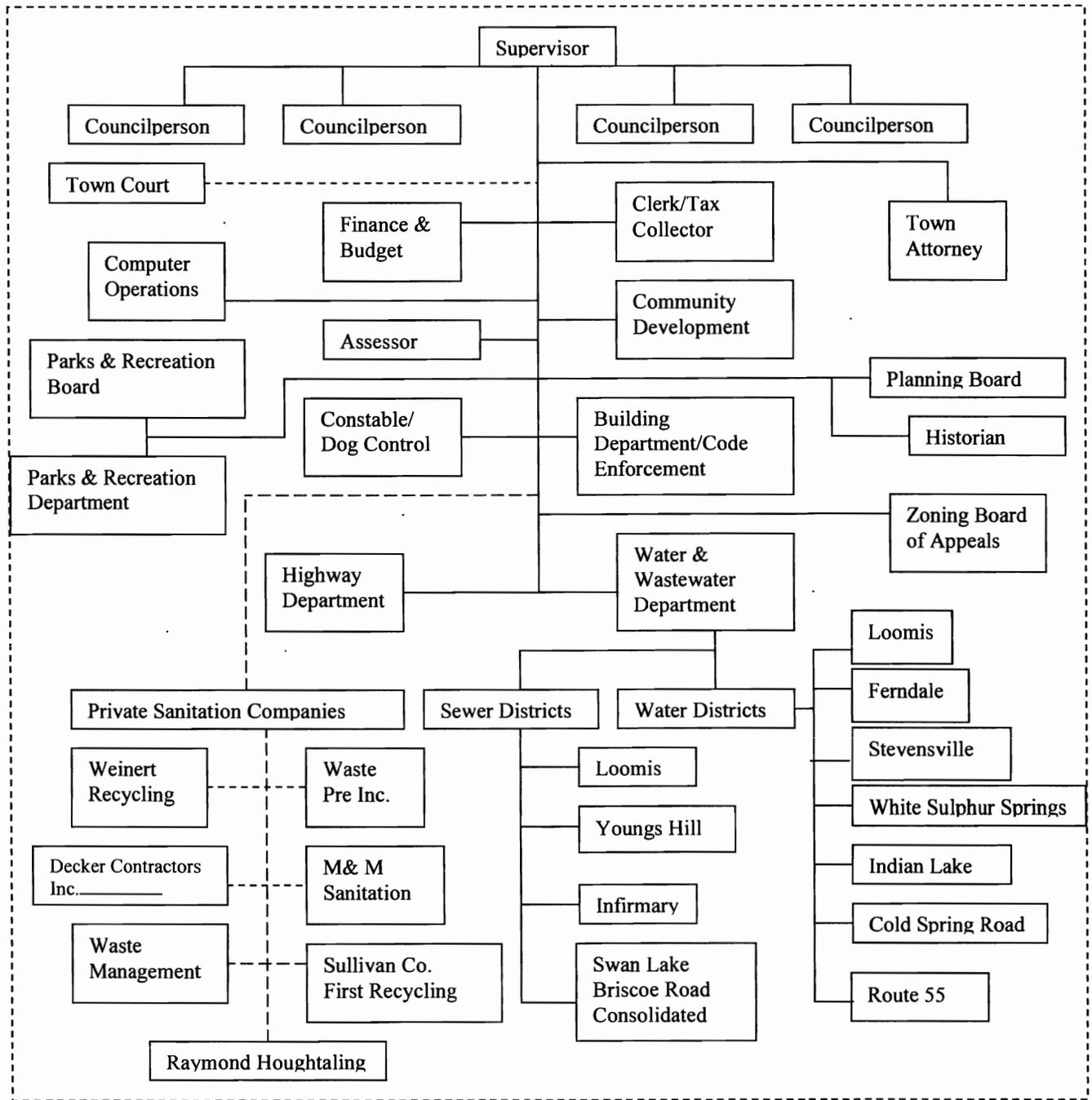
Program Features of Note

The budgeted cost of Village Sanitation Service, \$ 625,748, is revenue generated by property taxes assessed to all Village residents.

**DESCRIPTION OF GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAM FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES ADMINISTERED BY THE TOWN AND VILLAGE
FISCAL YEAR 2008**

TOWN OF LIBERTY

Organizational Chart: An organizational chart for the program functions and services administered by the Town of Liberty is shown below:



Organization of Town Government, Town of Liberty, New York

Program Function: Town Supervisor and Councilpersons

The elected Liberty Town Board, composed of the Supervisor and four Councilpersons exercises both legislative and executive functions and is responsible for policy making and managing Town government. As described in the Local Government Handbook published by the New York State Department of State, the Town Board appoints all non-elected officers and employees of the Town, and acts on the budget recommended by the Town Supervisor, as well as approving budget modifications or transfers.

The Supervisor is the presiding officer of the Town Board and also exercises certain important administrative functions under State law: acting as Treasurer and custodian of monies belonging to the Town; disbursing funds; keeping records of all funds; making reports; paying salaries and performing other duties as directed by the Town Board.

Budget Allocation 2008

The 2008 personal services budget for the Supervisor's function is \$67,870, consisting of \$35,000 Supervisor's compensation, \$32,870 Supervisor's executive secretary compensation, and office costs of \$5,000, for a total of \$72,870. The four Town Councilpersons are budgeted compensation at \$9,500 each, with supporting costs of \$325.00, for a net \$38,325, and therefore a combined total budgeted cost of \$111,195 for Town governance costs.

* * * *

Program Function: Town Clerk / Tax Collector

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amounts budgeted for these functions are \$72,100 for the Clerk's duties and responsibilities, and \$15,100 for the Tax collection function. The combined total of \$87,200 is 3% of the General fund budget. Of the total budgeted, \$4,870 is for personal services to finance the salaries of the Town Clerk, one full time Deputy, and one part time clerk employed principally to assist with the tax collection process. The balance is for office supplies and equipment, and for miscellaneous contractual services. There are no capital or debt service costs budgeted to this function.

Program Functions and Management

The Town Clerk is the chief administrative officer of the Town government. The position reports and is accountable to the Supervisor and Town Board. All residents of the Town outside the Village are the constituents of this office. The Clerk is responsible for management of all duties and functions of the Town Clerk and Tax collector.

The Town Clerk is an elected position, currently salaried at \$35,000. The incumbent is Ms. Laurie Dutcher. She supervises one full time deputy and one part time clerk. Among other duties, the Clerk prepares meeting packets for and attends all Town Board

meetings; prepares minutes of those meetings; and follows-up on actions required by decisions of the Board. The Clerk is the Town notary; administers oaths of office to all Town employees; is the Town archivist responsible for management of all Town records; and is the Town's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) administrator.

The Town Clerk's office receives, records and banks all monies due the Town for property tax payments, fees and penalties, interest, water and sewer bills, building department fees, health insurance premiums, and fees paid for licenses it issues. The office also audits all monthly vouchers issued by the Town. The office also receives and distributes all mail addressed to the Town and its several departments.

The office is responsible for issuing marriage licenses; dog licenses; hunting and fishing licenses; birth and death certificates; and handicap parking permits. The Town Clerk's office is the principal point of contact and public intake for most persons who have business or inquiries of any kind to conduct with the Town. Dealing with the public constitutes an important year-round component of the office's workload.

Tax Collection

The Town Clerk is the designated tax collector for the Town. This entails issuing property tax bills to all owners of taxable property, and collecting the taxes due. Mailing of tax bills is done by a contractor for the Town. Set-up to closure time of preparation and mailings takes about five to six weeks.

The Town has no tax-collecting working relationship with the school district.

Collection occurs over a period of about three months. About 78% of the tax roll is collected by February each year. The Town does all mailing and collecting; banks are not involved. The Town uses a lock box. Collection is fully computerized. Delinquent taxes are a problem. The Town does not engage private vendors to assist in collecting delinquent payments, although the Village does.

The Town's working relationship with Sullivan County's tax collecting program is good. Reimbursement to the Town by the County for delinquent taxes is prompt and complete. The Town tax collector is aware of the study of tax collecting being undertaken by the County, but has reached no final conclusion about the probable outcome. Direct assumption of the collection function by the County would eliminate personal contact between the taxpayer and the local taxing authority, a result which has its disadvantages.

* * * *

Program Function: Town Court

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted for this function is \$157,870.00, or approximately 6% of the general fund total of \$2,506,202. Of the amount budgeted, \$144,660.00 is for personal

services; \$2,500.00 for office supplies and \$10,170.00 contractual. There is no breakdown for employee benefits by position. As discussed below, Justice Altbach has indicated that there are three full time clerks; the budget only includes the amalgamated amount.

Program Functions and Management

Jeffrey Altbach is the Justice for the Town of Liberty. He has served in this elected position for a period of 21 years and his term expires 12/31/09. Mr. Altbach is the Co-Department head of the Town justice court. He is responsible for the administration of the general municipal and Town of Liberty codes. As Town Justice, Mr. Altbach is responsible for multiple aspects of state law including, vehicle and traffic, landlord/tenant, and Agriculture and Markets. There are two Town Justices in Liberty. Along with Brian Rourke (the other Justice) they supervise three full time clerks: Ann Friedman who has been in her position for 16 years, Denise Curry, who has 17 years and Connie VanKuren who has 6 months. At one time there were 3 ½ positions.

His salary is \$24,300 annually and he receives state medical and pension benefits. The position is considered “full time” and therefore provided he can meet “Tier 3” retirement thresholds he will receive both pension and medical benefits upon retirement. (he currently does not make any contribution to medical but believes he does make some contributions to pension). The Town had indicated that when Judge Rourke came on he had to make a contribution to medical.

Workload

Justice Altbach provides some summaries to the Town. Reports to the New York State Comptroller are provided on criminal and vehicle and traffic dispositions as well as a monthly report which includes data on cases/revenue.

The Town Court can be described as the “Court for the People”. Each judge is present one day per week plus additional appearances as needed, for example nighttime arraignments. Clerks are present all week for intake. Small claims are also brought to Town Court.

There are no formal outcome measures but several output measures such as revenue, availability of judges but not outcomes, e.g. “Crime is down due to performance of judge”.

Following is a very significant chart that shows the impact of a recent decision by the Superintendent of the State Police, that State Troopers will no longer be available for “plea bargaining” tickets they issue. The impact has been a dramatic loss of revenue for the Town. (see 2005 v 2007). With the elimination of plea bargaining there are more trials. Mr. Altbach also expressed his opinion that he has a sense that crime is on the rise.

Town Share of Justice Court Fees					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
January	\$14,580.00	\$15,428.00	\$15,830.00	\$7,677.00	\$10,037.50
February	\$14,688.50	\$22,602.00	\$17,805.00	\$8,153.00	
March	\$14,856.00	\$21,542.50	\$16,395.00	\$8,300.50	
April	\$17,523.50	\$18,544.50	\$15,110.00	\$6,745.00	
May	\$18,474.50	\$18,911.00	\$16,692.00	\$8,889.00	
June	\$18,951.00	\$20,678.00	\$18,562.50	\$6,979.00	
July	\$14,027.50	\$18,107.50	\$16,087.50	\$5,814.50	
August	\$20,353.00	\$20,268.00	\$18,038.50	\$7,295.50	
September	\$17,715.50	\$19,281.50	\$10,914.50	\$6,613.00	

Office Space and Equipment

Justice Altbach states that the large courtroom in the basement of Town Hall is adequate. The Judges have an office and some conference space and there is a work area for the clerks. There is also adequate space for the storage of records. There are Xerox machines accessible on each level of Town Hall and the equipment functions adequately.

Current Shared Services

There are no formal agreements for shared services, but if the sitting Judge is unavailable a Town Justice from the adjacent Town can be called in to do arraignments. The Town serves the public of the Town and Village combined and under some circumstances a violation in the Village might be heard in front of the Town Justice.

Near Term Issues

Justice Altbach believes that having the District Attorney present during the vehicle and traffic law cases is wasteful. He believes that as long as there is a Village they must have a court because similar to the Town, they could not afford to give up the revenue.

* * * *

Program Function: Town Attorney

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted for this function is \$67,000, or approximately 2.6% of the general fund total of \$ 2,506,202.00. Of the amount budgeted, \$ 27,000.00 is for personal services and \$40,000 contractual. The budget provides no breakdown for equipment (possibly because Mr. Klein works out of his personal office). There is no breakdown for employee benefits by position.

Program Functions and Management

Kenneth Klein has been in the position of Town Attorney for fourteen years. He is paid an annual salary of \$29,000 which he must voucher for with monthly invoices. Mr. Klein is exclusively the legal counsel for the Town Board and Town Officers. He reports to the Town Supervisor but it is the Town Board that actually hires him. Among the areas of law that he is responsible for are: General Municipal, Town, Police Officers, Local Finance and Local Municipal Laws. In general, there are no reports to be filed except under section 239 of the County Law.

Mr. Klein attends all Town Board meetings. There are two meetings per month: the first is generally with Department heads while the second is for action items before the Board. There has not been much litigation and he could not recall losing any either.

Mr. Klein's responsibilities are to the Town's officials and its employees. While he occasionally has contact with the public it is generally misplaced as he is not their attorney.

Workload

Mr. Klein believes that the workload has increased due to development pressure upon the Town. He is generally satisfied with the level of services provided. He believes his last raise was two to three years ago and that its time for consideration towards an adjustment, given the increased workload.

He also indicated that there had been no mandates that have impacted on the services he provides. Occasionally, there are new regulations that require some additional training, e.g. violence in the workplace.

Office Space and Equipment

There is no issue with workspace as Mr. Klein works out of his personal law office. There are no issues with regard to his equipment or personnel needs.

* * * *

Program function: Town Treasurer / Finance

Budget Allocation 2008

Amounts budgeted for this multiple function is \$78,220, including \$ 60,220 for the Treasurer / Finance function; \$16,500 for auditing, and \$1,500 to support the Budgeting function. This is 2.8 % of the Town General Fund 2008 budget.

Program Functions and Management

This position administers two different program functions, which combined constitute financial management and budgeting for the Town. While under State law, the Town Supervisor is the chief financial officer and fiduciary of the Town, the treasurer performs all duties and responsibilities associated with that role, short of signing checks.

The incumbent is Mr. Earl Bertsch, currently salaried at \$25,500 annually based upon part time service in preparation for impending retirement in the near future. He has served more than twenty years in the position He supervises one employee who is proficient and well trained, and is capable of succeeding him after he retires.

The Treasurer's responsibilities include management and oversight of all accounts receivable from property tax revenues, water and sewer fees, grants and other payments received from Federal and State sources, and funds received from other sources. He authorizes disbursements from those accounts for all purposes. This includes payroll and other funds required to finance ongoing Town operating programs, and payment of debt service. The incumbent prepares and issues all financial reports required by State and Federal law, including the annual report to the Office of the State Comptroller.

The treasurer arranges with appropriate lending sources for the issuance of debt borrowings by the Town for various purposes as authorized by the Town Board. The treasurer also arranges for and oversees the annual auditing of all Town accounts, which is conducted by a CPA firm under contract to the Town.

The incumbent also prepares the Town budget each year for presentation to the Town Board for their approval. Budgeting entails providing for the funding needs of all Town operating programs and services, and payment of debt service and other contractual services engaged by the Town.

The budgeting function also includes estimating expected revenues generated by property taxes, user charges, and other revenue sources required to finance the budget, along with either cost reductions or proposed revenue increases in the form of tax or user charge increases to finance shortfalls.

Monitoring ongoing disbursements to Town operating programs and services to insure that they conform to authorized budgeted expenditures is a continuing responsibility of this office.

* * * *

Program function: Computer Operations

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted to this function is \$ 82,230, or 3 % of the Town's General fund budget. Of the total budgeted, \$55,730 is for personal services, \$3,000 for equipment, \$

2,500 for software upgrade, and \$ 11,000 for equipment upgrade, for a total of \$ 72,230 to support Town operations. In addition, \$ 10,000 is budgeted to support operational services provided to the Village for these kinds of activities.

Program Functions and Management

This is a service provided to both the Town and Village governments to support and facilitate the management of their data processing and information technology systems. Clientele served are Town and the Village officials, staff and employees. There is minimal direct contact with the public. The program is administered solely by one information technology professional person, who reports directly to the Town Supervisor. There is no subordinate staff.

The incumbent is Mr. Timothy Kelly, salaried at \$52,900. He has been with the Town for thirty-four years, of which twenty-two years have been in information technology management.

Computer Operations functions include responsibility for:

1. Proper installation, operation and maintenance support (both hardware and software) for two servers, approximately 35 PC's, printers, scanners and fax machines.
2. All purchasing and recommendations for technology hardware and software.
3. Help support to end users for first line hardware and software.
4. Administrative network support and connectivity.
5. Network security and backup.
6. Development and maintenance of internet and e-mail accounts.
7. Development and support of Town webpage
8. Operations support to Town's Director of Finance: special reporting requirements, data base queries, projections, etc.
9. Miscellaneous trouble-shooting.

Space and Facilities

Office space is adequate in size, but only Town Hall and Village Hall are fiber - connected. Other Town and Village buildings are not fiber-connected, and therefore cannot use computing and telecommunications equipment and services.

Workload Changes

Increased emphasis is being placed on connectivity with other government agencies and the public to facilitate business transactions electronically via the internet.

Program Funding

The Town has provided excellent support in its annual budgets and long-standing capital reserve fund to finance hardware and software and maintenance upgrades. While the Village pays a minimal annual fee to the Town for software maintenance and support, it does not cover connectivity or hardware support for the Town servers and lines, nor does it pay for the use of the Town's central processor on a transaction basis. The Town has been generous to the Village in funding costs associated with information technology services.

Improving Efficiency Of Service

Increased training and education of IT staff and end users would enhance the effectiveness of both technical support and end-user proficiency in managing their respective programs.

* * * *

Program Function: Liberty Community Development

Budget Allocation 2008

There is no specific line dedicated to the CDC in either the Town or Village budget.

Program Functions and Management

(Note: The Liberty Community Development Corporation is an example of consolidation of services between the Town and Village)

The Executive Director of the Liberty Community Development Corporation (CDC), Heinrich Strauch, has been in his position for 2 years and 9 months. As Executive Director, Mr. Strauch is responsible for program management, grant research and interaction with other government agencies, primarily in the area of economic development, but also including beautification, housing and youth initiatives on behalf of both the Town and Village of Liberty. This corporation represents an example of consolidation of functions between the two municipalities. The Town and Village both have appointees on the Board of Directors. The Executive Director reports directly to the President/ Chair of the Liberty CDC. Currently, there are no other employees as the secretarial position was eliminated as part of a cost savings effort as well as a youth coordinator that was once funded through a grant. The CDC provides some advice on zoning, signage and comprehensive plans and it also provides the Town and Village with periodic updates. (See attached)

The Liberty CDC is a 501(c) (3) organization. The CDC operates and executes programs within the Town and Village to further revitalization of communities, marketing to new and existing businesses, youth projects, opportunities to improve housing stock for low and moderate income families and efforts towards community beautification. Efforts

stem from a strategic vision created by the community. All efforts are carried out by the Executive Director and volunteers. There are also contracted grant writers. The total budget is \$190,000 with \$30,000 coming from each the Town and Village. (This figure was previously \$35,000). Other contributions include private foundation and government programmatic grants.

Office Space and Equipment

Office space is adequate to meet the needs of the program and the equipment is in good shape. As there is only one staff member at the moment equipment and space are not issues. The office is located within a storefront on main street in the Village and allows for “walk-ins” and easy access for the public.

* * * *

Program Function: Assessor

Budget Allocation 2008

The 2008 budget for the assessment function is \$87,200, of which \$78,120 is for personal services and \$9,400 is for maintenance and operation. Of the \$9,400, approximately \$2,600 is spent on education and training. These expenditures will be reimbursed to the town by the Office of Real Property Services. The assessor is provided a vehicle by the town for her field work.

Computer work related to preparation of the assessment roll and tax bills are done by an outside vendor. Liberty has used David Brokaw of Customer Links for a number of years. The contractual payment to the vendor is not part of the Assessor’s budget.

The assessor’s office is primarily funded through real property tax revenues. The Office does receive \$2,700 from the State for the administration of the STAR program. The County and Village also apparently receive funds for STAR administration although neither local government has any responsibility for STAR administration. Given the two items of reimbursement the net funding from local sources is approximately \$81,900, plus the cost of the outside computer vendor and fringe benefits.

Program Function and Management

The assessment function sole purpose is to create the basis for levying county, town, village and school real property taxes. While the function has many facets to it, that will subsequently be discussed, the primary task is the production of an annual tentative and final assessment roll. The assessor’s office has no duties and responsibilities outside of the assessment function other than involvement in 911 addresses.

Liberty CDC / 2008 projects & activities for TOWN of Liberty

Project / Activity	Scope of service	Community Investment Value
Liberty Business Park / Shovel-ready site	Project coordination (w/ SC Partnership), research & application for funding to connect infrastructure to site, grant administration for Build-Now NY grant	Tbd (bus. Park) \$100,000 BN-NY App. 2 MM (w&s) Approx. \$1MM
Infrastructure improvements	Research & application for funding re: extension of water line from Rt. 55 to tie into Loomis Water district	
Swan Lake Community Improvements	Grant administration & project management for Multi-Modal / sidewalk construction Grant administration & project coordination (w. Swan Lake Renaissance) for 'Golden Feather' award and community projects (Cat. C. Sullivan Renaissance community)	\$70,000 Multi-Modal \$50,000 Gold. Feather \$10,000 Cat. C.
Parksville Community Improvements	Research & application for funding to realize hamlet's improvement projects; Liaison with DoI to coordinate Dot activities with community objectives	tbd
Village beautification	Project management for: Landscaping of 2 nd Roundabout Installation of banners along Main Street Installation of lighting for walkways to parking lots Phase I of landscaping & paving for parking lots behind North Main Street	\$15,000 \$2,000 \$10,000 \$55,000 Phase I
Technical & financial assistance for local businesses	On-going assistance for businesses: business plans, facilitation of funding opportunities; Grant research and grant-writing as applicable	n/a
Liberty Bikertrail	Research and application for funds to rehabilitate trail, administrative assistance for Liberty Bikertrail group	tbd
Comprehensive Plan implementation	On-going participation in Comp Plan Committee Resource for Shared Municipal Services Committee	n/a n/a
Development of Housing Alternatives	On-going liaison with 'Liberty Commons' project Research & application for Housing Rehabilitation funds in Fall 2008 funding round	\$ 12 MM tbd
SkatePark	Project management (construction & equipment) for realization of Skate Park in Walnut Mountain park by Summer 2008, including administration of \$40,000 grant from Sen. Bonacic.	\$40,000 grant \$80,000 equipment

Liberty CDC / 2008 projects & activities for VILLAGE of Liberty

Project / Activity	Scope of service	Community Investment Value
Liberty Ag/Industrial Park	Complete project management, in collaboration with County & IDA	App. \$ 1 MM
North Main Street sidewalks	Project management w/ Engineers, Grant administration for Dept. of State & Multi-Modal grants	\$170,000 Phase I \$300,000 Phase II
Downtown Parking Lots & Walkways	Project management & project execution: installation of lights, paving, landscaping, research & application for additional funding	\$65,000 Phase I Tbd Phase II
Main Street Beautification	Installation of banners on 29 utility poles along South & North Main Street, Chestnut Street	\$2,000
Mill Street Gateway Beautification	Landscaping of Traffic Circle 2: installation of 'welcome' sign, flagposts & flags, illumination, planting	\$15,000
Technical & financial assistance for Village businesses	Grant administration for Micro-Enterprise program, including reporting; all contacts with grant/loan recipients. Application for new ME program	n/a
Griebel/Revonah Park	On-going assistance for businesses: business plans, facilitation of funding	\$ 200,000 (new ME) \$ 5,000 (TA)
Liberty Biketrail	Renewed & expanded grant application to NYS Parks & Rec. for rehabilitation of park, including dam	\$ 350,000 (Estimate)
Infrastructure Improvements	Research and application for funds to rehabilitate trail, administrative assistance for Liberty Biketrail group	tbd
Comprehensive Plan implementation	Project facilitation & management for PV (Solar) system for Water Treatment facility;	Tbd
Development of Housing Alternatives	Research & application for funds for local transportation system (Trolley); Research & application for funds for water & sewer system expansion (Ferndale)	\$50,000 (Estimate) \$ 2.2 MM
SkatePark	On-going participation in Comp Plan Committee Resource for Shared Municipal Services Committee	n/a n/a
	On-going liaison with 'Liberty Commons' project	\$ 12 MM
	Research & application for Housing Rehabilitation funds in Fall 2008 funding round	tbd
	Project management (construction & equipment) for realization of SkatePark in Walnut Mountain park by Summer 2008	\$120,000

Staffing

Kathy Sprague is the appointed assessor. Appointments are for six year terms. She has held the position since 1995. Prior to 1995 she worked in the Liberty assessor's office as a clerk and data collector from 1989 to 1995. In addition to the assessor, there is one full time clerk responsible for many of the office functions. At the current time there is a part time data collector (about two days a week) updating assessment records. This person began in December and is expected to finish shortly.

The assessor's main reporting line is to the town supervisor. Much of the reporting is done on as need basis. The assessor keeps the town supervisor informed on issues she thinks he needs to know about. No formal town reports are required, with most reporting done verbally. The only formal reporting mechanism is a monthly meeting of all department heads. This monthly meeting is held with the town supervisor and all town board members. This is the assessor's primary contact with the town board members unless they have a specific question or request.

Legal Framework

The assessment function is almost entirely driven by State law. There is no Federal involvement of any kind. This function, unlike many others, is very calendar driven. Throughout the year there are key dates that must be met and adhered to by the assessor. No slippage in time is allowed even if it means a reduction in quality of service or product. Because of the necessity of strict adherence to time deadlines and the very specific outputs required, there is not a lot of emphasis placed on preparing monthly or annual work activity plans. Within some exceptions, the workload can easily be forecast.

Constituency Served

The constituency of the assessor's office is all property owners in the town and village of Liberty. Direct contact with property owners is frequent, both in the office and out of the office. Most contacts of property owners with the assessor are initiated by the property owner and cover a wide range of issues. The Assessor estimates that the clerk spends half her time directly dealing with property owners (either directly or by telephone). The assessor, herself, spends significantly less time in property owner contacts.

Village of Liberty

The assessment roll for the village is prepared by the town assessor. The Village of Liberty by local law has ceased being an assessing unit. The Village provided no monetary support to the Town for the assessment function. The assessor reports that the Village does receive some funding from the State (amount uncertain) for the administration of the STAR program, although the Village has no STAR responsibilities. The creation of a Village assessment roll does not create a lot of additional assessment roll for the Town. One issue is the difference in fiscal years of the town and village and the necessity to create a Village assessment roll with a different assessment calendar

cycle. The main additional work created by the Village is address changes and the necessity to notify the Village of address changes. Excel spreadsheets with address changes have to go back and forth between the Town and Village.

School Districts

The assessor has only minimal contact with the four school districts with segments in the town of Liberty. The main point of contact generally involves litigation, of which there has been fairly little recently. Issues of equalization and property tax apportionment in the school districts are usually not brought to the assessor's office.

Sullivan County

Counties can play a nominal role or a very major role in the administration of the property tax. In Sullivan County the county plays a fairly minor role. Assessment roll processing and tax bill preparation often done at the county level is done by a private vendor hired by the Town. The main function provided by the County to the assessor is deeds and sales reports on all sales transactions and deed recordings. The County also supplies the Assessor with updated tax maps. This is done annually (in many counties it is done quarterly).

In many counties there is a direct computer linkage between the County Property Tax Director and the Assessor. This is not the case in Sullivan County.

A key concern of the Assessor is 911 addresses. An updated inventory of 911 addresses is needed. There has been only limited cooperation from the County. Currently, the Assessor is primarily dependent on property owners to make and correct 911 addresses.

Property tax delinquencies have been a problem in Sullivan County. This is primarily a county responsibility. The Assessor's Office will provide verification of the inventory of delinquent properties.

The county director's office is now in transition. The long time director has now retired, along with another key staff person. For a while there will be some instability and uncertainty in the relationship with the County. A major complaint and concern of the assessor's office is the slowness in processing deeds, sales reports, and tax maps corrections. The assessor does not see the County providing additional support and help until they can do an improved job in their current efforts.

State of New York

Most of the requirements and instructions to assessors come from the Office of Real Property Services (ORPS). At the current time, they are providing fairly limited help to the town of Liberty. The Assessor is using the Real Property System (computerized data management system) prepared by ORPS. New versions are issued periodically. The

newest version has not been obtained and installed. ORPS also provides a significant amount of education and training which the Assessor attends.

Each year ORPS makes an equalization rate for each town and city. Assessors can play a significant role or no role in the determination of the equalization rate. The Assessor plays a fairly minor role, with a review of ORPS's work after it is complete. Assessors can initiate the equalization rate, with a review then done by ORPS (with a possible override).

Office Space

Office space is a serious problem. The Assessor's Office is on the second floor. It should be on the first floor, since it has frequent contact with property owners. The problem is further compounded by the fact that the Assessor's Office is not handicapped accessible. Assessors of necessity have many files. In the Assessor's office are 10 filing cabinets and in the clerk's area 11 filing cabinets. They need to be in a common area and more easily accessible. More space is needed by the Assessor's Office.

Workload Changes

There has been no reduction in workload in the Assessor's Office, but there has been an increase in workload. The increased workload has largely emanated from changes in State law. Exemption administration is a major function of an assessor's office. The Assessor estimates that 40-50% of the total staff time is spent on exemption administration. Each year the workload in this area increases.

The STAR program, and its annual changes, has significantly added to the Assessor's workload. The State has partially recognized the additional workload by providing limited reimbursement for administrative costs.

More recently, the State has provided a local option exemption for volunteer firemen and emergency medical technicians. This program has proven to be confusing and time consuming. In 2007 eligible volunteer firemen and emergency medical technicians were eligible for both an income tax credit and a property tax exemption. In 2008 they must choose between the tax credit and the property tax exemption. This has created confusion and more work for the assessor.

The volume of sales in Liberty has increased in recent years. This creates a greater workload for the Assessor who must update property records, make address changes, send out exemption information, etc. The increase in sales has also led to more parcel splits and merges. A lot of farms and large tracts are being subdivided.

New Mandates and Workload

Although few are specifically known, it can almost be guaranteed that when the 2008 legislative session comes to an end there will be additional workload generated in the exemption administration area. The Assessor is now mandated to take a course in Ethics.

In recent years property values have been increasing. Outsiders have had a major role in driving up property values. With a downturn in property values, and very high local effective property tax rates, more property owners may be concerned about their assessments and seek to have them lowered.

Quality and Level of Service Provided

The legal mandates around the preparation of an assessment roll are being met and the on-going day to day functions are being achieved. However, the town of Liberty last conducted a full town-wide reassessment in 1991. This reassessment was updated in 1995. There have been no updates since 1995. As a result the assessment roll has become increasingly unfair and inequitable over time. The Assessor reports that each year as part of her budget request she brings up the topic of reassessment. Apparently, most of the towns in Sullivan County are like Liberty and have not kept their assessment up to date and accurate. The equalization rate for 2007 was 62.75, and is expected to fall into the 57-58 range in 2008.

The property inventory base dates to 1991. On an as need basis (building permits) or as new information is uncovered changes are made to the property inventory records. A reassessment would require a recollection/verification of the inventory of all properties.

A primary function of an assessor's office should be "valuation" of properties. But in the current environment, valuation receives much less attention than many other functions.

The Assessor believes she should be spending the majority of time in the field (out of the office). Assessment roll improvements and changes are largely the result of field work. Currently, she is spending the majority of her time in the office.

Program Funding

The Assessor's budget has remained largely unchanged in recent years, with the changes primarily related to salary increases. The budget is adequate to carry on the same level of program as now exists, but not to undertake improvements. A reduction in funding is viewed as catastrophic. If funds were increased several priorities were identified.

Among the priorities are developing a data base of pictures for all properties, improving the sales files and doing sales analyses, and updating the property inventory data base. All of these areas are routine in many assessor's offices. Another property owner service would be putting assessment information on the Town web site. This has not been done, or contemplated, in Liberty.

Opportunities for Improvement

Some of the opportunities for improvement have been identified in the preceding paragraphs. Communications between and among local officials was cited as a major area needing improvement. Code enforcement was cited as one area. (Writer's note: too often assessment is viewed as an isolated function, when the assessor should be viewed as one part of an integrated town team).

The State is now pushing for county assessing and offers funding for both consolidated assessing units (towns joining together) and cooperative assessing (an assessor being responsible for multiple local governments). The Assessor was only vaguely aware of the County's application for funding for a study of county assessing and has no contact or communication on the issue. The Town with 6300 parcels has not considered either becoming part of a consolidated assessing unit or cooperative assessing. The Assessor did not anticipate any significant program realignment or change in service delivery in the near future.

Issues to Be Confronted in the Next 2-3 Years

Pressures from high property taxes will aggravate the assessment system. The existing inequities in assessments may become less and less tolerable. Falling property values may further create pressure for fair assessments. Clearly, the need for the town to do a reassessment will need to be confronted in the next few years. The Assessor's Office would need external valuation support for the reassessment. Data collection could be done either through additional staff assigned to the Assessor's Office or through an external contractor.

Even without a reassessment, all the evidence points to an increased workload for the Assessor's Office with no potential decreases in workload in sight.

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Program Function: Parks and Recreation Department: serving Town and Village Residents as well as visitors and tourists. Activities include two large Town Parks, a small new lake access site and scheduled recreational events undertaken within the Village.

Budget Allocation 2008

1. The Town's 2008 Adopted Budget for the Parks and Recreation Department (P&R), carries through the requests for that year (no changes), and is for \$410,975. There are modest increases in most functions compared to 2006 and 2007 ranging from 1% to 5%, with a notable 15% decrease in "Celebrations", probably due to savings resulting from moving events from Hanofee Park to the Village center. Administration costs of \$114,195 include some off season maintenance work. Equipment and contractual services are included in the above figures. In addition to these '08 budget, \$177,355 is listed for employee benefits

for the P&R function. Thus Parks and Recreation expenditures budgeted at \$588,330 are 23% of the total \$2,506,202 Town's Budget for 2008 (exclusive of capital reserve and debt service budgets). Another way of breaking down the P&R budget (exclusive of fringe benefits) is by function, as follows:

- Personal Service \$280,875 (60% in hourly wages, 68% of total budget)
- Equipment 15,500
- Contracted Services 77,600
- Capital Outlay 37,000 (capital funds likely to be spent soon)
- \$410,975 total

2. There is a "capital reserve" of \$26,000 for Hanofee Park, and \$6,000 interest payment on a \$50,000 bond for recent pool repairs. Additionally the Village has a \$4,476 budget item for "culture and recreation" in the 2008 budget, reportedly to be held as a reserve to match grants for park projects, if any are applied for and awarded. No capital project or acquisition grants are included in the '08 budget, but these grants for new park facility projects have been a part of past years' budgets.
3. Most of the Town P&R budget is derived from the Town's general tax revenues. \$114,500 revenues are anticipated from fees and activity charges, accounting for nearly 28% of the function's costs to the Town. There are no State or Federal funds shown in the current P&R budget, and understandably so, since these operational and program grants are almost non-existent.

The Program Function and its Management

1. Describe the program function, it's purpose, and operational management including:
 - a. The Town P&R Director, Brian Scardefield, Assistant Recreational Director Christopher Sinceno and Andrew Dworetzky, Park Supervisor. Oversight, in part by a P&R Board, chaired by John Ballard.
 - b. In addition to the three full time staff above, there is a secretary, Linda Mullen who does administrative work. There are 6 Park Attendants employed between May and September. All of these full time and seasonal staff perform some maintenance, some park operation oversight and some program supervision. The pool has 6 guards and a director for June to Labor Day operations and also is allotted some early season training costs. A summer "day camp" accommodating 160 children employs additional staff of 17 Day Camp Counselors. Volunteers for specific activities such as trail maintenance, little-league management and specific projects done by the Rotary, BOCES, Civil War re-enactors and other volunteers are also recruited. Performers for festivities are by contract.

- c. Town P&R programs include facilities and activities for all age groups, with some specific attempts to satisfy special population's needs. It can be truly called a comprehensive program. A building space above P&R offices in mid Village houses a senior program, currently run 3 days a week. Additional facilities, such as a new skate-board area, is now being designed to attract teens, to be offered as an additional program that is being spearheaded and advanced by the Liberty CDC and volunteers. While no State or Federal law requires a P&R operation, the elements within that program have to adhere to a variety of State regulations, such as the Health Department's Sanitary Codes. Codes regarding lifeguards, pool and concession maintenance and group camps are especially demanding.
- d. There is an admirable attempt to provide for Park use and recreational activities on an all seasons basis. Understandably, the summer season considerably overshadows the rest of the year's activities, driving staffing and expenditure budgets. Four-page program flyers for each of four seasons offer a wide variety of passive, active and instructional programs. An attempt is made to link with school, senior services and organized group activities.
- e. The Town and Village residents of all age groups are served by the facilities and programs, however visitors and tourists are also welcomed for a small additional charge (i.e. swimming is \$2 for residents, \$4 for non-residents). Senior programs offer meals (partly coordinated with Sullivan County), activities and some health related services, available in the building behind LaPolt Park.
- f. The two major parks, a small (new) Swan Lake access site and a Main Street Stage in mid Village require a significant staff effort. In addition to the facilities, 19 activities and 10 listed special events are offered, so the Town's P&R program carries a significant workload within the budgets assigned to them.
- g. The Town and Village already coordinate their park and recreation functions. At the Main St. Stage, next to the Village's LaPolt Park, the Town maintains both facilities in the summer and the Village Public Works plows during the winter. Festivities (such as 4th of July fireworks) have been relocated downtown (in conjunction with the Liberty Chamber of Commerce), easing some of the overuse pressures on Hanofee Park and allowing better oversight by Village Police. In fact the Town can already be said to operate the recreational system for both entities. If the Village decides to apply again for a grant to develop a long abandoned recreational site near the water plant, then even more Town / Village coordination will be required to run that additional park.
- h. The Town P&R offices, located within a few steps near the Main Street Stage, and below the Senior Center, also operated by P&R. It is an adequate office space and is convenient for the public.
- i. The equipment and facilities that could be reviewed in two hours looked to be in good condition, built / or acquired with a thought for economy. In a few cases this presents a longer term problem, such as facilities like the pool being served by either portable toilets or requiring a long walk (sometimes

shunned by small children). Additional field review could be undertaken for the study if needed.

- j. Judging by the consistent budgets, little has changed during the past three years, however with the addition of the small new access site at Swan Lake built by (a Renaissance Project funded by) the Gerry Foundation, at least a half a staff member's hours with a pick-up truck may be needed for maintenance and oversight of the facility. If a new Village Park is added, as the Village budget indicates, then after two years for planning and construction one seasonal "Park Attendant" and other temporary workers may have to be added to the staff, with a truck and other equipment, all contingent on the facilities added to the (proposed ?) new park (if any).
- k. There are no new State or Federal mandates, specific to P&R that will require a change in these programs.

2. Additional information obtained through interview.

- a. The Town of Liberty has a fine P&R program. The staff seemed justifiably proud of their facilities and services. A lot of the area's attraction, as touted by the Town and Village web sites, depends on these facilities and programs, so continued support is warranted. A formalization of the de-facto Town-Village coordination seems well underway and is apparently effective.
- b. The budget appears to be adequate, though at least the 2% to 5% annual increases will be required. The escalation of costs in pool chemicals and some other materials will also require increases; also gradual increases in salaries can be anticipated.
- c. There is little available through grants for P&R operations and programs. New facilities and added parkland are grant eligible, but considering that the operations' costs will be left to the municipality, caution is suggested before expanding facilities. Opportunities regarding the use of concessionaires at Hanofee Park, may present a modest cost savings with the additional prospect for increased services. Fee increases considered (if any) should be small and incremental to keep the parks and services affordable, but some marginal increases in revenues may be possible. Additionally volunteers and "friends-of-the-park" organizations can help, though these efforts are usually focused on specific activities and new facilities, and as such do not readily replace the basic services performed by staff at present.
- d. While there are no additional mandates that are anticipated, new facilities such as the skate-board area will require added oversight and maintenance. The new access site at Swan Lake will also add to P&R workload, while it secures a most welcome point of access to this large and beautiful lake. If the Village undertakes a new park project, staff and equipment needs will have to be added about two seasons after construction is begun. The addition of bathrooms at the Hanofee pool may be a high priority, as are bathrooms at the playfields in Walnut Mt. Park. If it's proposed to advance these projects for grants, some additional recreational facilities may also need to be

proposed in conjunction with the rest rooms to obtain high priority ratings for the proposals.

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Program Function: Town Planning Board

Budget Allocation 2008

The total amount budgeted for this function is \$8,000, of which \$5,000 is for personal services and \$3,000 contractual.

Program Function and Management

Diane Deutsch is the Chairperson of the Town Planning Board. The Board's function is to ascertain that new construction adheres to the laws of the town, state and federal governments. The Planning Board is responsible for administering the Town Subdivision Regulations and Town Zoning Law. The subdivision process starts with a pre-filing conference, then progresses to a public hearing and preliminary approval. Final subdivision approval is granted only after the County Health Department has also approved the subdivision.

The Town Zoning Law was enacted to help ensure orderly, well planned development within the Town. Under the Zoning Law, some commercial uses of property may require a Special Use Permit or Site Plan Review by the Planning Board. The Special Use Permit process requires a public hearing which allows residents who may be affected by a proposed commercial use of a property to voice concerns and provide input.

The Town Planning Board may review and make recommendations on any new Town Comprehensive Plan or amendment, and is responsible for assuring compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Staffing

Mr. Mark Van Etten, is the Village's full-time code enforcement officer reports to the Town Supervisor. He supervises a full-time account clerk, who assists him and he also supervises a full-time secretary, who provides administrative support to the town planning board and ZBA. For further discussion see **Program Function:** Building Department/Code Enforcement beginning on page 26.

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Program Function: Town Zoning Board of Appeals

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted for this function is \$8,000.00 or approximately 3.3% of the Appropriations: Town-Outside Village fund total of \$ 239,268.00. Of the amount

budgeted, \$ 5,000.00 is for personal services and \$3,000 contractual. Per the budget there is no breakdown for equipment. There is not a breakdown for employee benefits by position.

Program Functions and Management

Tom Sprague has been Chair of the Town Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for 6 years. (Please note: Tom is also currently a Village Trustee. He will be leaving the position this month after serving since 1993. There was a three year break of service but Tom could not identify the year.)

As Chair of the ZBA he presides over the Board meetings with assistance from the legal counsel. There is a Town secretary who is assigned to assist the ZBA and the Planning Board with its work. The ZBA is responsible for listening to appeals concerning local zoning ordinances. There are no formal reports with the exception of matters involving the County “239” reviews (involving actions on or near County roads).

Meetings are held on an “as needed” basis. For planning purposes they anticipate six times a year. The public comes in contact with the ZBA through the Secretary by asking for items to be placed on an agenda. In general, the Chair believes the level of services is sufficient.

