

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD
PUBLIC HEARING**

November 24, 2015

A public hearing to hear objections to the 2016 Assessment Rolls for Sewer and Water Districts was held on November 24, 2015 at 6:00 PM at the Joseph A. Griffin Town Hall with Deputy Supervisor Gordon Kniffen presiding.

Present: Supervisor Gordon Kniffen
Councilman Robert Weingartner
Councilman Lewis Grubham
Councilwoman Linda Yonchuk
Councilman William Diffendorf, Jr.

Also Present: Herbert Kline, Town Attorney
Gayle Diffendorf, Town Clerk
John Finch Jr., Chief Water Treatment Plant Operator
James Smith, Budget Officer

Supervisor Kniffen verified that he had affidavits of posting and publication in the Press & Sun Bulletin.

Jim Smith explained that units were recently modified. There is a decrease of 78 water units and 5 sewer units and the changes are reflected in the rolls with most of the changes affecting commercial units. The rates in general are lower this year than last year since they used more of the available budget of fund balances, which are in decent shape, to try to stay within the tax cap. There are still decent contingency and repair lines built in. There is no definitive information as to what the Binghamton-Johnson City Sewage Plant rates are going to be but based on past refunds the plan is to keep the rate down from \$5.75 to \$4.90 for next year. The Town received a \$42,000 refund from BJC for 2014. Even if they were to raise it 9%, this budget covers that.

Jim Smith said the equipment line includes some items that John Finch and Ray Coolbaugh are looking at. One of the biggest items is a back hoe to share with water and sewer which may be able to be done out of this year's budget if the paperwork is in order. John Finch is proposing that the Ford truck that Alan Glover drives be replaced at a cost of about \$32,500. A Muffin Monster, a new item to help in sewer processing, is being proposed. There may be a used one available that could be reconditioned at a much reduced cost. In total there is about \$112,000 in all equipment lines in water and sewer budgeted for these 3 items and additional smaller items. Typically they put money into a reserve to enable equipment purchases later.

John Finch explained that the cost of a Muffin Monster would be about \$40,000 to \$50,000. The Town of Vestal has one that is supposed to pump 1 million gallons a day but is undersized for their facility. This is the size Kirkwood would need and they are going to check into it. They could send it back to the factory to be reconditioned and made like new again. He said it would go in the wet well. Originally \$105,000 was budgeted which includes the cost of the Muffin Monster, installation, changing out the remaining valves on the dry wall side and also pumping sewage during installation since the whole station will need to be shut down.

In response to Councilman Grubham John Finch said the mileage on the Ford truck is 100,000 miles. Councilman Grubham said this breaks down to about 130 miles a day, including weekends.

In response to Councilman Grubham, Jim Smith said some of the Rychlewski units were adjusted down a little and they seemed all right with this.

Ed Egan questioned how the minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour will affect the sewer and water departments. With the exception of summer help, it was noted that the wages are above that. It was also noted that it will be a long time before that increase will be phased in.

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November 27, 2012

Marchie Diffendorf of Gorman Road questioned where the water and sewer vehicles are driven 130 miles every day to put that much mileage on them. He said it seems like a lot of miles and would be difficult to do in the normal course of a working day. He said if there was a GPS system they would know where the trucks were and would probably save a lot of money in fuel and personnel time.

John Finch said he has never broken it down as to how many miles they drive each day.

Supervisor Kniffen noted that it involves 2 trucks which would be 65 miles per day for each vehicle.

Councilman Grubham said he brought it up several years ago that there should be daily logs for every truck and it still is not being done. Supervisor Kniffen said he wants this to start right away and the numbers are to be shared with the Board over the next few months. John said he will see that gets started tomorrow and report to the Board at the next meeting.

After hearing no additional comments, Supervisor Kniffen ordered the hearing closed at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle M. Diffendorf
Town Clerk