



The Budget Workshop of the Village of Birchwood
was held on **Monday, September 28th, 2026**, at **6:00 p.m.** at the
Birchwood Village Hall, 101 N Main Street, Birchwood, WI 54817.

MINUTES

1. VanGilder called the Meeting to Order (meeting is recorded)
2. Pledge of Allegiance-Recited
3. Roll Call by Clerk-Present-R. VanGilder, T. LeBrocq, R. Seffinga, P. Parkos—Absent-B. Darkow
4. Public Comments
 - a. Citizen comments on agenda items only (3 minutes per person)-None
5. Current Agenda
 - a. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by Seffinga to approve current agenda. Carried 4-0.
6. Birchwood Four Corners Emergency Services District
 - a. Dewayne Reiten to present BFCESD 2027 Fire and Ambulance Budget and Assessments- Reiten stated that before he started in his position, the BFCESD received grants for an ATV ambulance and had also ordered a new ambulance. The tracks and winch were not included in this and there was no financial plan for the new ambulance. Thankfully, fundraising covered the expense of these items. Reiten commented that he has pushed for a flat budget and better financial planning in both departments. He added that it will be at least 10 years before they make any major purchases. Sam/EMS is doing a great job and has started an outlay account for future purchases. In 2029, the State is requiring all radios to be replaced. Reiten added that he hopes there will be grants to cover the expense. The total increase to the Village for both Fire/EMS is \$4618.66 which is better than previous years. He commented that both Department heads are doing a great job. Dewey added that all costs are going up due to fuel prices, etc. Fire calls this year are at 57, last year the number of calls was higher. There is no way to budget for these. Dewey and Cedar Lake were the only representatives that attended the budget meetings at the BFC. Reiten voiced concern over the questions that have been raised regarding his salary for the meetings. Reiten stated that the BFCESD continues to deal with ongoing staffing issues, especially coverage during the week. They continue to try and recruit help. Dewey explained that the Fire Receipt line item in the Budget was an error and Cindy is working to correct it. VanGilder inquired about the 10% wage increase for department heads. Dewey stated that this was built in before he started and is an automatic increase. He added that the workload in these positions has continued to increase due to State requirements, etc. VanGilder thanked Dewey for his help and time.
7. Group Health Insurance Programs

- a. Review 2027 Group Health Insurance Programs provided by Employee Trust Fund. VanGilder explained that if Ashley and Adam participate in the same plan (Security Health) it will save the Village and employees money. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by LeBrocq to approve the move to Security Health -keeping the current plan for both Adam and Ashley. Carried 4-0.
8. Debt Service
 - a. Discussion on municipal debt service-Beffa reviewed the information that Brandon supplied. The Village is not adding any debt to the taxpayers for debt service. Even with the fire protection being financed the debt service amount is going down.
9. Draft 2027 Budget
 - a. Draft 2027 Budget-Beffa supplied a detailed printout. Beffa explained items that have increased. Revenue- The Water PILOT has gone down,so Beffa is looking into how this is calculated to see why. Shared revenue and ACT 12 funds are increasing. DNR PILT continues to decrease when they sell land in the Village. Brunclik commented that most of this land is being changed over to DOT property. Zoning permit fees have increased due to Atwood helping us re-structure our fee schedule. The Village only has 1 Short term rental in the Village (not grandfathered in), so that revenue is down. Public works-we budgeted on the conservative side for abatement because we don't know when those funds will come in. Citations are also hard to budget for because they are unpredictable. VanGilder sent a letter to Edgewater regarding the police contract. Strand generated a small amount of revenue for scrap from the Spring cleanup. Doolittle-shower fee increase has helped. Beffa indicated that Milligan stated he thinks he can secure more seasonal sites which would help increase revenue. Beffa commented that declining bank interest rates really hurt the Village this year. At the October BOT meeting, Degraw will present a new Village garage lease which if approved, would increase the rental income.

Expenses- Beffa calculated raises at 3.5% for employees for 2027. She discussed committee and board members wages along with the Commissioner of the BFCESD. The Village will pay the Commissioner of the BFC for all meetings-18 meetings will be budgeted for 2027. The Village changed attorneys which Beffa thinks will lower legal fees. The Village portion of the employee health insurance isn't subject to FICA, so Beffa will adjust the worksheet for the next meeting. The change to Security Health Plan will save the Village around \$9100. Office expenses for the hall are currently divided into 60/20/20-(Gen/water/sewer. Beffa plans to change this for 2027 by taking the yearly expense total and making the allocation through the water/sewer yearly rent instead of on the vendor side. Election costs will decrease for 2027 because there are only 2 elections. Beffa has not received the exact amounts for the Village insurance for next year. 2027 Proposed Ambulance contract is \$72,823.24 and \$8604.71 for Fire Protection. Beffa would like to put Strand's projects (sidewalks/parking lines) into an outlay account for next year. In 2026, the loader issues pushed equipment maintenance over budget, so hopefully there are no issues with it in 2027. Budget for 2027 reflects transportation increases because of high fuel prices.

Beffa explained that \$36,098.04 is the approximate amount that needs to be trimmed to balance the budget. She commented that the sidewalk and repainting parking lines could be financed. Strand added that instead of removing all the parking lines, only the incorrect lines could be removed. VanGilder added that removing \$30,000 for painting the lines would be the 1st thing he would cut. He added that the sidewalks need to be done to prevent safety hazards. Beffa commented that we had funds in the 2026 budget for the sidewalks that weren't used. She will ask Brandon if those funds can be put in an outlay account to be used for sidewalks in 2027. The next meeting is October 13th at 5:30.

10. Adjournment-Motion by Seffinga, 2nd by Parkos to adjourn. Carried 4-0.

The meeting is open to the public and is handicapped accessible. Agendas are posted in three public places which are the Village Hall, Pioneer Market and Deli, and Birchwood United States Postal Service Office notice boards, and on the village website www.birchwoodvillage.wi.us to comply with Resolution 175-15.