Workload

At one time the Town had one staff person to assist the building department and the ZBA, now there are three. The responsibilities of the staff also include water and sewer matters. Tom believes two staff should be sufficient to cover these functions.

There is no annual report issued by the ZBA. There has been a slight perceived increase in workload.

The program is adequately funded. Members are paid \$50 per meeting with planning for six meetings. The Chair’s stipend is \$100 per meeting. Technically, the budget allows for up to twelve meetings, but Tom says no more than six take place.

The Chair has participated in home study and continuing education to stay current on procedures.

Office Space and Equipment

The ZBA meets in the basement of Town Hall. The space is considered adequate, though there may be an issue with ADA accessibility (in other interviews, the interviewees have considered the space to be in compliance with ADA rules and regulations).

There are no issues concerning the production of documents and no complaints about procedure.

Current Shared Services

The Village runs its own independent ZBA. Aside from the different codes, it is conceivable that they could be merged.

Long Term Issues

The recruitment of volunteers has occasionally been an issue. Generally, recruitment for the ZBA is harder than the Planning Board, though they pay the same stipend.

The new Town Comprehensive Plan could have an impact on the ZBA as Village and Town zoning issues were a subject of review for that plan. Future growth could also be an issue for the ZBA as well as the fact that the Town is updating its zoning.

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Program Function: Building Department/Code Enforcement

Budget Allocation 2008

The total current year budget for this function, listed in the Budget, Town Outside Village portion, as *Safety Inspection-Demolition*, is \$131,090, with the allocations as follows: \$102,090 in PS, \$26,412, employee benefits not allocated, , equipment \$4,000, capital outlay zero, debt service – nothing indicated and contractual services \$25,000, of which the entire amount is for demolitions. (See revenues below) No capital items are listed in budget. The total Codes Budget accounts for 54.8% of the Town’s General Fund –Town Outside Village total appropriations for and 4.8% of Town’s GF Town-wide and TOV total appropriations for 2008.

The Codes Officer indicated that the annual maintenance charges for the special computer software system (BAS) used to manage information for this Program is not included in the program function budget. A vehicle is assigned to the Codes Officer but no information is contained in program budget on any associated costs.

The special revenues estimated to be generated by this program are building permit/inspection fess of \$30,000 (B2770) and demolition charges of \$25,000 (B1570) equal to expenditures in the first instance for demolition (see above) to be recovered by responsible parties. Excluding the second item, 77 % of the listed program budget is supported by the property tax levy, with fees offsetting the remaining 23%.

Administration and Supervision

Mr. Mark Van Etten is the Village’s full-time Code Enforcement Officer and has been in this position for since 2004 and reports to the Town Supervisor. He supervisors a full-time account clerk, who assists him and he also supervises a full-time secretary, who provides administrative support to the town planning board and ZBA.

Laws Administered and Programs

Mark Van Etten administers and enforces the State Building and Fire Safety Codes and certain town laws. The code enforcement officer is responsible for issuing building and demolition permits, conducting building code and fire safety inspections on structures and properties in the village. In addition the officer is responsible for sign regulations and enforces local laws dealing with zoning, maintenance of properties, such as refuse and abandoned vehicles. He also participates in site plan reviews, attending meeting of the Planning Board and ZBA.

Mr. Van Etten issues violation citations and is extensively involved in court proceedings associated with violation of state building and fire codes and local laws.

The Town codes department has responsibilities associated with building and fire code regulations and inspections for the 30 summer camps that operate in the Town.

Some of the annual or other regular reports required to be prepared include:

1. Annual local Code Administration & Enforcement Report - to NYS Department of State (NYS DOS). This is a major upgraded reporting requirement implemented under the revised State building and fire codes program (5 page form)
2. Annual Multiple Residence Inspection List –To NYS DOS 2007
3. Annual Sullivan County Building Permit Activities Report - To Division of Planning and Environmental Management. (1 page)
4. Annual Report of New Residential Building Permits – To US Census Bureau (1 page)
5. Annual List of Planning Board Projects, with Actions Taken –Town

Constituency Served

Mr. Van Etten deals directly with town property owners, tenants, and contractors and attorneys engaged by property owners

Work Load- Quantity of Services

Measures of Annual Workload for the Code enforcement Officer for **Calendar 2007** include:

- Building permits issued: 375 (includes new construction, additions, repairs)
- Renewals demolitions, signs, pools)

- Complaints/violations: 228
- Units authorized to be abolished: 9
- Planning Board activity measures: 37 projects for review

To the above, add the time consuming court related appearances and associated workload. Also, a new workload is administration and enforcement of the new mandated State DEC municipal stormwater management program and all the reports generated to meet NY State and other mandates.

Coordination and Shared Services

Some of the key activities of the Code Enforcement Officer are coordinated with the Fire Department, with respect to information and issues and actions concerning unsafe properties. Mr. Van Etten also works with the town attorney and is often before the Village Court. On summer camp s oversight noted earlier, Van Etten works closely with the Regional Office of the State Health Department, which has lead regulatory for approvals for the opening of summer camps and their safe operations. Mr. Van Etten has an informal agreement with the Town Code Enforcement officer to cover for him on vacations and vice versa.

Office Space and Equipment

The office space for the program is upstairs in Town Hall and Mr. Van Etten and his staff are squeezed into tight space. A closet is used for the overflow of file cabinets, and more space is needed and money needed for significant improvement in record retention and management. Van Etten is assigned a new vehicle in good condition, and previously had a vehicle transferred from the water department. He has adequate computer workstations for him and for his two staff.

Increase in Program Workload –State Mandates

There has been an increase in work load related to more residential subdivision activity for primary and second homes, post 9-11, in the Town. Also, increases in rundown buildings and properties generate more workload. The new more stringent State Building and fire Code requirements for inspections and reporting requirements has also increased workload, as well requirements in 2007 to administer and enforce new State DEC municipal stormwater management program has created more workload.

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Program Function: Town of Liberty Highway Department

Budget Allocation 2008

The Town Highway Department budget for 2008 fiscal year is \$2,263,241 of which \$1,198,890 is identified as Town-wide, \$884,551 is identified as Town outside Village, and \$179,800 is identified as Highway CHIPS funds. This represents an increase of

\$112,662 or 5% over the 2007 budget. Of note in the 2008 budget is the omission of the Highway Machinery Capital Fund which was budgeted at \$100,422 the previous year. The Highway Department budget is approximately 29% of the total Town budget relatively unchanged from the 2007 budget at 28%.

Administration and Supervision

Timothy Pelham has served as the Town of Liberty Highway Superintendent for the past nine years. Previously he served on the highway crew for approximately 14 years and is a second generation to worker with his father serving more than thirty years before him. Tim is an elected official with his department receiving funding approval from the Town Board. In addition to 18 full-time and 7 part-time employees there is a full time clerk and Deputy Highway Superintendent.

Laws Administered and Programs

The Highway Department is responsible for maintaining approximately 126 miles of roads, several bridges, shoulder areas; common grounds within the Town, Town owned parking lots, in addition to mowing in the summer and plowing roads and parking lots in the winter.

Only one regular report is required to be prepared as follows:

- Filing an annual 942 Form, Agreement to Spend Highway Funds
Constituency Served

The Highway Department functions serve virtually every resident and business within the Town. As an elected official Tim serves at the pleasure of the voters in the Town for 4-year terms.

Work Load- Quantity of Services

As a 23-year veteran of the Highway Department, Tim is very familiar with all operations within the department. His biggest frustration comes from dealing with the ravages of Mother Nature. In recent years the Town has been plagued with damage to roads and bridges caused by what appear to be and ever increasing frequency of severe storms. Despite filing his 942 Form which basically outlines his projected work on an annual basis, he has found that in the last several years the majority of the Town's efforts have been dedicated to recovery from severe storm damage to roads and bridges making it difficult to perform normal maintenance duties when needed.

Coordination and Shared Services

A stronger working relationship has been established between the Village and the Town Highway Department. Equipment is shared when possible; paving is accomplished using

the Town's paving equipment, the Town and Village trucks, and personnel from both departments.

In addition to working with the Village, the Department shares services with the neighboring Towns on a regular basis.

Office Space and Equipment

Tim is fortunate to have recently completed construction of a new Highway Department Facility. The facility is large enough to house all of the plowing equipment in addition to providing adequate shop space, parts and small equipment storage, tire repair shop, and a welding shop. Equipment is replaced on a regular schedule and appears to be in very good condition. The Department appears to be well equipped and organized and other than the normal cycle of replacing a couple of the older trucks this year Tim indicated that a new loader and roller were also on the current equipment replacement list.

Future Issues

Tim's concern is that many of the Town's residents are moving in from the metropolitan area with unrealistic expectations on the level of service the Department should deliver. Plowing on a 24-hour basis is now being demanded by some and is just not feasible within the current program constraints. As development continues within the Town, increased demands on his department to build and maintain new roads is becoming an issue. And of course his biggest concern is the ever increasing cost of fuel and materials making it impossible to continue to provide the same level of service without a substantial increase in the budget which can only be realized with an increase in taxes.

* * * *

Program Function: Water and Wastewater Department

Budget Allocation 2008

Total Water/Sewer budgeted expenditures for 2008 are \$2,786,627 which is approximately 35% of the total Town budget. This figure represents \$2,400,763 in operations expenses including personnel, \$120,450 in various District reserve accounts, and \$120,450 in debt service payments. While reserves were increased a modest 3% and debt service payments remained essentially level, operational expenses increased approximately 9% from the FY2007 budget.

Administration and Supervision

Thomas Kehrley is the Working Supervisor for the Town of Liberty Water Sewer Department. In addition to Tom the Department employs one full time Account Clerk, Joan Reddington, Chief Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, Al Picard, and four laborers.

Laws Administered and Programs

Water and Wastewater treatment plants are operated under NYS Department of Health and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regulations respectively and require licensed operators for both functions.

Regular reports are required to be prepared as follows:

- Daily Discharge Monitoring Reports for the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Monthly DEC compliance reports for the Water and Wastewater treatment plants.
- Annual Capacity reports for the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Annual Water Quality Certification Report for the Water Treatment Plant

The Town of Liberty Water and Wastewater Department has four Sewer Districts served by Wastewater Treatment Plants located in the hamlets of Loomis and Swan Lake. The water districts include: Loomis, Ferndale, Stevensville, White Sulphur Springs, Indian Lake, Cold Springs Road, and Route 55. Several of the districts include extensions and many are interconnected. The Water/Sewer Department is responsible for all treatment, distribution, and collection functions within those sections of the Town served by the infrastructure.

Work Load- Quantity of Services

The Department is faced with a variety of issues common to most systems of this age and make up. Aging equipment, increased regulatory pressure, source protection, new technologies, need for expansion, and increased operations and maintenance costs are just a few of the issues faced by the Town in attempting to ensure they are providing the quality and quantity of service needed.

