

**VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2013 – AFTERNOON**

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer, Board Members Fitzgerald, Majewski and Milkovich (arrived at 12:17 pm)

Absent: Councilman Marnicki

Also Attending: Comptroller Laura McKane, Parks Superintendent Jim Bukowski and Town Clerk Emil Bielecki

**WORK SESSION** - Supervisor Schaffer convened the meeting at 11:50 AM.

**Parks Department 2014 Budget Review**

Parks Superintendent Jim Bukowski made the following points during the line by line review of the proposed budget:

- We have not been able to maintain a full crew all season due to vacations, sickness and injuries.
- Seasonal employees are necessary for the Department to operate properly and provide a reasonable level of service. Two are needed to keep up with mowing and trimming. Four are needed to keep up on general maintenance items. Six would allow the Department to maintain the athletic fields. Eight would allow the Department to complete some of the capital projects.
- We are falling behind on field maintenance. It is cheaper to maintain a field than to rebuild it after it has been destroyed.
- Stair Park is getting more use. The area is transitioning to a younger demographic.
- Overtime is going over budget because seasonal help was not hired.
- The increase in the miscellaneous line is to purchase new grill and garbage can lids.
- The Town should explore imposing fees for the use of other parks for organized events like picnics.
- We have to be licensed to use pesticides even if we sub out the work. There is tremendous liability if we use these materials without the proper certifications and documentation.
- We are the supplier of grass seed for all of the departments.
- He is asking for additional funding to do field maintenance. The leagues are doing some of the work but only in season and the work is very unpredictable.
- There are significant quality differences between the pavilions at Arnold Park. The Town should consider charging different fees to reflect that.
- The capital request for 2014 is approximately for \$407,000 (3 pick-up trucks, volume mower and a zero turn mower).
- The truck fleet size is to some extent a function of the summer help that we get.
- Mowing fleet need to be kept updated to avoid problems.
- There is a developing trend to use compressed natural gas in vehicles. We should be looking to convert to CNG vehicles.

Councilman Majewski stated that we should consider contracting out all of our pesticide work. Jim Bukowski responded that it would not be practical and labor is very expensive.

Councilman Milkovich recommended that the Public Works Committee meet with the 3 departments that use the equipment to determine which equipment to keep. There should be a better understanding of how the equipment is being shared and who is responsible to the maintenance.

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Supervisor Schaffer stated that we should consider the replacement of Pavilion 1 at Arnold Park and asked Park's Superintendent Bukowski to provide the Board with a cost estimate.

Councilman Milkovich noted that the Board is considering the realignment of some the duties performed by the janitor if the Fire Department contracts out their cleaning services. That realignment could include the cleaning of the bathrooms on the Rail Trail and perhaps some of the other parks.

**2014 Fire District Budget Review update from Comptroller McKane**

Comptroller McKane provide the Board with a list of budget adjustments made by her and the Fire Department that would reduce the spending side slightly from last year and would result in keeping the tax levy unchanged. She noted that the Board would need to adopt the 2014 Proposed Fire District Budget at the regular Work Session scheduled for the evening of Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The Work Session was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk