

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD  
WORK SESSION**

**June 29, 2021**

Present: Supervisor Lewis Grubham  
Councilman Robert Weingartner  
Councilwoman Katie Legg  
Councilman William Diffendorf, Jr.  
Councilman Arthur Shafer

Also Present: Robert McKertich, Attorney  
Kelley Diffendorf, Town Clerk  
John A. Finch Jr., Commissioner of Public Works

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**1. Discussion – Jessica Kinney - \$20.00 per week stipend for cleaning code building. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham explained that Jessica Kinney is cleaning the code building. We didn't hire the company that is doing our other buildings to clean up there. Jessica Kinney is requesting that she get paid for it. I'm proposing that we give her an extra \$20 a week, not in her paycheck but in a stipend in addition to her paycheck. Councilman Shafer said if we went with the cleaning company it would cost us more money. Supervisor Grubham said it would cost us well over \$200 for the same work. We are saving at least \$100. I think it's beneficial to both her and us.

**Resolution.**

**2. Discussion – Energy Savings – Lighting. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said this is the energy savings summary for changing to LED lighting in all our buildings. All the numbers are in the included packet. The Town Hall and Code Building has a project cost of about \$7500 to change all the lighting in both buildings. We will get an incentive back from NYSEG for \$1285, so the final cost would be \$6273. We save an average of \$110 a month on our bill, which is an annual savings of \$1300. The payback period is about 56 months which is a little over 4 years. After that the cost would be paid for and we keep saving each month.

This is a direct wire system which is the way it should be. We had a quote from another company but they do ballast work and their price was more. I'd rather go with this system, it's the cheapest, simplest, and easiest way to do it.

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The highway garage had a cost of \$4500 with a NYSEG incentive that would bring it down to \$3400. That would be a 48 month payback. The garage underneath the Post Office would cost a total of \$386 with a payback of a year. The Post Office itself would have a final cost of \$700 with a payback of a little less than a year.

I think it's the way to go, it does a number of things. It cuts back on our energy use tremendously, it also lets us be more environmentally friendly with our buildings. We have money in a reserve account that has over \$70,000, so we can pay the initial investment from that account. We have more than enough to cover the cost of it, we don't need to go find the money.

Councilman Diffendorf said it sounds really great. Supervisor Grubham responded to Councilman Diffendorf's questions saying the fixtures will stay the same, they take the ballast out, they rewire the unit, and it just uses a LED lights that you can buy at any electrical supply house. Supervisor Grubham responded to Councilwoman Legg saying the lights last about 5 to 6 years. The color is slightly different. Councilman Weingartner said they are whiter and brighter. Supervisor Grubham said they should have the same illumination or better. John Finch mentioned that it will save the Town money as far as getting the electrician out here. Every time a ballast goes in one of our current lights we have to call the electrician and that is money wasted. These new lights aren't going to have a ballast anymore. John Finch responded to Councilman Diffendorf saying we can change them out ourselves. Supervisor Grubham said they are very similar to putting in bulbs that we already use.

Councilman Diffendorf said I have been watching the LED street lights and they are staying on. With that other system we'd fix a light and it would be out in no time. Supervisor Grubham said we save a tremendous amount of money on that light bill, within the year it will have paid for itself.

## **Resolution.**

### **3. Discussion – Donation to Land Bank – 179 Main Street. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said the Land Bank is going to take down the house at 179 Main Street in Kirkwood. That is the house that is sitting right on the river bank, half falling

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into the river. They approached me asking if we would contribute something to that demolition. They will still take it down whether we contribute or not. Apparently other towns have been contributing to the Land Bank. It helps them with future projects because they only have so much money to spend. Dickinson, Union, Johnson City, and Binghamton have all contributed some money. The person that called didn't say how much or that we had to contribute but I was going to suggest \$2000-\$3000. We can find that in the budget. Councilman Shafer said it would be worth it to get rid of that eyesore. Supervisor Grubham said it does help with the tax base because now the houses around that area will be worth more money. Councilman Weingartner said I'm ok with it. Councilman Shafer said it will help save face later down the road and I support it for \$3000. Councilman Diffendorf and Councilwoman Legg both agreed. Councilman Diffendorf said the Land Bank has done some work for us already. Supervisor Grubham said they have been very helpful to us. I came up with that number because of what the Town of Dickinson contributed and wanted to be fair. I feel we are a comparable town. That house will cost \$16,000-\$17,000 to tear down.

## **Resolution.**

### **4. Discussion – Opting out of licensing and establishing retail cannabis dispensaries and on-site cannabis consumption establishments. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham explained that the Board had already discussed opting out of the marijuana deal. Opting out has to be done before the end of the year, but we also have to put this out for permissive referendum. I thought we should get going on this and get it out of the way. Now, we can always opt back in. It will be the end of 2022 before the State gets this all together to decide how they are going to handle the sale points.

Councilwoman Legg said I am for opting out. I don't want to opt out and be done with it. I feel that there is a lot more we need to learn. It's happening right now in our community without it being legal. People are selling it and people are going to cross the border to go to other places to buy it. I just think we need to revisit it again down the road to see where we stand with it. If people are going to come through our Town to cross the border to buy it maybe that could be an opportunity for us. We could be the leaders in learning how this is going to work and maybe take part with the County on making those initiatives happen. We can then oversee what's happening with it and regulate how it is happening in our community. Councilman Diffendorf said I don't

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think we are going to be hands on with this, I think the State will be making the decisions. Mr. McKertich said we can regulate it through zoning but the actual transactions are regulated at the State level. Councilman Diffendorf responded to Councilwoman Legg explaining that it will be up to the Board at the time we revisit it to decide whether they will address it or not.

Supervisor Grubham reminded the Board that people are going to be able to grow their own marijuana. They can grow up to 12 plants. We don't have anything to say about that, it's going to be allowed. Councilman Diffendorf said it's a very confusing issue. In some areas the black market is much better than buying it at the store, so the black market doesn't even go away. Supervisor Grubham said we won't know until next year what the regulations will be, it will be up to the State.

**Resolution.**

**5. Discussion – Road Rehabilitation Project – Resolution authorizing the Town Supervisor to execute a Grant Disbursement Agreement with DASNY (Dormitory Authority of the State of New York) for Project ID #9203 entitled Repaving of Multiple Roads throughout the Town. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said I'm working with DASNY on getting the \$400,000 we were supposed to get. There's always stuff that we have to sign so, Councilman Weingartner and I have signed a couple things already because we had to get them in. There is more coming. Supervisor Grubham responded to Councilman Shafer saying I think we are going to get the money. There has been a couple of snags and I'm working with Jim Smith on that. I may have to call and discuss it with them. We went ahead and did the work, and they require you to do certain things that we may not have done. I'm hoping that won't mess things up.

**6. Discussion – Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds – Resolution authorizing the Town Supervisor to request Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to Non-Entitlement Units from the United States Department of Treasury under the American Rescue Plan Act. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham explained that we will need to sign paperwork in regards to requesting the recovery funds. I'm still not sure of the final number, but I'm guessing

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around \$1.2 million since that is what we were told initially. This needs to be done by July 9, 2021. I need the authorization to do that tonight.

**Resolution.**

**7. Discussion – Increase hours and salary of the Assessor. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham explained that Athena Smales resigned from her position in the Assessor's Office for personal reasons. I'm proposing that Scott Snyder, our Assessor, go back to his old hours and not hire anyone right now. This will increase his salary. The total will still work out to be about \$7000 less than what we budgeted. Scott Snyder will now get an increase of whatever Athena Smales would have made for the remainder of the year. Scott Snyder will be coming in every week, 1 day a week until September and then he'll be coming in 2 days a week for that month because that is when the school taxes go out.

**Resolution.**

**8. Discussion – 2021 PAL Agreement. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said we sign the PAL agreement every year, we give them \$1000 for their operation. It's been done for longer than I can remember.

**Resolution.**

**9. Resolution hiring Julius Tutko as Laborer to work in the Parks Department effective July 6, 2021 until September 30, 2021 at a rate of pay of \$12.83 per hour. (JAF)**

John Finch explained this is to hire a laborer for 90 days for the Parks Department. Jake Tutko has been coming back year after year luckily, because we can't find anyone else that wants to work part-time.

**Resolution.**

**10. Audit of Claims.**