

TOWN OF KIRKWOOD WORK SESSION

September 24, 2024

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

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

Absent: Councilmember Robert Weingartner

1. Discussion – Resolution Approving the 2025 Preliminary Budget and Directing a Public Hearing for October 29, 2024 at 6 PM. (LCG)

Councilmember Legg suggested it was time to take a look at the salary for the Youth Director, she mentioned it was a good time since the current Youth Director, Marc Latini would be leaving the position at the end of this year. Councilmember Legg noted the duties have changed over the past 5 to 10 years and the job doesn't require the same time investment as in the past, therefore it may not warrant the salary allocated in the budget. Other topics discussed were if the position was required to be a civil service position, setting new expectations for the new hire, and if the job should keep the same title or not.

Councilmember Legg requested a special raise of \$1,000 for the Historian which would increase the salary from \$4,021 to \$5,021. All Board Members agreed.

Councilmember Diffendorf asked for additional clarification regarding the 27 pays and the potential for hourly employees to misunderstand that the increase in the Payroll budget for 2025 would be permanent. It was agreed that both hourly and salaried employees would receive a letter with the first payroll of 2025 explaining the situation. Councilmember Diffendorf and Councilmember Legg asked further questions on how the salary cap works for hourly and salary employees and an explanation on the rate for each scenario.

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- 2. Discussion – Resolution scheduling a public hearing for October 29, 2024 at 6:03 PM on the Year 2025 Fire Contracts. (LCG)**

The Five Mile Point Fire Company has handed in their budget, Supervisor Grubham has been in contact with the Kirkwood Fire Company to get theirs in right away.

- 3. Discussion – Resolution re-appointing Peter M. Maciak as Member Board of Assessment Review for a term to expire September 30, 2029. (LCG)**

- 4. Discussion – Town Hall Roof Repair. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham reminded the Board about the problems with the Town Hall roof and presented the Board with two quotes (for the right-side of building). Fruehan & Son's came in with the lowest bid.

- 5. Discussion – Resolution approving the Standard Work Day and Reporting Resolution for Elected and Appointed Officials for Adisen Harden as Member Planning Board, in accordance with the attached resolution. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham mentioned the Zoning Board of Appeals is very low on members and Adhoc members, he will be sending out a postcard to everyone in the Town, hoping to find someone who might be interested in joining the Board. The Planning Board is looking for two Adhoc members as well.

- 6. Discussion – Resolution appointing Jessica Cambisi as Deputy Town Clerk, effective October 7, 2024, at a salary of \$8,964.22 pro-rated for the remainder of 2024. (KMD)**

Kelley Diffendorf reported that herself and Councilmember Wasson conducted several interviews for the Deputy Town Clerk position. The decision was difficult, but both agreed on Jessica Cambisi who is very qualified and eager to begin.

- 7. Discussion – Resolution authorizing Alan Glover and Matthew Loftus to attend the Southern NY Water Works Conference on October 10, 2024, in Sidney, NY, at a cost of \$40 for each person.**

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8. Audit of Claims.

Solar Discussion.

Councilmember Wasson reported that residents have approached her about a variety of concerns with solar farms in the area. She questioned if the Board can make changes to the current law to possibly add further setbacks, or remove solar farms from being permitted in the rural/agricultural districts. Although the Board can make those changes it basically would eliminate solar options in Kirkwood since that would only leave the Industrial District as a choice, and there is no Industrial property available at this point. The more restrictions that are made would give more strength in the variance application process for any zoning district in the town. Currently, the Town has very aggressive setbacks that match the State setbacks for large solar projects.

Regarding environmental concerns, Mr. McKertich noted that the special permit process is in place to be sure all concerns are under review and addressed, and if residents have concerns they should go to the Planning Board meeting and speak during the special permit process.