

**Village of Fox Crossing
Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees – Budget Workshop
Municipal Complex – Arden Tews Assembly Room
Monday, October 9, 2023 – 5:00 p.m.**

Minutes

1. Call to Order

President Dale Youngquist called the workshop to order at 5:00 p.m. Clerk Darla Fink noted those present including: President Youngquist, Trustee Michael Van Dyke, Trustee Kris Koeppe, Trustee Gregory Ziegler, Trustee Jason Patzwald (via teleconference), Trustee Barbara Hanson, Village Manager Jeffrey Sturgell, Finance Director Jeremy Searl, Police Chief Scott Blashka, Police Captain Tim Callan, Municipal Court Judge Timothy Hogan, Municipal Court Manager Mandy Bartelt, Director of Community Development George Dearborn, and Director of Parks and Recreation Amanda Geiser. There were nine attendees.

2. Presentation of Departmental Budgets

Judicial

Director Searl stated there are no significant items to note in this department's budget with no major changes or projects noted for this year. The main unknown is how the new High School will affect the Municipal Court. They are expecting to hold a truancy court onsite at Neenah High School similar to what the City of Neenah did, so the students don't have to miss any additional school by attending court. Judge Hogan advised it is a waiting game to see how many juvenile citations we will see from Neenah High School. They plan to sit down in November to assess the number and how best to proceed. He has reached out to the City of Neenah Judge to see how he handled this, and learned they held court at the school once per month during the school day (lunches and study hall hours).

Director Searl advised we will be making some changes to the website and front door indicating the hours for Municipal Court as Mandy is typically here earlier in the morning than regular Municipal Complex hours and leaves early on Fridays. The hope is for the strain on other Municipal Complex departments and staff as well as resident frustration/complaints will be reduced with the posting of more accurate hours. Trustee Hanson asked about delinquent fines being sent to debt collection rather than warrants being issued. Judge Hogan explained that we have been able to use this process for many citations to recover more funds through state debt collection. He advised they have a considerable number to get through but this is something they're working toward.

Parks & Recreation Department

Director Searl stated a large section of the revenue accounts in this department are Special Revenue Funds which were discussed last week, but this budget details the transfers from these accounts to the General Fund to offset costs. The State Attractions revenue account generates a very small profit but promotes the Village's goal of keeping our residents active and coming into our building.

In Park expenditures, there are a few changes in payroll. Director Geiser will now be split 50/50 between the Park and Recreation accounts (was previously 60/40). The Recreation Supervisor is proposed to go full-time, rather than ¾ time. Director Searl reminded the Board that in 2023 the administrative position in this department was changed to only having one full-time person

assisting both the Park and Recreation and Street Departments rather than 1.5 positions between the two departments. This partially offsets some of the increased costs of these payroll changes.

In the 02-10 Professional Services Account, there is a rollover request of \$10,000 for Woodland Prairie Park Consulting Services as this was not completed in 2023. There is also a Trestle Trail Bridge Structural Inspection with a total cost of \$20,000 to be split 50/50 with the City of Menasha and offset with fund balance. The 02-34 Site Maintenance Account includes new benches at O’Hauser Park for \$2,250, offset with fund balance. The 03-40 Disc Golf Account has expenses however all of these costs are paid by the Disc Golf Special Revenue Fund. There are some carryover items in this account including the completion of installing a beginner disc golf course at O’Hauser Park.

The 03-53 Equipment Maintenance Account includes \$3,000 in repairs for the slope mower, offset with fund balance. There were discussions on the plan going forward for completing these services, as far as either purchasing a new mower, purchasing a used mower, or contracting these services out. There are funds designated for this in the ERF, but they need to decide how best to go forward.

The 03-55 Vehicle Maintenance Account was increased to be more in line with recent years’ average cost of repairs. The 03-72 Crack/Seal Account includes the Fritse Park parking lot and both parking lots at Palisades Park totaling \$30,000, all from fund balance. The 03-78 Urban Forestry Account includes approximately \$10,000 for removal of Ash trees using the EAB funds and replacing many trees using the former Street Tree Fund for a cost of approximately \$5,000. The 08-31 Miscellaneous Capital Activity Park Account includes new trash cans and lids as well as picnic table replacements, all offset with fund balance. Trustee Ziegler asked what type of material the new picnic tables are made out of and how they are holding up. Director Geiser advised they are a composite material and are holding up very well. She continues to replace a few every year. The kayak rental program may be fully or partially funded by a Valley Tourism Grant, otherwise we would transfer funds from the Room Tax Special Revenue Fund for this expense to promote tourism.

