

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD
WORK SESSION**

August 4, 2020

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

Also Present: Robert McKertich, Attorney
Kelley Diffendorf, Town Clerk
John A. Finch Jr., Commissioner of Public Works
Marchie Diffendorf, Planning Board Chairman
Duane Travis, ZBA Chairman (via Zoom)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

1. **Resolution appointing Marc Latini as Recreation Supervisor-OC effective August 5, 2020, with probationary status ending August 4, 2021. (GEK)**

Supervisor Kniffen said Marc Latini is our Recreation Supervisor, we'd like to reappoint him as of August 5th. Councilman Diffendorf asked why the probationary period was so long. Councilman Weingartner said he was waiting on his test. It's open competitive, which is what the OC stands for. He took it and passed it.

2. **Discussion – Resolution ratifying a resolution authorizing the Supervisor to sign a contract with Municipal Solutions, Inc., to provide assistance with continuing Disclosure Filings and Regulations pursuant to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Rule 15c2-12, in accordance with the attached contract. (GEK)**

Supervisor Kniffen said this is a company Jim Smith primarily uses, he's our finance person. We have that agreement to use if necessary, if we have to borrow money, like we did when we had a flood. We had to borrow money until we got FEMA money. This is an agreement that we renew from year to year.

3. **Discussion – Contract Renewal – Broome Security Services for the Kirkwood Town Court – 09/01/2020 – 08/31/2021. (GEK)**

Supervisor Kniffen said a couple years ago we contracted with Broome County for security services for the court room here in Kirkwood. That contract is up for renewal. The new rates will be based on whatever the cost of living is at this

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time. Councilman Grubham asked, are they raising the rate. Supervisor Kniffen said I don't know yet, but if they do it will be based on COLA.

4. Discussion – Bookkeeper Training – Create another Bookkeeper-PT position with Broome County Personnel so Jean Smith can continue training new bookkeeper and continue to be paid on payroll. (GEK)

Supervisor Kniffen said as you know Jean Smith just retired. We have a new bookkeeper who is in training right now. Jean is gone and had trained her for quite a while but she didn't get all the training in because all the things they need to cover weren't due right now. We'd like to create another bookkeeper title for Jean if she gets called upon to come in and then she would be paid on the payroll rather than on a voucher. We don't like them being paid on voucher because it doesn't cover taxes, social security and that type of thing. We haven't really done this in the past, but in the past when there's been a change over there has been a lot of calling back to the previous bookkeeper for questions. We thought this would be the best way to handle that.

5. Discussion – Solar lights for Valley Park. (JAF)

John Finch said we have no lights over at Valley Park, we haven't had them there since the flood of 2018, two years now. We've been working with FEMA, and they aren't the fastest, we finally got everything closed out and I was hoping to have a check by now for the repairs and everything that we needed to do. It was about \$128,000 in damages for the park including, the covered bridge, lifting it up with the crane, getting all the debris out of the park, replacing all the infield mix. We lost lights at the park, there are a total of 15 lights, FEMA reimbursed us for 7 that had fallen over. There were still some that were standing so they felt like they didn't need to be reimbursed. All in all the total came to about \$128,000 in damages, they paid 75%, the state is hopefully going to pay their 12½%, which they have been paying, just not sure what is going to happen now. Nonetheless, we are going to be reimbursed for quite a bit of the expenses. We had gotten a quote from Gorman Electric to redo the electric and that was about \$65,000-\$70,000. That was to rerun all new wiring and put new concrete in for the light poles, mount the light poles, put in new raised electrical boxes, which covered everything.