Coordination and Shared Services

From a shared services standpoint the Village currently provides sewer capacity to the Town at pre-determined rates for Town sewer districts contiguous to the Village. Additionally, the Town and Village installed an emergency interconnect between the Village and Town Water systems to allow either system to be operated in the event of an emergency or catastrophic failure within the systems.

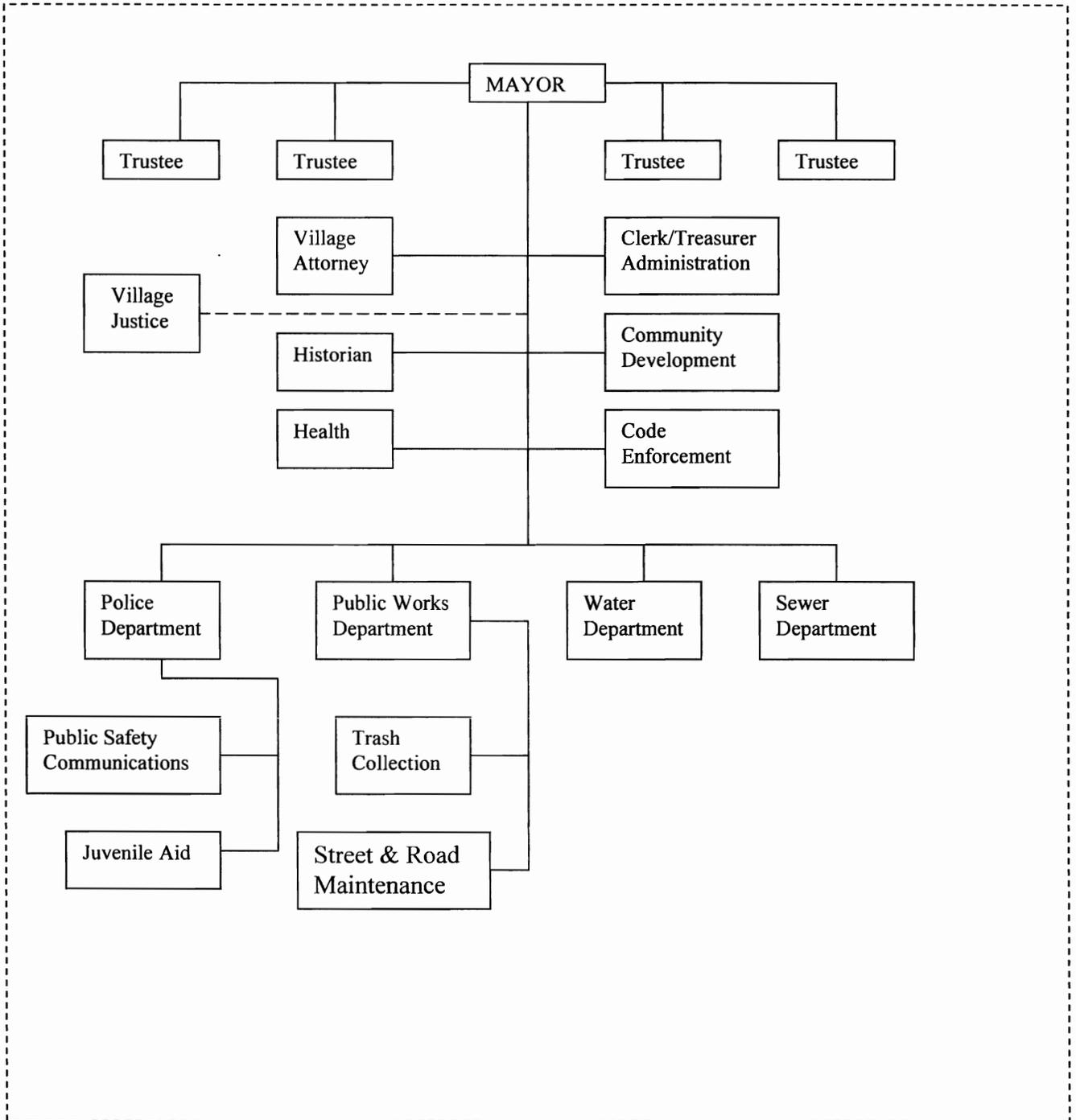
Future Issues

Significant growth is anticipated within the Town especially in the Swan Lake area. The Town is currently studying capacity issues at its Swan Lake Wastewater Treatment Facility and expects to identify various alternatives that will allow the infrastructure to attempt to accommodate the growth. Funding for future capital projects and increased energy costs are anticipated to be among the biggest issues to face in the future.

VILLAGE OF LIBERTY

Organizational Chart

An organizational chart for the program functions and services administered by the Village of Liberty is shown below:



Organizational Chart for the Village Of Liberty

* * * *

Program Function: Mayor and Board of Trustees

The elected Board of Trustees, composed of the Mayor and four Trustees, is the governing body of the Village. As described in the *Local Government Handbook* published by the New York State Department of State, the Board's broad powers include organizing itself and providing for rules and procedures; adopting a budget, approving of modifications and transfers and providing for the financing of Village activities; abolishing or creating offices, boards, agencies and commission and delegating powers to these units; managing the Village properties, and; granting final approval of appointments of all non-elected officers and employees made by the mayor

The Mayor is the chief executive officer of the Village and is responsible for enforcing laws within the Village, and for supervising the police and other employees of the Village. The Mayor appoints one of the Trustees as Deputy Mayor, who acts in the Mayor's absence

Budget Allocation 2008

The Mayor's 2008 budgeted personal services cost is \$7,213, consisting of \$6, 700 compensation, and benefits of \$513. Trustees are compensated at \$5,150 each, with composite benefits at \$1,576, for a total of \$22,176 budgeted for the Village Trustees; a total of \$29,389 budgeted for governance at the Village level.

* * * *

Program Function: Village Clerk / Treasurer

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted for this function is \$ 120,008, or approximately 3.5% of the general fund total of \$ 3,435,767. Of the amount budgeted, \$ 75,652 is for personal services; \$ 32,656 for employee benefits; \$ 1,000 for office supplies; and \$ 10,700 contractual (utilities, etc.). There are no capital items or debt service budgeted to this function. Of the personal services amount budgeted, \$ 54,540 is for the Village Clerk and \$21,112 for two part time clerks. The Deputy Clerk is salaried at \$ 32,782 and budgeted to the Village Water & Sewer program accounts; it is a charge, however, to the Village Clerk function. Based upon the composition of revenue sources constituting the general fund budget base for 2008, the Clerk / Treasurer budget is financed approximately 83% by property tax revenue.

Program Functions and Management

The Village Clerk / Treasurer is the principal administrative officer of the Village government. The position reports directly to and is accountable to the Mayor and the Board of Trustees. All of the residents of the Village of Liberty are the constituents of this office; none outside the Village. The position is responsible for management and

execution of all duties and functions of Village Clerk as described hereafter, including Treasurer / Finance, Budget, Registrar, Tax Collection, Infectious Disease Control, and direct dealing with the public on these subjects as well as inquiries concerning all Village government functions. The Village Clerk / Treasurer also currently serves informally as Mayor's secretary.

The incumbent Clerk is Ms. Judy Zurawski who has served in the position for 19 years. Her current salary is \$ 52,840. She supervises one full time Deputy Clerk and two part time employees year round, as well as one additional part time employee during the summer months at the height of tax season.

Responsibilities of the Deputy Clerk include assisting with public counter intake; managing and implementing of water / sewer billings and collection, ordering turn-off / turn-on of service for non-payment of bills, water maintenance and customer service and complaints; manages and executes all aspects of accounts payable and accounts receivable; assists with tax collection; is also Deputy Registrar. Part time clerks assist in dealing with Village residents at the public counter, assist with phones, data entry, filing, assist with deposits for taxes, cash receipts and water / sewer billings / receipts and receivables / records, and assist in tax collection payments during tax season. The additional part time clerk employed only during tax season during June and July assists with tax collection.

The Clerk functions also as secretary to the Board of Trustees, prepares agendas and meeting packets, attends and prepares minutes of all Board meetings, and executes follow-up actions as needed; attends and prepares the agendas, legal notices, and minutes of meetings of the Village Zoning Board; is the Village Notary Public; and processes all paper work and data entry for new employees.

Current Shared Services

The Village Clerk works jointly with the Town on payroll preparation and payment issuance. The Village Clerk organizes and processes all time sheets to a master sheet, then transfers the data to the Town. Town enters data and prints checks, returns to Village Clerk, who issues checks to payees. The Village shares with and obtains quality IT services from the Town. These are increasingly important services with regard to the administration of program provided to Village citizens.

Workload

The office workload, in addition to daily over-the-counter resident service, entails in part billing about 1,600 customers quarterly, or 500 to 600 customers per month, for water / sewer and tax bills on annual average. Office also issues quarterly drinking water reports to all customers; issues about 100 to 150 vouchers per month; and processes and issues 1,600 new tax bills annually. Public client counter traffic workload includes but is not limited to payment of taxes and water and sewer bills, water and sewer turn-off / turn-on,

issuing birth / death certificates, handicap permits, hack and taxi licenses, peddler's permits, towing permits, complaint forms, directing persons to other Village offices, arranging citizen appointments for other Village departments, and helping residents review and understand the Village budget and Board meeting agendas. This is year-round workload.

Registrar work load includes filing new death and birth certificates, and issuing about 50 death and 50 birth certificates annually to those who request them. The Clerk's office receives, processes, and distributes mail for all Village government departments.

As Treasurer, the Clerk position manages all aspects of Village finances, including receiving and accounting for deposits, reconciliation and collection of monies for all funds (General, Water, Sewer, and Sanitation); processing all payments for water and sewer bills, tax bills; maintaining accounts receivable and payable; and processing cash receipts for the Building department and all payments received from the Justice, DPW and Police Departments. Treasurer's responsibilities include also recording journal entries for all financial transactions, making bank deposits about two to three times weekly, modifying the Village budget as needed throughout the year, processing all bank statements, and preparing and printing financial reports monthly for all departments. The position, as the Village's fiduciary agent, prepares and files all financial reports required by State law, including Annual Financial report, Constitutional Tax Limit report, and the Budget report.

Tax Collection

The Clerk / Treasurer's office is responsible for issuing property tax bills and for collecting the real property taxes owed to the Village. One additional person is employed full time during the months of June and July, and intermittently for about an hour on average daily during the remainder of the year, to support this function. The Village has receipts for the Building department and all payments received from the Justice, DPW and Police Departments. Treasurer's responsibilities include also recording journal entries for all financial transactions, making bank deposits about two to three times weekly, modifying the Village budget as needed throughout the year, processing all bank statements, and preparing and printing financial reports monthly for all departments. The position, as the Village's fiduciary agent, prepares and files all financial reports required by State law, including Annual Financial report, Constitutional Tax Limit report, and the Budget report.