In Recreation Expenditures, the 02-41 Building Maintenance Account shows a decrease due to some repairs being completed last year on the roof of the Community Center. It should be noted the contractor did recommend a complete re-roof of the Community Center in 2025 due to age for the entire building, other than the Fire Station #41 area which was completed more recently.

Trustee Ziegler asked how the Bird Scooter program went this year. Director Geiser and Commissioner Beson stated there were no real complaints, but this will be a topic of consideration when the contract renews again. Currently, Bird is not paying the Village anything for riders to use the scooters in the Village, but this was a choice based on concerns with insurance and liability as compared to the small revenue the program generates. Trustee Patzwald asked when the current contract ends. Director Geiser advised Bird should be pulling the scooters soon due to the change in weather, but otherwise these agreements run annually through the end of the calendar year. Trustee Ziegler asked about seeing the scooters outside of the geo-fenced area. Chief Blashka reminded the Board that there are many residents that own personal motorized scooters and those can be driven anywhere as compared to the actual Bird Scooters.

Trustee Hanson asked about the increase in credit card fees as well as the budgeted purchase of a stove for \$750. Director Geiser explained that credit card kiosks are now located at the Disc Golf Course and boat launch. She stated she will only have one stove left to replace at the parks after this one. They have looked into getting donated stoves from residents, however that has not fared well in the past. Trustee Hanson asked about the funds set aside for vandalism. Director Searl advised if there was a major act of vandalism costing the Village more than \$1,000, we would submit it to insurance, but we typically have smaller issues that add up which we clean up

ourselves. There are cameras budgeted for Schildt Park which nearly completes the pavilion set up for cameras which help, but a lot of times the vandalism occurs in an area not under camera.

There is an \$11,000 increase to the ERF this year, as we are using \$47,000 from fund balance to offset the replacement of the 1-ton dump truck at an increased price. The increase to the ERF should have been significantly more as almost all of the playground equipment structures had their values increased based on this year's completion of the Butte Des Morts Park project and current planning for the O'Hauser North Park in the next couple years. Director Geiser advised there were some items involved in construction that were never included in replacement costs, such as installing drainage to prevent flooding, concrete curbing, and other costs. She advised the cost of the latest park is nothing compared to what the cost will be when replacing the O'Hauser Park equipment. Depending on the use of parks, the lifespan of this equipment is approximately 20 years. Director Searl advised, due to the upcoming extensive look at the ERF and current ability to borrow for large items like park renovations, the ERF was not increased as much as the new formulas would have called for simply because the funds aren't there at this time. There are no vehicle replacements in 2024, however the Gator, Mower, and Dump Truck are all slated for replacement in 2025, as well as updates to Kippenhan Park, O'Hauser North Park, Fritsch fitness equipment, and Schildt Park.

In the Park Capital Project Fund, there are a few projects to complete this year. The Butte Des Morts Park renovation has a projected rollover of approximately \$50,000 to complete the kayak launch (the playground replacement occurred in 2023). O'Hauser Park South is budgeted for a drainage improvement and bleacher replacement for a total of \$100,000, offset with borrowing. Director Geiser explained we have some water and flooding issues at this park on the softball field and disc golf course. The project would create a swale and they will be re-ditching in between the disc golf course and large field to the creek. They are working with McMahon on this project. She advised there are future plans and improvements in relation to this area but they want to make sure the water issue is fixed first before going forward with any other changes. Trustee Patzwald asked if we could use disc golf funds as this will project be improving the course. Director Geiser advised she would not be opposed to using those funds for part of the project if directed by the Park Commission and Village Board. She advised she will also be working with Suburban Athletics for other improvements to that baseball field in the near future including new fencing.

The Rydell Conservancy Shoreline Restoration project is scheduled for next year as this shoreline is eroding away. This would be similar to the Butte Des Morts Park project but much more extensive and longer. They will be working with the Wisconsin DNR on this project. Director Geiser advised the Cold Spring Road Trail resurfacing from East Shady Lane to West American Drive is set for next year.