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In the meantime, waiting for FEMA to pay us I've been trying to come up with other ideas on what we can do over there. One of our residents, Sandy Wasson, mentioned that another park somewhere nearby had LED solar lights. I did some research and came up with a light that we have mounted on our V plow in the front yard of the highway garage. I've had it there for almost a month, it was a loaner to see if it actually works. This is the first style like that, no one has that style right now. There are other LED lights that have the same technology as this light, but they've changed the design. Most of them are just the flat angle, where the solar panel is on top and the light shines down. They are very modern looking, they weren't very appealing to me. I had my secretary look into it, Dunn Electric is the only one that has that new lamp style. It's an old fashioned style light, see the enclosed paperwork on them. I told them I wanted to demo it before this meeting so I could make sure it worked. I wanted to see how bright it was. Dan and Sandy Wasson have been coming over to check it out every night, and I checked it out. I have it in view on my camera, I can see when it shuts off. It has a dusk to dawn light on it, but it also has a motion sensor on it which is nice because it helps save the battery. If there is no motion it will dim down then when people get close to it, it will brighten back up to its normal operating light so it won't use up all the battery during the entire night. It's been working every night. It has a 360 degree broadcast of light and it's probably close to 12 feet in the air. The fact that the particular light hasn't been around here made me a little nervous but the technology has been around here. The design is not the issue, it's the technology. The company said they haven't had any issues with light in our area during the winter time, as far as overcast, with any other solar LED lights. These take 9 hours to fully charge, and they will get 3 full nights of usage out of them before they won't work. If it's overcast for 3 days straight, you won't have a light in the park, until you get some sort of sun light to charge those batteries again. They won't charge below 32 degrees but if they are charged they will work until 4 degrees below zero. In the wintertime you have to think about if it's below 32 degrees at night how many people are going to be over there walking when it's dark out and below freezing, probably not too many.

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I'm trying to come up with the best and most effective way to put light in the park at a minimal cost to the Town and save money in the long run too. With the solar lights, there's no wiring, no electrician will have to come out to wire them when they get knocked over or just come out to wire them period. We can install them ourselves. There's no energy usage. I checked the usage on our lights over there, it was about \$1,000 a year, which includes everything. The Hometown Christmas was running off that, so there were spikes here and there. On average it was mostly the lights that cost most of the electricity. These poles are more expensive. We had 15 over there, I was recommending we buy 23; 20 for the park and 2 near the covered bridge and 1 in front of the Town Hall. All 23 would be solar powered lights. They do have a 3 year warranty, so if there's any issues, including the battery, they will replace them. If the battery does die, which it will die (battery life about 5 years) they cost \$103 a piece. That would be about \$2,300 every 5 years, barring any other issues with them. If we buy 20 or more it's around \$700 each. The current lights we have now cost about \$350 each but we also have to pay the electrician to come out and wire them, which is another \$200, so it's \$550 per light. They are not LED. There's pros and cons to both of them. If we do the 20 lights it would be \$14,200 plus the extra 3 would around \$17,000 total. If we go the other route we would have to pay the electrician to run the electric and pay for electric about \$1,000 a year, which we could save and put aside for batteries. If we do the electrical work according to FEMA it will be \$65,000 and possibly have it flood and get damaged again, then we are possibly back to the same issue we have now. If we do the solar it will literally be the cost of the poles and the concrete. We have to put new tubes in concrete for the new poles anyway, I plan on putting them deep enough to have at least 12 to 18 inches sticking out of the ground. I will work with Binghamton Precast to have a decorative form. They will be far enough away from the track so our plows won't hit them in the winter and knock them over. They'll be high enough so if something runs into them it will hit concrete not the poles and it will also keep them away from the dogs urinating on them. We could save potentially \$40,000 that we could put in the park reserves or use for future batteries or improvements on lights at the other parks.

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Councilman Grubham said the concrete would cost \$200-\$300 per pole at a total of \$6,000 total. Supervisor Kniffen asked if the FEMA money could be used for these lights. John Finch said yes, I signed the final project sheet over a month ago and it's probably delayed with everything that is going on, but once I get the money I want to get moving on this.

Councilwoman Legg asked, how long before you expect the money from FEMA because the quote on these lights expires August 14th. John Finch said they don't go up in price much at all if any, but they would hold that price for us.

Councilman Grubham said I'm generally in favor of this, but there could be times when the lights aren't working. Once and a while it does get below 32 degrees around here. John Finch said my backup plan for that is getting a price from an electrician because we do have the LED powered light in the parking lot that isn't working right now. So we need to get power back over there anyway and power to the far side of the covered bridge. I want power on the other side for a band and DJ music for the Hometown Christmas. We still need power over there but it will be a lot less money. LED would light up the parking lot. We also have a halogen light on the covered bridge but it's burnt out, so I have another one on order. But those two lights would be the backup if the solar lights weren't charged.