The Village has experienced a consistently high rate of delinquency. The current level of uncollected delinquencies approximates \$ 300 thousand, some dating back to 1990. Efforts to moderate this delinquency have been in part to employ a tax collecting agent, the MTA Group, to collect delinquent taxes for the Village. This has improved the rate of recovery. Work to collect delinquent taxes continues throughout the year. Since the County does not reimburse and make the Village whole on these uncollected tax delinquencies annually, as it does for the Town, the effect is to shift the tax burden to responsible taxpayers to compensate for unrealized revenue to finance budgeted needs,

thus increasing upward pressure on the tax rate. Provision should be made for the County to make the Village whole on these tax collection shortfalls, as it does the Town.

The tax collection process is essentially similar for both the Town and the Village. There is no direct working relationship to the school district tax collection process. Neither the Town nor the County provides assistance to the Village in tax collecting. Village tax collecting was previously shared with the Town, using the services of one person for both. However, the Town has employed a service to manage its tax collection function, so this service is no longer shared. The Village does not allow taxpayers to pay their taxes by credit card because card issuers, chiefly banks, will not relinquish card fees, thereby reducing the net revenue return to the Village.

Office Space and Equipment

Office space is generally adequate, although providing some private space to work on the budget and financial matters would be helpful. Sharing a single building and Village Clerk office space with the Town Clerk office space would improve effectiveness and efficiency of both operations. Directing people to either Town or Village offices would be eliminated; sharing billing clerks and data entry staff would be possible because the Town and Village use the same accounting programs. Other efficiencies would develop. Equipment is adequate, although updated computers and scanners would increase effectiveness.

Near Term Issues

Inflation in the prices of fuel, health insurance and retirement costs will pose significant financing problems for the Village government. Aging office space, inadequate handicap accessibility, and outdated electrical / communications infrastructure will require that these shortcomings be addressed in the near future. Rapidly changing technology will require investment in latest equipment and devices, and continuous training of employees.

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Program Function: Justice for the Village of Liberty-Harold Bauman

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted for this function is \$73,175, or approximately 2% of the general fund total of \$3,576,462.00. Of the amount budgeted, \$73,175 is for personal services; \$37,070 for employee benefits; \$700 for office supplies; and \$87,250 contractual. There are no capital items or debt service budgeted to this function.

Program Functions and Management

Harold Bauman is the Judge for the Village. He has served in this elected position for a period of 5 years and one year as “acting” judge, with a term of three years. He is

responsible for the administration of Village of Liberty Justice Court. As Village Judge, Mr. Bauman is responsible for Village Law, the Uniform Justice Court Act and Village Codes. In this position Mr. Bauman has two clerks-Chief Clerk Lillian Rubio who prepares calendars, interfaces with the public and sets up meetings. Her salary is in the \$20-\$25,000 range. The second clerk, Victoria Winchester, she assists the Chief Clerk and has only been on board for three months with a salary of \$19,000.

Judge Bauman's annual salary is \$25,000 and he does not receive any benefits. Mr. Bauman also maintains a private law practice.

Workload

Mr. Bauman states that the total calendar is about 500 cases per month.

There are no formal measures for this workload with the exception of supplemental copies of records provided to the Village and financial records such as fines and surcharges which are reported to the New York State Comptroller. There is no reporting to the Office of Court Administration.

A typical week for Mr. Bauman is broken down as follows:

- Mondays: Jury trials are done as a convenience to District Attorney/Legal Aid
- Tuesday: Criminal calendar of generally 75-90 cases, constituted by arraignments, preliminary hearings, non-jury trials, discovery proceedings and violation of probation.
- Wednesday: Writes opinions in office
- Thursday: Further civil calendar or vehicle and traffic matters
- Friday: Research and writing.

In general, the workload has increased. Judge Bauman attributes this to increased criminal activity and better police enforcement. Judge Bauman is on call 24 hours/day 7 days/week for arraignments. Last year there were 905 arrests. He believes that the calendar and court is busier than that of the 2 town justices put together. Judge Bauman believes that he does the workload at least equal to the two Town Justices and yet they are paid similar salaries. He believes consideration should be given to increasing his pay scale.

Office Space and Equipment

Although court is held on the ground floor of the building, he believes that the space may be in violation of ADA standards. Handicapped citizens certainly can not come upstairs to see the clerks and if they need to a meeting must be arranged in another office.

Mr. Bauman has supplied his own computer, copier and set of law books. He feels that the Xerox machine in the court is not sufficient to handle the case load. Although the storage holds everything they have he feels it is barely adequate. (Note: as a result of a recent New York Times article, the Office of Court Administration is supplying laptops and recording devices). He would like to see hardware for keeping court records.

Current Shared Services

There are informal agreements with the Town Justices on an “as needed” basis. Criminal cases and arraignments sometimes come from outside the Village although this is very infrequent.

Near Term Issues

Generally, Judge Bauman believes the Village court should be separate from the Town, but if someone has a good argument he would listen. He doesn't see how they could be merged due to the disparity in the case load. Obviously, it could be done away with if the Village were to be dissolved, but cited Long Island where there are district courts but they kept the Justice court. It is conceivable, though not likely, that a better system could be designed and said that you could look at district courts but he believes that it is unlikely that the Towns and Villages would move away from the Justice Court.

Mr. Bauman believes that the ADA issue will eventually be a problem and thinks that there should be more training of staff.

* * * *

Program Function: Village Attorney

Budget Allocation 2008

Total amount budgeted for this function is \$ 49,000 or approximately 1.4% of the general fund total of \$ 3,435,767. The total amount budgeted is allocated to contractual. There are no capital items or debt service budgeted to this function.

Program Functions and Management

Gary Silver is the attorney for the Village and not an employee of the Village's. He has served in this position for a period of 7 years – 5 years with a break of 2 years and now an additional 2 years. He is responsible for providing services to the village Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. He prosecutes violations of the Village and State building codes. He was hired by the Village Board to work on behalf of all three boards and therefore represents a “consolidation” of service delivery functions. He will attend most meetings of all of the three boards. There are multiple areas of municipal and state law for which he is responsible. Sometimes the Village will hire special counsel on matters that require specialized services.

His salary is \$30,000 annually and he can bill additional time at \$275/hour. He receives no benefits.

Specifically for the Village Board, Mr. Silver will attend one of their two meetings per month; will communicate with Mayor and Board Members; prepare memoranda of agreements; answer inquiries from the public (though technically they are not his clients) and speak with Village employees. For the Planning Board Mr. Silver will attend meetings, review application, communicates with applicants and counsels Village. Finally for the Zoning Board, Mr. Silver attends meetings on an “as need” basis.

Workload

There are no formal reports filed on workload. While there are time slips, there is no formal review. The billing information contains an hourly description of services rendered. There is a great deal of communication between the attorney and the Village. There has been almost no litigation. In general, the workload has increased. The Village and planning board ask more questions. The justice court is more active with more code enforcement activity.

Based upon workload, Mr. Silver does not believe he needs any additional staff. The Village of Liberty can exist with one attorney providing services to all three Boards, but he believes the Town’s workload would not make this arrangement possible for them.

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Program Function: Village Of Liberty Police; Juvenile Aid; and Fire-Police Communications

While all three of these functions are listed as separate categories in the Village’s Budget, organizationally and operationally they are closely aligned and the Police chief supervises all these functions and, therefore, they will be incorporated into one report.

Budget Allocation 2008 for Police Department

The total current year budget for this function is \$1,469,454 with the allocations as follows: \$945,233 in PS (includes \$38,535 in overtime); \$431,048 in employee benefits, equipment \$4,612, capital outlay zero, debt service zero and contractual services \$88,561. No capital items are listed in the budget. This total budget accounts for 41.1 % of the Village’s General Fund budget Appropriations for 2007-2208 for the Village. However, the Police Budget for 2007-2008 should be adjusted to cover the leasing of 5 vehicles, a photo copier and radio/telephone recorder for a total amount of \$32,241.

The non property tax grants/revenues available to support village policing include: \$73,104 from the Liberty School District to pay for a school district resource officer (note this is listed as crime control (A 4320) and a DWI state grant of \$8,825 (not identified in budget documents??) and \$2,450 for traffic enforcement (A3389).

Budget Allocation 2008 for Juvenile Aid Bureau

This function is actually a Police Detective Sgt who does regular duties as well. The total current year budget is composed of \$87,422 of which \$65,777 is PS (includes some overtime) and the remainder, \$21,676, is fringe benefits, with no allocations for other categories. One grant is available for juvenile aid and amounts to \$9,000, used to fund part of the Det. Sgt's salary. The DARE drug abuse program is dependent upon donation and does not use village funds.

Budget Allocation 2008 for Fire-Police Communications

This function covers the 911 System and dispatcher personnel. The current year budget for this function is \$197,905 and includes \$131,215 in PS (\$8,405 of this is allocated to PT employees and \$3,000 in overtime) and the rest is employee benefits amounting to \$66,690. No special revenue or grants are identified as supporting this function.

All three functions account for 49% of the Village's General Fund Appropriation, and overwhelmingly the Village's property tax levy supports these functions.

Police Administration, Supervision and Overview of Operations

The Chief of Police Michael DeFrank is responsible for supervising the all three functions and is assisted by Lt. Robert Mir, second in command. The chief has been in this position 5 years and with the department 20 years. Lt. Mir has been in his position 5 year and with the department for 17 years. The chief works days and the Lieutenant works evenings. The Police Chief reports to the Mayor and Village Board.

Fourteen full-time police personnel are supervised by the Chief and Lieutenant:

1. 3 Sergeants
2. 1 Detective Sergeant, who is the Juvenile Aid Officer
3. 1 Detective
4. 10 Police Officers There are no part-time police officers. There are three full-time Dispatchers, and although funds are allocated for such, there are no part-time Dispatchers.

The police force operates 24/ 7 in 8 hour shifts and duties include:

1. Regular Vehicle patrols (2 vehicles minimum)
2. Foot patrols in summer on all 3 shifts
3. Traffic control, including school crossings and buses (see below.
4. A full-time police officer presence rotating in SD's 3 schools
5. House checks
6. Responding to service calls
7. Investigation activities
8. Serving papers
9. Village Court security
10. Court appearances
11. Paperwork, such as associated with arrests
12. Juvenile Aid Bureau functions

The Detective Sergeant responsible for Juvenile Aid provides assistance to families and children, maintains juvenile records, and is involved in family court referrals, in addition to his regular policing duties.

The 3 dispatchers, all women, handle the 911 emergency system and other calls for both police and fire and each works 8 hour shifts five days a week. Police officers fill in when a dispatcher is not on duty, normally as part of their inside office duties, with some overtime required. When on duty and not handling calls the dispatcher performs extensive data entry on all reports prepared by the police, such as lengthy arrest reports, act as matron for female persons in the holding pens.

