

**Subject: Springtime! Ah, the budget talks!**

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**Conversation:** Springtime! Ah, the budget talks!

Greetings, Neighbors!

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>>RTA SALES TAX INCREASE, Tues., 4/1

>>BIPARTISAN RESPONSE TO CN ACQUISITION

...and around the town with DPN

We've been tweaking the DPN web site and installing a new email system. We needed much more capacity for our ever-growing email list; that mean more software—let's hope we set our switches right! We plan to send more frequent (but not too frequent) and shorter emails. But remember, the web site is updated at least several times a week, so check in there. We appreciate your feedback if anyone encounters problems.

>>**VODP BOT SPECIAL MEETING** Mon., 3/31, 7pm, the Barn, BUDGET. To quote the *Barrington Courier* online, **"After the .5 percent sales-tax increase referendum was defeated in February the board is looking at alternative options for funding the roads program."** Indeed! What residents tell us is that when the public funding of Vehe property development ends, there should be plenty of money for the rest of the village.

Sure, we're stuck maintaining the Barn (which had flooding issues a few weeks ago and toilet issues during the Feb. polling), but as far as ongoing improvements? The Tot Lot (which should have been completed long ago), the "floating island," a bridge, other landscaping and outbuilding improvements: Yes much of this was in the original budget. But the contractor didn't finish the work, and another \$800,000 or so went to Pepper to fix what was undone or done badly. So in our opinion, Vehe Foundation should NOT get another bite at the apple.

Oh, and still no complete accounting of the Vehe project spending. We certainly would like to see that BEFORE any Foundation requests are even discussed.

The budget talks are the perfect way to know which trustee feels what way about specific spending. You may want to take notes; there's an election next April.

>> **PLAN COMMISSION MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING**, Mon., 4/14, 7pm, the Barn. Agenda and Public Hearing notice posted on our “Docs and DVDs” page. PC meetings are very interesting, well run and informative. The hearing is on proposed changes to Village code on accessory buildings—that means sheds and pool houses and the like. Other matters on the agenda, see our “Docs and DVDs” page.

Speaking of Vehe, Trustee Joel Rotter is concerned about the wording of the sweeping indemnification clause in the Vehe management contract recently signed between the Village and the foundation. We’re pretty worried about that clause, too. All Joel is asking for is clarification as to the effect of that clause—and if you haven’t read that contract, visit our Docs and DVDs page. We think this wording is wrong: “in or not opposed to the best interests of the Foundation....” Shouldn’t this contract protect the best interests of the VILLAGE? Shouldn’t there be consequences for work done badly or not at all?

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>> Canadian National acquisition—this continues to be the hottest topic in our emails and web site. Please visit our Editorials and Hot Button pages for more. At stake are our public safety, emergency services, air and water pollution, the proposed STAR rail line and lots more. We realize that many people have the “it’s a done deal” attitude, but if Deer Park Neighbors stands for one thing, it’s for the voices of individuals. Be informed, and then speak out—loudly and often. CN is the “Hot Button” on our web site; anyone can quickly catch up on the issues, impacts and possible remediations. This is the time to keep the pressure on our public officials.

>> Quentin School may be on the chopping block...again. We’ve posted a recent story on our Press and Education pages. Is districting inevitable? We may be looking at a two-year window on moving our kids.

So, what about this snow? Wow. At the March meeting, we learned that Ela Township will no longer provide snow plowing for village. It seems our cul de sacs and their equipment are not compatible. And Trustee Kellermann is already working so hard on roads and drainage, but finding a new vendor is one more challenge.

Speaking of Trustee Kellermann, he was confronted at the Feb. BOT meeting by Pat Winkleman (pres., Vehe Foundation) at to HOW he voted on the sales tax referendum and WHERE he expected to get funds for roads and drainage. Of course, Pat knows we have a private ballot system here in the US. We also are sure that Pat and her cohorts didn’t mean

to deplete the village checking account with their visions for Vehe. So the question to Pat is, where does she think the monies for roads will come from?

If we don't waste it at Vehe, there is money coming in. December sales tax receipts were up about 25% from the December before, a whopping \$260,000. Just as we predicted during the sales tax discussions. Way to shop! The new hotel is underway; guests will have to eat and shop, too. Even with the new RTA tax, at 7%, we enjoy a significant advantage over our Cook County neighbors. Ask at the Apple and AT&T stores (as we did), and they'll tell you that potential buyers call ahead to check the sales tax.

>>Tues., April 1, New Sales Tax in effect, .5% in DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will on all goods, including food, prescription and non prescription medicines. These are NOT local taxes, but those imposed by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) for public transportation and public safety projects.

>>Red Light Cameras: Well, our board is leaning in favor of these devices, and just in time, too, as Kildeer is looking at its own camera for Rand at Quentin. It's time to get off the dime on this. Either we gain more proceeds from tickets or we slow down the traffic as people come to know where the cameras are. The vendor is qualified, there's no investment on our part to speak of, and certainly lives to be saved.

Here's some wonderful news out of the March BOT meeting. President Gifford thinks that the village ought to be informing residents more often, and he thinks the village should cut loose some additional dollars for more frequent newsletters.

Scott, we applaud your sentiment, but isn't your communications plan a bit one-way? Instead of "informing residents," why not dialogue with them! We urge you to schedule more "town hall" meetings, like the recent Parks and then Roads/Drainage forums. Come down off of the dais, and engage with a broad spectrum of residents. The Barn is free, no paper, no postage. DPN and local papers would be happy to publicize these events. What do you say, Scott?

As the last of the snow melts, let's all take a breath and focus on new beginnings and new opportunities. The rest of this year can set the stage for a brighter future for all of us. But like all new things, the future requires nurturing. Remember, responsibility begins at home.

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