Councilman Diffendorf said my concern is the winter time use. I don't know who uses the walking trail, what time of night they use it, or if they use it during the day. In the summer months I doubt many people use the lights because it stays light so late. But I would like people to use it in the winter if they want to, but it is dark at 6 PM. But I don't want them not to work because it's too cold. That could be the biggest time when people are walking at night. I want to be sure these lights are going to work. Councilman Weingartner said I don't see people walking at night. Councilwoman Legg said I'm surprised because I do see people walking at night in their winter garb. Sandy Wasson said I usually don't see as many people at 8 PM at night. Councilwoman Legg said but we don't have any lights over there right now. A person from the public said I own solar and you better be prepared to wipe them off in the winter time because the snow

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doesn't melt off. If you get 6 or 7 inches of snow on them it's not going anywhere, it's like an insulator. John Finch said the solar panels are under a dome so some of it will come off but during heavy snows we may have to take a broom and dust off the dome itself. The person from the public said I don't recommend solar for this part of the country. Councilwoman Legg asked, is there a way to find out who uses solar lights for their parks and find out how they work. We do have a little bit of time to find out. I love the lights, I think it's great. The person from the public said I have seen them out past Corning as street lights, at the State level, maybe they could give you information. Councilman Grubham said, to me the selling point is even if they don't work some of the time it's still cheaper than paying \$60,000 to an electrician. Supervisor Kniffen said it's a good idea, John check to see if they are being used someplace else and you can get back to the Board. John Finch said he would.

6. Discussion – Stratmill Road Booster Station Pressure Reducing Valve. (JAF)

John Finch said we had an issue with Steve Smith's house, it received too much pressure, and it was definitely a pressure issue. We had talked about this at a previous board meeting. We think we have it traced back to this pressure reducing valve that is located at the Stratmill Road Booster Station. It's the original valve from the early 80's, it's never been rebuilt. We got a couple prices to rebuild and replace from W2O and Evan's Mechanical. It's a clay valve and W2O is a certified Clay Valve representative. They will completely replace the internal workings of the clay valve for \$5300. Even though Evan's had a cheaper price I'm not recommending we go with them because in his quote it stated, if disassembled and we find internals beyond rebuilding it could end up with a reassemble and order replacement, and possible piping involved. I don't want to take out anything we don't need to. Evans is also not a certified representative of Clay Valve. When I talked to W2O their kit includes, everything inside coming out and everything going back in is new, the only thing that is going to be old is basically the frame of the valve itself. Everything else will be replaced and functioning as new. Once it's done they will adjust the pressure and check everything. Basically we think the issue is, under high flows when the hydrant is on, either that valve isn't opening properly or it's sticking. When it sticks it opens

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and sends a surge of water pressure. We are trying to eliminate that. There was a 2 inch pressure reducing valve replaced about 4 or 5 years ago, so we know that one is working properly. The other valve hasn't been touched since it was installed. We're expecting that to resolve our problem, if it doesn't it still should be done as a precautionary measure. I recommend we go with W2O at a price of \$5300. John Finch responded to Supervisor Kniffen, I want this done ASAP. The parts should be available within a couple weeks. This isn't in our budget, we'd have to take it out of our capital reserves for water repairs. I checked with Jim Smith and there is over \$300,000 in the water repair reserves. I'd like to have a resolution to approve this.

7. Discussion – Intake for Generator at Water Treatment Plant. (JAF)

John Finch said the generator that is at the Water Treatment Plant is the original one that was put in in 1970 when that plant was built. Councilman Diffendorf said it was a little later than 1970. John Finch said when I came to work here in 1995 the unit had 4 hours of operating time on it. Within the last 5 or 6 years we've put in transfer switches and got it working ok so when the power shuts off we just need to hit a switch. We are having issues with the generator now that we are running it. It's not getting enough intake air to allow the generator to work properly and efficiently. Originally in the 70's the generator was built in its own little room with a door and we had to remove an asbestos wall years ago, we never put it back up. Since we started running this generator we thought we should put that wall back up, it was obviously there for a reason. We did that and the generator isn't getting enough air. The room right next to it has the furnace for the water treatment plant. The cold air intake is being sucked out of the furnace, causing it to shut down. It has burned the pump up at least once on that furnace, which no one ever knew because they never ran the generator in the past.

