

**TOWN OF LA POINTE  
PUBLIC HEARING: 2011 BUDGET  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2010  
Immediately following a Public Hearing regarding  
A Special Assessment for Miller Farm Rd.  
At Town Hall**

Called to order at 5:38 PM

Board Members Present: Beth Fischlowitz, Jim Patterson, Greg Nelson, Ham Ross, Larry Whalen

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to discuss the 2011 proposed budget.

Ham Ross began by saying that he feels the Town Board has done a great job on the budget and that cut backs were made.

Greg Nelson pointed out that although the budget did increase this year, over the past ten years it has been cyclical: up some years & down the next. He also said that the Board feels the increase is justified because the Town is saving for future projects rather than borrowing. He added that it would not be difficult to get the increase down to a minimal amount if that is the will of the Townspeople.

Burke Henry stated that the budget is too high, that the Town Board is asking for things that are not required. He asked Keith Sowl why the \$25,000 for the North Shore Rd. ravine is not \$15,000.

Keith Sowl replied that that figure would not be accurate.

Henry remarked that Sowl did not justify the \$25,000 either.

Sowl responded that he has experience in culvert replacement.

Henry asked about the proposed repair to the Clubhouse walkway: what consequence would occur if that project were dropped.

Sowl responded that it is a wash-out area and hazardous; he further stated that that project was supposed to be done last year.

Henry then questioned the \$125,000 being taken from the checking account and transferred to the 2011 Budget.

Sowl responded that \$100,000 of that is for seal coating which will need to be done in the next two to four years.

Henry then asked for an accounting of the use of the gravel.

Sowl presented a map showing the use of the gravel.

Henry requested a spreadsheet instead.  
Sowl replied that that could be done.

Henry then asked about \$25,000 budgeted for a trail upgrade.

Sowl replied that the upgrade is designed for the hauling of equipment.

Henry asked why.

Sowl responded that the equipment is heavier now.

Henry then drew attention to the Parks proposed budget. He felt that \$25,000 of that budgeted amount is not accounted for in the budget.

Beth Fischlowitz replied that nothing in the budget is not accounted for; the figure represents two years of room accommodations tax.

Henry asked if the \$100,000 in the Parks proposed budget is budget neutral.

Fischlowitz replied that it is, to the best of her knowledge.

Henry stated that the revenue is covered except for \$21,000.

Fischlowitz said that that is not her understanding.

Robin Trinko-Russell asked if the upgrade of the Park was under discussion.

Greg Nelson replied that there were many complaints regarding Big Bay Town Park, and that the Town is in the very early stages of doing something about them.

Trinko-Russell said she thinks it's a good idea, that the Park draws revenue.

Henry pointed out that the Town is asking the Townspeople to write a check (tax money) in January for a planned future improvement to the Park.

Ham Ross replied that nothing has been decided yet.

Beth Fischlowitz said that the whole park situation is covered in the budget and that the Town Board was seeking to avoid paying interest.

Gary Russell stated that there has been two or three years of intense work on the infrastructure and that he thought the coming year would a "normal" one. He added that 10.7% is a lot of increase. He asked if the new back hoe (cost of \$105,000) could be purchased in 2012. Keith Sowl replied that there is no payment on the backhoe in 2011.

Ham Ross asked Burke Henry how much taxes are going up.

Henry replied: 8%

Ross asked: Based on what? The mill rate?

Henry replied: based on the budget as presented.

Arnie Nelson thanked the Town Board members for the time they spent working on the budget but said he felt that the consensus of the townspeople is that 10.7% is a bit high. He suggested an adopted tax levy of between three & five percent of last year's levy.

Mike Starck said that he feels the tax levy should be two to three percent. At 2% the budget would need to be reduced by \$134,000 and at 3% the reduction would need to be \$118,000. He referred to money that the Town Board is "salting away" for future projects.

Robin Trinko-Russell requested that the Park planning not be eliminated because that is an investment.

Greg Nelson said that the Town Board will abide by the will of the Town **regarding the 2011 budget.**

Ham Ross added that the thinking of the Board was to avoid borrowing, but if the Town has to borrow money down the road, "so be it."

Mary Ross pointed out that the new ambulance was purchased for the Town with no borrowing done because there had been a designated fund for the purchase. Her advice was to be careful where the cuts occur.

Robin Trinko-Russell agreed with having funds for future purchases.

Lois Carlson stated that she supports spending on parks & infrastructure.

Mike Starck referred to the \$25,000 contingency fund as a "slush fund."

Dave Hackett said that he supports fixing the Park but would oppose an RV park across the street from it.

Motion to adjourn. Mike Anderson/Mike Starck All in favor. MC  
Meeting adjourned at 6:23 PM  
Submitted by Patty Hobin, Town Clerk

Approved as corrected on 12/14/10: addition in boldface & underlined  
***Patty Hobin, Town Clerk***