Laws Administered, Programs and Reporting Requirements

The following statutes form the basis for policing activity: State Penal Code; State Vehicle; Traffic Law; State Health law and local noise and garbage dumping law, as well as assisting on animal control needs. Regular reporting requirements include:

1. Ongoing transmittal to State DMV on summons issued
2. Arrest Records sent to County District Attorneys office

3. Monthly Police Calls for Service, by Type for Emergency (18 categories) and Non Emergency (17 categories) by shift
4. Activity for Month, with the following information to Village Board:
 - a. Number of persons arrested
 - b. Number of Charges (by type felony, misdemeanor, violation and village ordinance)
 - c. Vehicle & traffic summons issued
 - d. Parking summons issued
 - e. Police Vehicles: total mileage and gasoline used
5. Other Monthly Reports
 - a. Incident Based Reporting (IBR) – to NYS DCJS Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) –to FBI
 - b. Alarm billing reports to Village Clerk
 - c. Fees collected reports to VC
 - d. Street light outage reports to NYSEG
 - e. Operation Safeguard Initiatives to Homeland Security
 - f. Juvenile Aid Bureau reports to Sullivan Co. Youth Bureau
 - g. MV Accident & Uniform Traffic Reports – To DMV
 - h. Domestic Reports and Child Abuse/Neglect reports to DCJS

Constituency Served

Residents, property owners, businesses in the village and shoppers and other persons visiting and passing through the village and the Liberty School District.

Work Load- Quantity of Services

The police department has an extensive record of annual/monthly department activity measures from the reports noted above, that include calls for services by type, actions taken and vehicle mileage. We have copies of a just a few selective months/years at this juncture, but more can be obtained. Here is some summary recent annual data:

	2005	2006	2007
Calls for Service	5,978	5,705	6,539
Arrests	644	849	905
Uniform traffic Tickets	1,781	1,701	2,036
Parking tickets	589	349	405
Police vehicle mileage	100,297	96,347	116,027

Personnel are required to make ongoing often extensive court appearances – there are six regular village court dates normally every month. The Department handles all of its own investigations within and outside the village regarding crimes occurring inside the village done by residents and non-residents.

About 4 man-hours per school day are allocated to traffic control and safety associated with school buses and students since all 3 schools of the Liberty school district (elementary, middle and high school) are located within the village., besides the officer assigned full-time to the School District.

The Department conducts most of its own extensive state required training at its own range and has officers who are state certified as range trainers and a budget allocation of about \$20,000 for training.

Coordination and Shared Services

The Police Department obtains ongoing forensic and laboratory assistance from the State Police. Troop F Headquarters are nearby on Route 17, and numerous sub-stations are located in the County and nearby counties are nearby. The State Police and the County Sheriff provide policing in the Town of Liberty and most elsewhere in the County. Only Monticello Village and the Town of Fallsburgh have full-time police, besides Liberty, and Woodbridge Village has a part-time force.

The Village PD works with the County Probation division on intakes of individuals. It does not regularly patrol Route 17 within the village jurisdiction, leaving that to the State police but may assist on major accidents and. On major complex investigations it will get assistance from State Police and will coordinate as appropriate with the County Sheriffs office.

The village DPW mechanic provides normal maintenance services and certain repair needs for the police vehicles (see below). The Police report concerns of unsafe buildings and other property code violations to the village's code enforcement officer.

The Village's Emergency Dispatch operations are tied into the County's E-911 system. Calls from inside the village go initially to the County 911 Center than get transferred to the Village's Communications Center. The village encourages its residents and business and other entities to call the village communications center directly for emergency assistance, since it saves some time. Lt Mir indicated that he thought the County 911 system was clogged with non-emergency calls.

Office Space and Equipment

The Police headquarter is attached to Village Hall is antiquated, and very cramped for police staff and operations. The Department currently has 4 patrol sedan vehicles and one SUV- model years 2005 to 2007, all on three year leasing and in good condition. Also 8 additional vehicles with high mileage owned after leasing that are not used for patrolling.

It leases a new vehicle every year. In addition, it has an SUV confiscated from a drug related arrest. Rising gasoline costs has caused spending beyond the budgeted amount.

The police department needs some new computers and printers and it radios are antiquated and should be replaced. Recently, it received through a grant a thermal imaging surveillance camera system from the US Dep't of Homeland Security and is field testing it.

Increase in Program Workload –Federal/State Mandates

The village has annexed some residential and commercial properties, a housing development and car wash- off Route 52 east of Route 17. A proposed major subsidized housing development, sponsored by the Village Town CDC, for modest income households is being planned within the village. These actions can increase the workload of the police department.

The Village and most of Sullivan County towns and villages have experienced many years of increasing adverse socio-economic conditions- modest incomes, growth in poor people and transients and a poor economic base without adequate good jobs - leading to more policing requirements. It appears from the activity data shown above, that calls for services and arrests have increased between 2005 and 2007, and could worsen in to the near term given the current national economic downturn.

The police department has had to transition to a new computer software system and is now tied into the national Incident Management System

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Program Function: Public Works Department including Streets Maintenance, Water Department, Sewer Department, Trash and Recycling

Budget Allocation

The total Departmental Budget of \$3,264,483 represents 52% of the total Village Budget. Overall budget increased 5% from 2007 to 2008. Trash and Recycling budget increase likely due to proper allocation of personnel. All departments shown are supported entirely by revenues in budget.

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>%Diff</u>
Streets Maintenance	\$932,525	\$982,291	5% –
Water Dept	\$813,984	\$787,169	3% +
Sewer Dept	\$892,226	\$849,784	5% +
Trash and Recycling	\$625,748	\$544,583	15% +

Administration and Supervision

Mayor William (Rube) Smith serves as the Interim Director of the Village Department of Public Works and oversees the functions of Streets, Buildings and Grounds, Water Plant operations, Wastewater Plant operations, and Trash and Recycling Programs. Rube has been functioning in these dual roles for nearly 6 years and has plans to continue in the positions as long as he is elected and the Board will continue to support the concept. Management of the separate departments is achieved with the help of working foreman appointed by the Mayor. A strong working relationship has also been established with the Collective Bargaining Unit representing the Village employees.

Laws Administered and Programs

Water and Wastewater treatment plants are operated under NYS Department of Health and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation regulations respectively and require licensed operators for both functions. The Trash and Recycling programs are governed by a locally administered Program and subject to the appropriate NYSDEC Solid Waste regulations.

Regular reports are required to be prepared as follows:

- Daily Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR's) for the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Monthly DEC compliance reports for the Water and Wastewater treatment plants.
- Annual Capacity reports for the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Annual Water Quality Certification Report for the Water Treatment Plant

Constituency Served

The Public Works functions serve virtually every resident and business within the Village.

Work Load- Quantity of Services

Rube's work philosophy is very basic; he simply asks that all employees give an honest, full days work; employees work together and be willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done; be open-minded and willing to share work tasks as needed.

Discernible progress toward efficient program deliver has been made in each of the Departments over the last six years. Streets and building crews have essentially tripled their work output with an organized, cooperative approach toward such functions as summer paving through resource sharing with the Town and other Village Departments.

Operation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant is now handled with a three man crew, two licensed operators and one laborer/trainee, down from three operators and two laborers. Water department operations have been similarly trimmed to a more efficient level without compromising the level of service and/or quality.

The Development of a comprehensive Trash and Recycling program has had a dramatic effect on the cost of program services in this area. Prior to Rube's administration no recycling program existed within the Village meaning the Village was collecting and disposing of additional tonnage resulting in unnecessary additional tipping fees. With a well defined and run recycling program the Village has seen a substantial reduction in the cost of their Trash and Recycling program. Rube also noted that a key factor in the success of the program has been the Village's willingness to institute and strictly enforce the recycling rules and not hesitate to levy hefty fines on non-conformists.

Coordination and Shared Services

Internal coordination between the Village departments and personnel has reaped the biggest benefit for the Village in terms of cost savings. Inter-departmental assistance and flexibility has been encouraged for all employees. As an example of the benefits realized with this philosophy Rube related how an equipment repair at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which previously would have been contracted to a vendor at a cost of several thousand dollars, was completed by one of the DPW mechanics at a fraction of the cost. Asked why this was not handled this way in the past the mechanic commented that "no one had ever asked".

Additionally, a stronger working relationship has been established between the Village and the Town Highway Department. Equipment is shared when possible, paving is accomplished using the Town's paving equipment, the Town and Village trucks, and personnel from both departments. It is estimated that more than triple the amount of paving has been accomplished within the Village in recent years.

Office Space and Equipment

Mayor Smith indicated that he had no real substantive issues with the DPW facility. Equipment philosophy was to emphasize heavy maintenance on equipment in an effort to extend service life as long as possible to avoid replacement costs when possible. Key pieces of equipment such as a new sewer jetting truck have recently been purchased and, when possible, are shared with the Town.

The Wastewater Treatment plant is approximately 20 years old and appears to be in generally good condition. Equipment is maintained well and the buildings show little signs of age. The collection system is a mix of new and old infrastructure. As found in similar communities, issues exist with the older pipes that contribute to a fairly serious Inflow and Infiltration problem contributing flows 5 times above normal during significant rain events.

The Water Treatment Plant was upgrade within the last ten years with seven miles of new transmission main installed during a recent project funded with a Small Cities Grant. No known issue exist within the water system and according to Rube, the system appears to be paying its own way.

The Trash and Recycling Program has seen the most dramatic turnaround within the Department of Public Works. As mentioned earlier Rube estimates the well defined program has lowered the Village's costs in excess of \$150,000 over the last several years.

High on Mayor Smith's priority list is replacement of the Village Hall. The building has a whole host of deficiencies not the least of which is its poor, inefficient layout, the fact that it is not handicap accessible, and in dire need of repair. Here is where Rube feels the Village and Town could reap the most benefit from a combined effort to finance and build a joint Village/Town municipal building.

Future Issues

Mayor Smith is confident that, given the opportunity to manage the Village operation for another five years, he could have the Village program functions organized and delivered in a cost effective manner that would eliminate the need to raise taxes in the future.

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Program Function: Code Enforcement

See Program Function: Town Building Department/Code Enforcement on beginning on page 26.

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Program Function: Liberty Community Development Corporation

Budget allocation 2008

There is no specific line dedicated to the CDC in either the Town or Village budget.

Program Functions and Management

Note: The Liberty Community Development Corporation is an example of consolidation of services between the Town and Village. For description of this function, see page 15.

IDENTIFICATION OF INFORMATION NEEDED BUT NOT YET PROVIDED

Following program elements are still to be completed by the consultant:

- An operational, facilities and engineering analysis will be presented for each functional area, including water and sewer services, solid waste management, transportation and major public works functions.
- An evaluation of Town and Village buildings as to utility and space utilization.

NEXT STEPS

Following consultation with the Joint Study Committee at its scheduled April 3, 2008 meeting, the next phase of this study is the consultant's **Analysis of Data and Information and Preparation of Recommendations.**

Subsequent steps, as shown in the **Timeline** on page 49 are:

- Meeting with Joint Study Committee for review and approval for final development of prospective opportunities for consolidating selected services (late June).
- Meeting with Joint Committee to discuss identified opportunities for shared services (September)
- Present Draft Report for Comment (late October)
- Public Meetings to discuss Draft Report recommendations (late November)
- Present Final Report to Town & Village Boards (by December 31)

Study Timeline