We had John Mastronardi come out with R & G Sheet Metal and they came up with a design and how to bring more air into the building when the generator is running. There are 2 different options; one to go through the wall and use a power louver, and one to go through the roof. I'm not in favor of going through the roof because of leaks and other issues. I would recommend we do the power

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louver through the wall to help that generator. R & G Sheet Metal got the specs on the generator and they know how much CFM (cubic feet per minute) it's supposed to pull in, and it's not close to that. That is how they came up with the size of the louver they have recommended to allow more air into that building. I'd like to get the work done as soon as possible so the generator can work properly and not starve it for air. Money for that would come out of water repair reserves. Councilman Diffendorf said we do need to do this but let's not test it with the furnace running for a while. When we do test it, let's pay attention so we don't have these problems. I can understand why it's starving for air. John Finch said I'd like to have a resolution to approve this.

8. Discussion – Purchase 2020 Hyundai Loader. (JAF)

John Finch said we purchased a loader in 2017, it was \$129,843. I had the loader at Tracey Road Equipment for warranty work, which is where we purchased it. I asked the sales rep to give me a value on it for a trade-in. I was surprised at the price he gave me. They valued the trade-in at \$90,000. I asked them to run the numbers, and to be fair I called Milton Cat, Five Star, and Monroe to get prices from everyone through OGS or Sourcewell and to give me a value on the trade-in. None of them could touch Tracey Road Equipment's price, for the loader and the trade-in. The current loader we have has a 3 year warranty that expires in one month from August 15th. The loader is crucial to our operations in the winter time for loading our trucks. The money out of pocket for us would be \$41,173 for a brand new loader with a 3 year warranty. We could also go with an extended warranty on top of that, for one more year for \$5200. It's the same exact unit we have now, same model, same everything. The next closest trade-in was Monroe Tractor, they would give us \$80,000, then went to \$65,000 from Milton Cat, and \$45,000 from Five Star. We have \$40,000 in equipment right now and \$71,000 in reserves. We're doing well on equipment right now and have updated most everything. We have one 10-wheeler we want to replace in 2022. If we have any issues on the loader we have now and they become major issues you are looking at close to that much (\$41,000) once it goes out of warranty. The radial tires on that are about \$3,000-\$4,000 each, all which needs to be taken into consideration. Tracey Road did give us an option of going 3 years at 3.9% interest, would cost us just under \$15,000 each year for 3 years. Or

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we can make a lump payment of the full amount. Jim Smith recommended we make the lump payment at the beginning of next year for the \$41,000. We would probably pay \$200-\$300 in interest between now and the first of year. If we have the money in the account Jim Smith would like to just pay it.

Supervisor Kniffen asked, if we are paying this at the first of year then this won't affect the austerity budget? John said correct we would make a payment to them January 1st.

Supervisor Kniffen asked what about the other 2 resolutions you discussed prior, are they in the reduced budget or the regular budget. John Finch said there is no austerity budget for the Water department, they weren't affected by that. They both were from the Water department.

John Finch said I have 2 pieces of equipment that I'll be selling this year. One is going on the auction in a couple weeks, it's an old army general. We have a 2000 single axle dump truck with a plow, I'll put that up on the auction site in October or November. I'm hoping to get around \$12,000 total for both of them. That money will go back into our reserves to offset some of this cost. John Finch responded to Councilman Grubham, as of right now we are just looking at the 10-wheeler in 2022. On the bigger trucks we want to replace them every 11 years, on the smaller trucks it's every 7 years. Our oldest F-550 is a 2017, we are just going to keep them in good shape.

Councilman Grubham said it seems we should have a written plan from you (John Finch) so we are prepared when you show up and say you want to buy something, say 2 years down the road. John Finch said Jim Smith and I did that 5 year plan and we talked about updating it after this purchase so we start with a new slate. We'll have it all itemized on which ones need to go first. Councilman Grubham said it would be good to have that and to always keep it updated.

John Finch responded to Councilman Grubham, the warranty ends September 14, 2020 on the current loader. Councilman Grubham asked, are we planning on doing this now, or in a month or two. John Finch said I'd like to do it now. We

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don't have to pay for it until January. They take our trade-in loader as our first payment, then next year there would be a payment due.

9. **Discussion – Request from Chad Moran to attend STBOA Training on August 19, 2020 at the American Legion, Horseheads, NY, at a cost of \$35.00.**

Supervisor Kniffen said there is a resolution for Chad Moran to attend a training session in Horseheads for \$35.

10. **Transfer of Funds.**

Councilman Diffendorf said I'd like to make a comment, we took money out of workman's comp to pay for grant writers. But then we had to take money out of the contingency to pay for workman's comp. I just think we should have never taken it out of workman's comp to begin with.

11. **Audit of Claims.**