

TOWN OF LA POINTE
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING

2012 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

At 5:00 PM At Town Hall

Present: Beth Fischlowitz, Jim Patterson, Greg Nelson, Ham Ross, Larry Whalen
Dept. Heads: Keith Sowl, Michael Dalzell
Committee Chairs present: Jerry Smith

I. Call to Order at 5:13 PM

Beth Fischlowitz suggested moving items C & D up in the agenda.

II. Budget Workshops with each of the following departments:

A. Roads presented by Keith Sowl, Town Foreman

Ham Ross questioned the fact that Sowl had no wage increase in his budget.

Sowl replied that he was aware that the Town Board has always given any increase to all employees in all departments.

Greg Nelson stated that balancing any Cost of Living Adjustment with the change in how retirement is deducted from employee pay checks is something the Town Board will have to iron out.

Sowl stated that he did ask for raises for two employees so that their take-home pay would be stable.

Ham Ross pointed out that one of them got a substantial raise last year and that he feels the Town has many fine employees and should be fair to all of them.

Greg Nelson pointed out that road maintenance expenditures were the highest they've been since 2008.

Sowl replied that this was because of the purchase of calcium chloride.

Ham Ross asked how much was used.

Sowl estimated that 25,200 gallons had been used.

Greg Nelson asked about designated ["roll over"] funds.

Sowl stated that he put \$50,000 from the North Shore ravine project (which didn't get done this year) and \$50,000 from Parks Capital Improvement into the Big Bay Town Park improvement project.

Ham Ross asked how bad the North Shore ravine is.

Sowl stated that if the filter cloth blows out the whole road is going. He further stated that the engineering & easements for this project are all done and ready to go.

Discussion followed regarding other road projects—chip and crack sealing specifically.

Greg Nelson questioned the broad range of estimates given for a replacement pick up truck.

Sowl responded that if the orange truck dies, there will be a need for a replacement; he believes he can purchase a pick up from Ashland County and has budgeted \$10,000 for it. [Clerk's note: this truck is not the one to which Greg Nelson referred.]

1. Griggs Approach Ramp Project: Ham Ross began by presenting the consensus of the local residents and adds that he will be abstaining from any vote.

Mike Fauerbach, the Town attorney, has asked for more time to research this issue.

Greg Nelson pointed out that the Town has no say over what occurs on the lake bed. He asked what happens to the approach repair if the Department of Natural Resources squashes the dock project. [Clerk's note: the DNR grant for this project requires that a dock be built as well as a ramp.]

Keith Sowl suggested that the Town could abandon the DNR grant and just go for the Wisconsin Coastal Management Grant for the ramp.

Ham Ross stated that his family does not object to the ramp or to the boat launch--just the dock, but he feels that the only reason the dock has to be included is that the State grant comes with strings attached.

Greg Nelson stated that a dock at this location may be more realistic than a big harbor project.

Beth Fischlowitz asked what would happen if the Town chose to do nothing at all at the Griggs Approach (What would be the dollar impact?). Foreman Keith Sowl replied that the dock was \$10,000 to \$15,000 of the first grant.

Fischlowitz asked if the Town could get the Wisconsin Coastal Management [WCM] Grant for the just the ramp.

Sowl didn't know for sure but indicated that if the Town keeps applying, the WCM would give it.

Fischlowitz asked the non-monetary impact of doing nothing.

Sowl replied that it depends on the lake level; it's been very low but could come up.

Ham Ross stated that the number one priority is a ramp for the Town to use in winter.

Beth Fischlowitz stated that it appears to her that "access" is the key word with the WCM: the more access, the more money they're willing to give.

Sowl responded that this is not the case with the DNR.

Greg Nelson stated that since the grant was only covering so much of the cost of the project, his greatest fear was that the Town would be committed to a huge expense.

The consensus was to postpone any decision while waiting for more information.

B. Parks & Recreation: presented by Keith Sowl, Town Foreman. Sowl began by saying that he would like to move the remainder of the Parks budget (around \$24,000) to a designated fund. The Parks budget includes no raises for Park staff and no added staff for the reservation system. Sowl went on to say that he thinks the Town will have very little out-of-pocket expense for the Big Bay Town Park project; the Town crew will do almost all of the labor.

C. Harbors & Docks: presented by Jerry Smith, Harbors Committee Chair. Smith began by saying that the Harbor Committee is still waiting to hear proposals from JJR, the company they hired to research & present ideas for the harbors. He pointed out that the net funds of \$30,000 may still be returned to the Town, but that some of it may need to be spent if the Town chooses to have a matching fund for grants. Smith stated that once the Harbor Committee hears from JJR, they can begin to make some decisions: these will likely be presented to the Town Board at the first Board meeting in December. Greg Nelson pointed out that for the purpose of the 2012 budget, December is too late. Smith asked what he should do about the \$30,000. Greg Nelson suggested that he seek help from Administrative Assistant Barb Nelson.

D. Airport: presented by Michael Dalzell, Airport Manager. [Dalzell was very sick and much of what he said was inaudible on the tape.] Dalzell began by saying that his budget is much the same as last year's. However, the airport is expecting to lose the revenue from Superieur Petrol's industrial lot lease. They have not left yet, but are expected to. Town Foreman Keith Sowl asked Dalzell about the Airport Improvement Plan. Dalzell was to have requested the 2011 unspent Airport Capital Outlay budgeted funds of \$5,000 to be put into the Airport Designated Fund account in 2011. However, he said the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics is planning to do an upgrade to the runway lighting in 2012, and the Town's share would be \$7,250 and would be paid from that same Airport Designated Fund.

III. Adjournment at 6:35 PM

Submitted by Patty Hobin, Town Clerk
Approved as submitted on November 8, 2011
Patty Hobin, Clerk