

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD
WORK SESSION**

September 3, 2024

Present: Supervisor Lewis Grubham
Councilmember William Diffendorf, Jr.
Councilmember Katie Legg
Councilmember Sandy Wasson
Councilmember Robert Weingartner

Also Present: Robert McKertich, Attorney
Kelley Diffendorf, Town Clerk
John A. Finch Jr., Commissioner of Public Works
Duane Travis, Zoning Board Chairman
Karen Ferguson, Historian

1. Discussion – Post Office Lease – 02/01/26 – 01/31/31. (LCG)

This is a five-year lease with a five-year renewable option. The rent did increase from the last agreement, but it will stay the same for the next five years. The tenant pays the heat and electric, the Town is responsible for repairs of the building.

2. Discussion – Lights at Grange Hall Park. (LCG)

After a brief discussion it was decided that the lights in the parking lot would continue to be used at Grange Hall Park but the lights around the track were no longer needed and would not be replaced. Besides the fact that it would be very expensive to replace the lights around the track, people are not using the track at night and the previous lights were constantly getting damaged. Councilmember Wasson asked if the light for the flag could be looked at since it was not working when she was there inspecting the park.

3. Discussion – Resolution authorizing JSE General Contracting, LLC to remove and reconstruct two (2) building at the water plant, at a cost not to exceed \$24,172, in accordance with the attached quote. (LCG)

4. Discussion – Resolution authorizing advertising for Sealed Bids for the Detention Tank and Air Stripper Project, with bids returnable September 26, 2024 at 11 AM, and publicly opened and read at that time. (LCG)

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- 5. Discussion – Resolution authorizing advertising for Sealed Bids for the Cluster Valves in the Industrial Park Drive Project, with bids returnable September 26, 2024 at 11 AM, and publicly opened and read at that time. (LCG)**

- 6. Discussion – Resolution scheduling a Public Hearing for September 24, 2024 at 6:00 PM regarding Local Law No. 7-2024 entitled A Local Law Amending Section 706 of the Zoning Code Regarding Application Fees for Solar Energy Systems. (LCG)**

Mr. McKertich explained the Town of Kirkwood has a \$750 application fee for solar energy systems and noted that other municipalities have a much higher application fee, some into the multiple thousands of dollars, to account for the amount of work that staff has to do to administer these programs. This local law would replace the \$750 fee with a provision that says the Town Board can establish the fees from time to time by resolution. Mr. McKertich is looking at other municipalities and will come up with a proposal for a fee structure.

- 7. Discussion – Resolution authorizing Maureen Walsh to attend the New York State & Local Retirement System Employer Education Seminar on Monday, September 30, 2024 at the Town of Homer, with all reasonable expenses paid. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham noted there is no fee for the seminar, just for gas and other expenses for the day. This is training for the online legacy system that will help her complete her monthly reporting.

- 8. Discussion – Water & Sewer Mapping. (J. Mastronardi)**

John Mastronardi discussed the evolution of the different formats of the water and sewer mapping system throughout the Town. The Town once only had paper records, then those records were scanned and put into a digital format. Unfortunately, some records were lost in the flood or faded and unreadable, so not all the mapping records are available. Currently, Al Glover is using the WaterPoint Network to map the Town’s system. It’s a real time database that will be extremely helpful once it is fully updated, and compatible with more than just an iPad. That transition is going to happen sometime in the near future.

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John Mastronardi is recommending the Town hire a college student to input the Town's data (such as water/sewer lines, manholes, hydrants) into the WaterPoint Network, then all the information will be there when needed and easily accessible. This information can also be exported to Broome County GIS.

9. Discussion – Reserve Funds. (J. Wyatt)

Julie Wyatt discussed how the Town has several general reserve fund accounts that are not very active and are not being used the way a reserve fund by state definition should be used. These reserve fund accounts could all be consolidated to one large general fund so the Board could draw from and use these funds when needed, such as a Buildings and Grounds Reserve Fund. Julie Wyatt is recommending this fund be a "type" reserve fund, where a permissive referendum would need to be done after the resolution is passed since this would be used for bigger projects.

Councilmember Diffendorf suggested the Park Development Fund stay as a "specific" reserve fund and kept as a separate fund, it would be much easier to get projects done that way. He also suggested adding the money from the Tennis Court Repair Reserve Fund to the Park Development Fund.

Councilmember Weingartner agreed because things happen unexpectedly and they need to be fixed quickly.

The Sign Reserve Fund and Personal Computer Reserve Fund can be handled through the budget each year.

Councilmember Diffendorf was concerned about getting rid of the Liability and Casualty Reserve Fund due to a past case the Town was involved in that was very complicated. Mr. McKertich explained that the Town is fully insured and hopeful most situations would be covered under the insurance plan.

Councilmember Diffendorf also mentioned his concern about getting rid of the Contingency and Tax Stabilization Reserve Fund, stating at times industries shut down and the Town may already be counting on that revenue from taxes. Julie Wyatt explained the Town does have a Fund Balance to help cushion that.

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After the discussion was complete it was determined, that under the General Reserve Fund category, all funds will be consolidated to a “type” fund of Buildings and Grounds Reserve Fund, except the Park Development Reserve and Tennis Court Repair Reserve, which will be combined to Park Development Reserve under a “specific” fund.

Under the Water Reserve Fund category, both reserve funds will be consolidated, they are both capital reserve funds, and it will be easier to keep track of the fund.

10. Discussion – Purchase a new 2024 CAT 305 EXC at a cost of \$85,517, less trade in of \$41,517, for a total cost of \$44,000. (JAF)

John Finch wants to upgrade the Case Mini Excavator since the warranty is ready to expire at the end of November. He received quotes from Case and Milton Cat. The Highway department would pay 75% of the purchase (\$33,000), the Water department would pay 20% (\$8,800), and the Sewer department would pay 5% (\$2,200). He will try to sell the current one on the auction site, which may bring in more than a trade in price. John Finch explained that it is good to have these machines under warranty. The Highway department would need to take money out of the reserve fund to pay its portion of the cost, while the Water and Sewer departments have enough in their equipment lines to cover the cost.

Schedule of Equipment.

Supervisor Grubham asked John Finch for a schedule of equipment so the Board knows what the plan is for the next few years, a timeline of when things will need to be purchased, traded in, sold, or upgraded. Supervisor Grubham also asked for an explanation of where the money will be coming from to do these changes so we don't have to try and find money to make these purchases or upgrades. Supervisor Grubham reminded John Finch that he mentioned buying a new truck for over \$200,000 in the next couple years, these big purchases need to be planned out.

John Finch reported a street sweeper needs to be purchased next year, it's a 2003 and was in the flood of 2006 and is in bad shape.

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- 11. Discussion – Resolution authorizing the Supervisor to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with Teamsters Local 317 regarding extending the summer hours through October 1, 2024, in accordance with the attached MOU. (JAF)**

Councilmember Diffendorf expressed his concern on the liability of doing this since it is dark in the mornings and school is starting, he doesn't see the benefit of extending it. He felt it was already a nice deal letting them do this Memorial Day through Labor Day during the summer. John Finch explained after the morning meeting and equipment check it is light out and he feels his department accomplishes more in ten-hour days. Councilmember Diffendorf reiterated that he has a real concern about the guys working in the dark, and he understands it has to be done at times, but to just do it for convenience is not a good reason.

- 12. Audit of Claims.**