3. **Recess for Regular Village Board Meeting**

At 5:51 p.m., **MOTION:** Trustee Hanson, seconded by Trustee Van Dyke to recess the Budget Workshop until the end of the Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried via voice vote.

4. **Reconvene Upon Completion of Regular Board Meeting**

At 6:17 p.m., **MOTION:** Trustee Ziegler, seconded by Trustee Koeppe to reconvene the Budget Workshop.

5. **Continue Presentation of Departmental Budgets**

Police Department

Director Searl stated there the Village submitted a \$12 Million Dollar request to Winnebago County for a new Police Department building or addition to the current building using ARPA funds which

has already been denied. In Revenues, the 434.01-04 Account includes School Resource Officer invoices for the Neenah Joint School District. In the Donations Account, there is the full donation for two units of the Tru Narc drug detection system. There is a transfer from fund balance including the cost to replace the ERF money as the Department did not sell the old Lieutenant truck, which was transitioned into a Community Service Officer vehicle, and for not selling two squad patrol vehicles (\$40,000 total) plus \$36,000 of additional ERF funds. The weed nuisance control figure is not large, but did double from last year, however the revenues and expenditures offset each other.

In Payroll Expenditures, there is a request for an additional Patrol Lieutenant to allow for three day and three night Lieutenants which would offer better coverage for vacations, illnesses, court time, etc. The total cost of this addition with benefits is budgeted at \$137,000. The Police Union Contract was set to expire at the end of 2023, but a new contract was accepted and is in place through 2028, which includes a 2% wage increase in mid-March and another 2% wage increase in mid-September. This Contract eliminated the longevity program and the uniform allowance was rolled into the wage increase, along with a gradual elimination of education incentives. Overall, the total Police Department payroll and benefits increased by 4.8% for a total of \$192,000. Chief Blashka explained the staffing model of the department which includes four officers assigned to each platoon. These platoons always work together, but they are lacking in supervisors. The highway and new high school responsibilities have increased the number of decisions that need to be made on a supervisory level. We have a lot of new officers and it's important that these decisions are made by officers with appropriate experience. Manager Sturgell advised they are also looking at other options to be worked out with the Union and will come back before the Board before any final decisions are made on this position. They will look for a candidate internally before looking outside the agency, however keeping this position in the budget, provides the needed extra manpower to support either option.

The 03-10 Office Supplies Account includes a remodel of the Police Command Center where the Communication Technicians are located in the amount of \$15,600. Trustee Koeppe asked if this remodel is part of the full Municipal Complex remodel that a space study was done on years ago. Trustee Ziegler asked if there is still talk of moving the Police Department out of the Municipal Complex, and if so, should we be completing a temporary remodel now or waiting until we are able to add on to the Police Department. Director Searl advised this is not adding more space, but restructuring the space for better use by a different size team. Chief Blashka advised this remodel does not include moving any walls, just a re-configuration for three employees working together on the same shift. The Department no longer has any administrative staff on during the night shift, as all of their paperwork, open records requests, etc., are done during the daytime hours. The phones are then transferred to the Sheriff's Department dispatch center at night. He advised the Police Department is running out of space quickly. The Chief, Captain, and Lieutenant all purchased temporary lockers to be able to use their offices as locker rooms as there is no room for them available in the locker room.

The 03-30 and 03-35 Training and Miles, Meals, and Lodging Accounts include an increase of \$2,700 for out-of-state training, as well as new training for the School Resource Officer and SWAT personnel plus general cost increases for training. The Operating Supplies 03-40 Account increased mainly due to portable radios and programming. Instead of purchasing all new radios on a set schedule, the current approach is to purchase a few new units each year and having a few spare on site to replace any that may break, and continue to use that cycle to keep levy funds consistent. The Body Worn Cameras have a set purchase cycle every year, so the overall goal is to keep the amount spent on radios and cameras consistent year-to-year on the levy, however the quantity purchased each year will vary. The 03-46 Uniform Allowance shows a large decrease due to the new Union Contract. However, if we hire a new officer, we are responsible for outfitting them with equipment and uniform so there is \$6,000 budgeted for the hiring of a new officer which will be offset with fund balance. The 03-92 Investigative Expenses Account includes a subscription to the

FLOCK camera network at a cost of \$15,000 on the levy as operations. They are requesting to have five cameras installed throughout the Village at this time. The cost is \$3,000 per camera per year which allows access to a nationwide database, and is a much smaller cost than is being spent by other communities who are using 20+ cameras. The FLOCK Company installs and maintains the cameras, and the Village simply pays for the subscription service. Chief Blashka explained how useful this system is and how we're one of the last local municipalities to jump into this program. There is also \$4,000 budgeted per year which will be paid to Outagamie County for use of their cell phone forensic system (encryption breaker).

