

Message From Mayor Susan Renda

Dear Resident,

Council passed the Village's annual budget at its March 8 meeting. We met in committee the preceding week to thoroughly discuss the budget and finances of the Village. As you may know, the financial bottom line of many Ohio communities has decreased significantly over the last eight years due to the elimination of the estate tax in Ohio, the dramatic decrease in the state's Local Government Fund, and the elimination of reimbursements from the state. Moreland Hills is not exempt from the effects of the loss of revenue. The Village has lost, on average, nearly \$350,000 per year because of the actions of the state.

In 2014 and 2015, expenses for the Village were significantly higher than revenues. That situation did not occur again in 2016, because we chose to have a very small road program and did not incur major capital expenses. However, we need to consistently fund road repairs to maintain the roads in good condition. Furthermore, service trucks and police cars need to be replaced regularly.

Thankfully, the Village's reserves are sufficient to carry us over in the short term because of our sound fiscal management over the last decade. However, the current situation is unsustainable in the long run. Our Treasurer, Prashant Shah, estimates that we will completely deplete our reserves in the next five to six years. Because Village government has been fiscally prudent and frugal, there is no fat to be trimmed from the budget. We have shared programs, equipment and personnel with other communities as much as possible. Cutting expenses at this point would mean cutting crucial programs or critical personnel.

Residents have had to pay income tax in Moreland Hills since 1977; the rate has remained steady at 1 percent since then. More than 90 percent of the communities in Cuyahoga Co. have a higher tax rate than Moreland Hills, and 17 communities have a tax rate that is higher than 2 percent. Only six of the 56 communities in the county have a tax rate of 1

percent or less. Mr. Shah explained that 72 percent of the Village's revenues come from income tax on the residents; 17 percent comes from property taxes; and the remaining revenue comes from other sources, including interest income, licenses, fees, etc.

When computing property tax rates as a percentage of market value, Moreland Hills' rate is in about the middle of all the communities in the county. Given the largely residential nature of the Village, maintaining the roads and the police and service departments falls to the residents.

I know this is not good news, but it is the reality of the situation. Council and the administration will continue to discuss the issue of timing, amount and type of taxes. However, I want to let you know that asking you, the residents, for a tax increase is no longer a matter of "if" but "when."

No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow. Come on spring!

- Mayor Susan Renda

Safety Corner

Spring is the time when weather can change very quickly. Plan ahead for severe weather, and keep an emergency kit on hand. Some items to include are:

- Battery-operated flashlight, battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio and extra batteries
- List of important information, including insurance and medical information
- Phone numbers for utility companies
- Emergency first aid kit that includes non-latex gloves, assortment of adhesive bandages, antibiotic ointment and sterile gauze pads
- 3-5 day supply of food and bottled water
- Personal hygiene items

Practice an emergency plan with your family. Make sure everyone knows where emergency supplies are stored, as well as how to turn off the water, gas and electricity in your home.

Blue Tip: Plant a Rain Garden

A watershed is all the terrain in a given area that drains to a single point—a lake, stream, wetland or even the ocean.

Your yard is part of the Chagrin River watershed. According to the Center for Watershed Protection, "Nature doesn't see the world in terms of municipal or site boundaries. Anything you do affects everyone else who lives in your watershed. That includes the people, but also the animals and plants."

One way to help maintain your part of the watershed is to plant a rain garden. Excess runoff can cause flooding and stream-bank erosion during rainstorms. Creating a rain garden with native grasses, trees and shrubs gives runoff from your home's downspouts a chance to soak naturally into the ground. Adding a rain barrel allows you to capture that runoff and use it to water gardens.

The Village is hosting a Rain Barrel Workshop on Tuesday, May 9, 6-7:30 p.m. The cost of the workshop is \$60. A Service Department employee can deliver your completed barrel to you, and the Village will waive the \$10 inspection fee.

**Village Offices will be closed
Friday, April 14, for Good Friday.**

Mayor

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Council

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Ordinances and Resolutions

The following Ordinances & Resolutions were passed in March:

Ordinance 2017-11 – amends Section 1151.13 (p)(2) “Fences and Walls in Rear Yards,” and Section 1345.05, “Fences and Walls in Rear Yards,” of the Codified Ordinances to require fences to be at least 50 percent open in rear yards, as is already required for fences in front yards. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-12 – amends Section 1183.09 “Signs in Residential Districts,” and Section 1325.08, “Subdivision Development Signs,” of the Codified Ordinances to remove the prohibition on illuminated signs. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-13 – amends Chapter 1151, “U-1 Dwelling House District Regulations” of the Codified Ordinances to prohibit front facing, attached garages and providing an exception for attached garages located on Wiltshire Road, Ellendale Road, and Berkeley Avenue. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-14 – amends Section 1173.07 (f)(1), “Uses Prohibited in Riparian Setbacks,” of the Codified Ordinances to permit construction of small structures in the Riparian setback. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-15 – amends Section 1151.07 (f), “Schedule 1151.07 Minimum Setback Requirements,” of the Codified Ordinances to amend “Footnote (c)” to maintain its original intent but to clarify its application in the case of irregularly shaped lot or dwelling designed with today’s architectural features. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-16 – amends certain sections of the Codified Ordinances to establish a 10 percent maximum gradient for the construction of driveways, so as not to create

ingress and egress risks for Village safety vehicles and personnel. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-17 – amends certain sections of the Codified Ordinances to establish setbacks and other regulations for air conditioning, air handling equipment, and pool equipment to minimize negative impacts on abutting property owners. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-18 – amends Section 1149.01 “Establishment of Districts,” of the Codified Ordinances to amend the table contained within the section to reflect the addition of the new planned development district (U-5 Chagrin Northwest & Planned Development Conservation District). **Placed on First Reading and Referred to Planning Commission**

Ordinance 2017-19 – amends Section 1173.05, “Regulations for the Cutting of Trees,” and Section 1353.06 “Conditions of Permit; Bond,” of the Codified Ordinances to require that any person cutting trees be required to remove the stump. **Placed on Second Reading**

Ordinance 2017-20 – establishes the permanent appropriations for the fiscal year 2017 for the Village. This ordinance establishes our yearly budget.

Cuyahoga Co. Library Survey

The Cuyahoga County Public Library wants to hear what people in their communities would like to see offered as far as free programs.

Please visit the site below and complete the short survey by August 1.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCPLprogramsurvey>

Historical Society Events

April 9 - Planning Event

2:30 p.m., 4355 SOM Center Rd.

May 20 - Docent Training

10 a.m. at the Garfield Cabin. Contact Sandra V., 216.752.7581

May 20 - Community Pot Luck Lunch

12 p.m. at the Community Center

June 4 – Garfield Cabin Open House

10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Village Hall. Music, food and tours lead by Mr. & Mrs. Garfield

November 4 - Benefit for Garfield Cabin

Time TBD, at Chagrin Valley Country Club

Coming Events

Chipping Week - April 17-21

Please make sure your materials are placed curbside the weekend prior to the scheduled pick up date and are bundled and tied with the branches cut no longer than 4 feet in length. No logs or tree stumps, please. The Service Dept. will work their way through the Village throughout the week, weather permitting.

Greening the Hills - May 6

9 a.m.-noon. See attached flier for more information. Hope to see you there!

Rain Barrel Workshop - May 9

6-7:30 p.m. in the Community Building. Hosted by the Cuyahoga Co. Soil and Water Conservation District. Each participant will construct a 60-gallon rain barrel. Register online at cuyahogawcd.org/events, or contact Jacki Zevenbergen at 216.524.6580, ext. 20. Cost is \$60.

Village of Moreland Hills

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