

**TOWN OF LAPOINTE
PUBLIC HEARING: 2013 BUDGET
MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2012
AT TOWN HALL AT 5:00 PM**

The list of those present is attached.

I. Call to Order at 5:03 PM

II. The purpose of this Public Hearing is to discuss the 2013 proposed budget.

Pete Clark, Town Administrator, explained the process by which the budget was created: department heads gave their input; then meetings were held with each department head. There followed a series of budget workshops covering each department. Then all budget requests were consolidated and reductions were made. The 2013 budget meets the levy limit.

Greg Nelson added that no resolution to raise the levy will be needed.

Ham Ross thanked the department heads for their cooperation in making budget cuts. The budget will need to increase at some future point, but for this year it is a tight budget. He explained that every department felt the cuts, and he thanked the Town Administrator for his efforts regarding the budget. He ended by endorsing the budget.

Greg Nelson added that the majority of the cuts were from designated funds. The Griggs Approach project [\$133,000 total cost; \$56,000 received in grants] was put on hold. The permits expire in June, and so the decision regarding whether to proceed with this project will be determined based on the severity of this winter. He explained that the permit would not likely be renewed, so that proceeding in a timely fashion would likely require financing of the additional \$77,000.

Larry Whalen stated that he objects to the cut made to the Zoning Department's legal expense line item [This item reduced to zero].

Greg Nelson responded that he thought the plan was to return some funding to the Zoning Department's line item for legal expenses.

Pete Clark added that a modest amount will be added back, and when that is exhausted, it will be replenished. He added that he feels a need to monitor expenses across the board.

Greg Nelson stated that if the people approve the budget, it can still be tweaked. There are some changes that are already planned.

Nick Nelson emphasized the need for returning some EMS wages and budget and referred to micro-management of EMS.

Pete Clark acknowledged that some reductions will need to be reinstated and that there are resources that can be accessed; however, everyone must understand that the Town's resources are down and it has to do more with less. He added that no longer does any one receive "the largess of the Town;" however, the best interest of the public will be served in the areas of public safety, wise land use and resource management.

Greg Nelson stated that the cuts seem small against a three-million dollar budget. He explained the end of fiscal year process and added that he feels there will be funds available after all the 2012 bills have been paid.

Jim Patterson reiterated that the 2013 budget does not require an increase in the levy request.

Burke Henry asked when the levy limit was last exceeded. No one was positive of the answer.

Burke Henry added that he doesn't think that the Town should talk like it has a lot of money. He cited area budgets that are down [Bayfield School District, the State of Wisconsin, Ashland County]. He added that he wants a tight budget.

Ham Ross said that the budget is "cut to the bone."

Burke Henry said he thought he heard a Board member say that the Town did not increase the levy.

Greg Nelson stated that the Town did not exceed the levy limit.

Dave Thomas asked if property taxes will increase.

Greg Nelson said yes.

Dave Thomas asked what more could be cut from the budget in order to not raise taxes at all.

Mike Starck answered, "\$62,000," and explained how he arrived at that figure.

Greg Nelson explained that the biggest part of the budget is wages, and that the COLA was actually reduced from what some departments requested. All employees were given a 1.5% increase for cost of living.

Burke Henry shared some percentages of growth that he calculated:

Since the year 2000, the levy has increased 158%

The CPI is up 138%

The Town's growth is up 136.5%

Bayfield School District is up 211%

Sarah Schram read her letter protesting the cuts to the EMS budget and how they were achieved.

Greg Nelson said that when one department's wages are up 16%, it gets the attention of the Town Board. He ended by commending the work of Pete Clark.

III. Adjournment at 5:30 PM

Submitted by Patty Hobin, Town Clerk

Approved as submitted on 12/11/12

Patty Hobin, Town Clerk