In the Capital Equipment 08-53 Vehicles Account, there is a request to add another Patrol Squad to the fleet at a cost of \$48,548, offset with fund balance. Due to increased use on the highways, the engines are having to work a lot harder, so the hope is to put the squad vehicles on a three-year rotation, rather than a two-year rotation with the addition of this vehicle. Currently, there are three Police Department administration vehicles which are being shared by the Community Liaison Officer, three Detectives, the Investigation Lieutenant, Chief Blashka, Captain Callan, and others that need a vehicle to attend trainings or court. There has been discussion on adding one small SUV type vehicle to alleviate some of the pressure the department is facing, however this has not been included in this budget. The current plan is to try to schedule use of the Village Administration vehicles to see if that works for now. Chief Blashka advised he often needs to take his personal vehicle, which is not equipped with emergency lights, sirens, protective gear, vest, etc., due to another vehicle not being available, however he can't use a personal vehicle to block traffic on the highway without emergency lights. Director Searl advised there have been additional discussions on leasing vehicles or using a rental company to purchase vehicles, however this strategy requires more research before being presented to the Board.

Trustee Ziegler asked when we took over the highway responsibility. Chief Blashka advised the transfer of responsibility occurred on April 1st and provided some statistics. To date, the Police Department has been averaging 5.6 highway calls per day for a total of 354.78 officer hours spent on the highway.

The Equipment Replacement Fund calls for the purchase of three new patrol squads to replace vehicles 965, 967, and S969 with ancillary equipment. The back-up squad car (964) is also included in this rotation, however the plan is to retain the vehicle in the best condition as the back-up squad and replace the other three. Chief Blashka feels they are relatively sufficient in squad vehicles with the requested addition, but the administration vehicles is where the main problem comes in. The Board discussed purchasing more Police Department vehicles, but asked when we would even receive vehicles if ordered now. Captain Callan advised if authorized, they would purchase a vehicle directly off the lot as they can purchase it cheaper this way than through the State bid. Trustee Van Dyke suggested only getting rid of two of the three squad vehicles up for replacement this year and still purchasing three new squads, and transitioning squad vehicles into administration vehicles. Captain Callan advised they are spending approximately \$3,200 every other year to changeover equipment in vehicles which adds up. If they could space out getting new vehicles, they would see a return on not having so many changeover costs. Rather than one squad car being on the road 24 hours a day/7 days a week, the workload could be split out between 2-3 vehicles in the hopes of retaining a squad for four to five years.

President Youngquist stated it is his preference to purchase two patrol squads this year out of fund balance, and retain the best vehicle of the four currently up for replacement in the ERF and rotate out the three squads that are in worse condition. The Board asked Chief Blashka and Captain Callan their ideal vehicle situation. Captain Callan stated his preference would be to purchase three new patrol squads and transition at least one prior squad vehicle to an emergency administrative vehicle. The Board asked the Police Department to prepare a proposal for how many of each type of vehicle would get them to their ideal number and bring this information back

to next week's budget workshop. Director Searl stated he will place this on the bubble and advised the impact to the fund balance of purchasing three squads instead of one squad only decreases our percent of fund balance remaining to 25.01% which is still well within Village policy.

3. **Motion to reconvene to the October 16, 2023 Budget Workshop which will begin at 5:00 p.m.**
At 7:48 p.m., **MOTION:** Trustee Van Dyke, seconded by Trustee Koeppe to reconvene to the October 16, 2023 Budget Workshop which will begin at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried via voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Darla M. Fink, Village Clerk

Note: *These minutes are not to be considered official until acted upon at an upcoming regular meeting, therefore, are subject to revision.*