

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD
WORK SESSION**

March 25, 2025

Present: Supervisor Lewis Grubham
Councilmember William Diffendorf, Jr.
Councilmember Marc Latini
Councilmember Katie Legg
Councilmember Sandy Wasson

Also Present: Robert McKertich, Attorney
Kelley Diffendorf, Town Clerk
Poe Williams, Highway Superintendent
Duane Travis, Zoning Board Chairman
Karen Ferguson, Historian

1. Discussion – Tree Removal at Wells. (LCG)

Supervisor Grubham explained there are a lot of trees alongside and above the wires going down the roadway to the wells. The trees are river maples that are not very strong and constantly shedding branches. Al Glover inquired about getting the trees removed and received two quotes. Supervisor Grubham noted if those trees should come down on the wires it would take two to three days to get them replaced. He felt it was a good idea to keep this area maintained. Councilmember Diffendorf questioned if it was NYSEG's responsibility to take care of the lines if they did go down, or the Town's. Supervisor Grubham will look into that before the meeting next week.

2. Discussion – Resolution authorizing the Budget Journal Entries, in accordance with the attached Budget Adjustment Sheet. (LCG)

3. Discussion – A Local Law Amending the Junk Ordinance Regarding License Fees – Schedule a Public Hearing for April 29, 2025 at 6 PM. (LCG)

This Local Law will amend the Junk Ordinance so the junk license fee amount will be established by resolution. Currently, it has a set fee listed, making this change will eliminate having to amend the law every time a fee is reviewed and updated. The current fee for a junk license is \$200 annually.

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Councilmember Diffendorf questioned if the fee should be raised, Supervisor Grubham agreed. There are currently five junk licenses in the town. Mr. McKertich recommends most fees be reviewed annually or every other year, since costs go up, fees should go up. He noted the fee is supposed to reflect the administrative burden on the town to process the license, it can't be a penalty. Supervisor Grubham is going to find out from Code and the Town Clerk how much time is spent on processing a junk license. From that point, a fee can be determined, it shouldn't cost the taxpayers to process these licenses. It can be discussed at the next meeting.

- 4. Discussion – Resolution authorizing a one-time modification to the vacation leave policy by extending the time for Paula Hashem to use 36.5 hours of unused vacation time to February 26, 2026 in light of an administrative error, provided that the circumstances giving rise to this Resolution are unique and shall not be construed as a binding past practice or precedent, nor a waiver of any Town management rights, nor an amendment to Town policies or procedures. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham explained that Paula Hashem was incorrectly told her yearly vacation time was to run through March 18, 2025, but the correct date was February 26, 2025. In the meantime, Paula went on vacation after February 26th and was expecting to use the vacation time she believed was still available (use it or lose it policy). When the correct date was noticed, Paula lost 36.5 hours of vacation out of her next annual vacation total. Therefore, if approved, this authorization will be a change in policy, one time only to correct the issue and give Paula back 36.5 hours of vacation. Councilmember Legg stated she was ok with this decision since Paula had asked and was told the wrong information. Supervisor Grubham explained that Paula asked the wrong person and a memo has gone out that employees need to ask the Supervisor or the Supervisor's Secretary for this information in the future.

- 5. Discussion – Increase rate of pay for temporary park employees from \$16.50 per hour to \$18 per hour. (PW)**

Poe Williams explained that it has been difficult finding people to work for \$16.50 per hour, especially when other places are paying more than that. The current minimum wage in NY is \$15.50 per hour. Councilmember Diffendorf also

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noted the time restraints the County puts on the part-time employees is frustrating and limiting.

6. Discussion – Resolution to retain Griffiths Engineering and Coughlin & Gerhart, LLP to assist the Town Board in the statutory process for the consolidation of Town sewer districts, pursuant to General Municipal Law Article 17-A. (LCG)

Supervisor Grubham estimated the cost to be \$12,900 to retain Griffiths Engineering and \$6,000 to retain Coughlin & Gerhart for the sewer district consolidation project. This project would consolidate all 11 sewer districts and make things much easier for the bookkeeper, budget officer, and water and sewer department and will save the town money.

Councilmember Diffendorf asked for further explanation about information on the Management Analysis Report submitted to the Board members by Julie Wyatt, Budget Officer, regarding the debt reserves of Bell School and Colesville Road. Supervisor Grubham will follow up and get the additional numbers Councilmember Diffendorf asked about.

7. Audit of Claims.