

Village of Birchwood
101 N. Main Street
PO Box 6
Birchwood, WI 54817



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The Budget Workshop
of the Village of Birchwood was held on
Monday, October 23, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.
at the **Birchwood Village Hall, 101 N Main St, Birchwood, WI 54817.**

MINUTES

Call meeting to order (Meeting is recorded)

Pledge of Allegiance-Recited

Roll call by Clerk: Present: R. VanGilder, B. Boatman, S. Milligan, and R. Seffinga. T. LeBrocq arrived late.

Public Notice: Posted at the Birchwood Post Office, Village Hall, Gary's Grocery and Village Hall.

Correspondence (if any)-None

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Motion by VanGilder 2nd by Milligan to approve current agenda. Carried 4-0
2. Approve meeting minutes.
 - a. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by Seffinga to approve the Budget Workshop minutes from October 2, 2023. Carried 4-0
 - b. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by Boatman to approve the Budget Workshop minutes from October 16, 2023. Carried 4-0
3. Municipal Levy and 2024 Budget
 - a. Draft Municipal Levy Limit and balance 2024 budget. Brandon from Two River's Accounting gave a summary of the Village Loan obligations for 2024. TID 1 and 2 should have generated enough value to cover their own Payment & Interest without putting it on the levy. The Water Utility LOC loan will be refinanced by funding through the Safe Drinking Loan Program, so it is not included in the P & I summary. This leaves the P & I requirements at \$81,592 for the debt amount on the levy. The 2023 base levy is \$151,468.00 plus the \$81,592 results in the total levy amount of \$233,065.91. The share of the taxes would go down about 10.8%. VanGilder inquired how this affects the budget. Brandon explained that the \$81,592 goes directly to the debt service fund and then goes out to cover the P & I. The base levy of \$151,468 consists of the property taxes available for the general fund budget. Brandon explained that until the TID's are closed out, there is no benefit to the Village- other than cash on hand to help the cash flow. P & I for new debt is allowed to be put on the levy.
LeBrocq arrived during the discussion on balancing the budget. Beffa suggested increasing the clerk wages allocation in W & S to 50% Gen/25% Water/25% Sewer, due to the extra time spent in these departments. Beffa explained that this takes expenses out of the General budget and puts them into the W/S departments. Beffa pointed out that we are overbudget on legal expenses due to the ordinances that were created/changed this year. VanGilder asked for clarification on the clerk wages and a calculating discrepancy was found of \$12,000. Van Gilder asked to change the

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legislative budget to allocate the same as the clerk wages. Hall repairs/maintenance-remove installation of a new furnace in 2024.

Public Safety-Van Gilder proposed lowering Attorney fees to \$500—Education lowered to \$1000.

Public Works-VanGilder proposed changing snowplow wage budget to \$15000. The loader repairs are what caused the repair and maintenance to go over budget. Crack filling will be adjusted to \$13,000. Beffa stated that the sidewalk repair is considered a special assessment with the property owners paying their portion back over the next 5 years. The Village would pay the costs up front.

The Village is doing well with the garbage services. Beffa asked to leave as is.

Parks-Remove Park bench. The light at the fishing pier remains in the budget. Beffa asked if the Chamber would help pay for the repair of the fishing pier.

The revenue is down at Doolittle Park. Beffa explained that there is a lot of competition out there and that most offer more amenities. Dan said he has a lot of people ask for WIFI. Beffa spoke to Mosaic, and they quoted \$4000 to install it. We only had 15 seasonals last year but can have up to 20. Beffa suggested increasing the camping rates- except the seasonals. Doolittle does not offer water and sewer. Dan suggested painting the bathrooms. Beffa recommended taking the shower doors off the budget. VanGilder commented that whatever we add to the Doolittle budget, we should offset it with that amount of revenue.

Remove wake zone expenses.

Zoning-Leave Atwood's services in the budget.

License/permits- add \$2000 for Airbnb permits. Charge \$5 for notary services.

Beffa recommended charging the water and sewer department for part of the snowplow services.

VanGilder suggested allocating 80% to General and 10% for both water and sewer for this.

Legal-VanGilder asked to reduce it to \$10,000.

Office supplies are being partially allocated to water and sewer.

Budget high for elections due to 4 elections being held in 2024.

Beffa thinks the Village needs to combine more lots to make them buildable, which would generate revenue. VanGilder asked why there was such a small increase in tax revenue when the Village did a full eval., Dollar General, and the East Hills lots being sold, plus a new campground. Beffa stated that anything in the TID doesn't benefit the Village. She feels the Village should pay off the TID, so that the tax revenue would be included in the General.

Boatman and VanGilder voiced concern over the public safety department being 20% of the budget. **11-16-2023-MINUTES AMENDED BY BOT TO REFLECT CORRECTION TO PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET FOR PUBLIC SAFETY-SHOULD BE 16% NOT 20%.**

Beffa commented that Brian will be retiring and that our police department is a valuable asset to the Village. Beffa suggested reaching out to other municipalities to see if they would like to contract with the Village for police services. Zillmer stated she heard the Town of Edgewater was going to reconsider the Village's request for an increase in the amount of their police contract with the Village. Milligan stated that he can't believe our increased assessments didn't increase tax revenue. VanGilder agreed. Zillmer commented that an increase in taxes would only be allowed on new net construction.

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Beffa suggested removing the 4% wage increase for employees (\$7500) and removing Public Works OT (\$4000).

VanGilder agreed to increase water/sewer rent for hall usage.

VanGilder suggested budgeting \$7500 for interest revenue.

LeBrocq inquired where the state shared revenue comes from. Zillmer responded that she has a book she can share to explain this. State transportation aid went down because the Village hasn't been doing road projects. We have TID funds we are planning to use to do a project in the future. Beffa gave another option to help balance the budget, but Brandon didn't advise it. We could put the TID amount on the levy and utilize that money in the general fund. VanGilder stated that this might be the only out -even though it isn't the best route. LeBrocq stated there isn't anything else to cut for \$45,000 and that the fire protection expense doesn't help. Beffa has been trying to get clarification from the attorney, League of WI, DOR, and PSC to see if we can put the fire protection on as a special assessment. VanGilder commented that he doesn't think we have any other choice but to put the \$45,000 on the levy. LeBrocq and Seffinga agreed. Milligan voiced concern over Brandon advising against this- unless it's the last resort. VanGilder replied that he feels this is the last resort. Zillmer stated that the Village is taxed almost the same for debt as they are for the base levy. Beffa was unable to contact Brandon for guidance. Discussion on Village Hall garage rental. Zillmer suggested charging monthly campers for electric. Seffinga agreed. Zillmer also asked if Doolittle had access to WIFI through S & K. Seffinga stated he pays \$56/month for his WIFI and basic cable when camping at Dulians, directly to S&K. Beffa will check with S & K regarding advertising for WIFI and cable TV services. Seffinga said that central WIFI isn't as good as the S&K is.

Continued discussion on budget items and changes. VanGilder asked to adjust crack filling to \$12,000.

Beffa will send the public notice to the Chronotype for the public hearing. The hearing will be November 16th at 5:30 pm. Final Budget Workshop will be held on October 26, 2023. Motion by VanGilder 2nd by Seffinga to approve the 2024 levy of \$278,166. Carried 5-0. Motion by VanGilder 2nd by Milligan to approve the 2024 balanced budget of \$565,888. Carried 5-0.

4. Adjourn-Motion by Boatman 2nd by Seffinga to adjourn. Carried 5-0.

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