

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer, Board Members Fitzgerald and Majewski
Absent: Councilmen Marnicki and Marnicki

Also Attending: Comptroller Laura McKane, Town Engineer Gary Campo, Museum Director Virginia Wood, Museum Curator Kate Ellenberger and Town Clerk Emil Bielecki

WORK SESSION - Supervisor Schaffer convened the meeting at 11:40 AM.

Flood Insurance for Town structures

Comptroller McKane provided the Board with a quote from Partners Insurance for flood insurance covering Town structures and buildings that have flooded in the past. The quoted amount was \$16,479 and it is currently not budgeted.

Town Engineer Gary Campo noted that each building has to be looked at separately. We have to get flood insurance on the structures that FEMA provided reimbursement on. Some of the other structures may or may not be in the flood zone and their status could change if FEMA adopts new maps. The situation needs to be monitored because the cost of flood insurance, if not purchased before the maps are adopted, will increase dramatically. He will review the list of structures included in the quote and determine which locations may need to be added or removed.

Engineering Department 2014 Budget Review

In a line by line review of the proposed budget, Town Engineer Gary Campo and Comptroller Laura McKane highlighted the following:

- The office supply line has increased because of some new expenses like ink toner.
- The professional services line is used to cover some of the unanticipated expenses connected with bonding.
- The building and grounds line was left at last year's level but we have achieved some savings this year due to the ability of the new maintenance worker to do more of the work in-house.

After a brief discussion, the Board decided to remove the funding from the budget for appliance pick-up.

Capital budget

- The boiler at the highway garage is leaking and must be replaced.
- As part of the overall Two Rivers Greenway project agreement, Vestal is committed to coordinating the purchase of signs for all participants in the County. We have to pay for the signs but will be reimbursed. Comptroller McKane indicated that if the reimbursements are timely, perhaps this project can be financed internally to control costs.

Councilman Majewski suggested that the Department look into getting an engineering student to do an unpaid internship with the Engineering Department.

In view of the fact that the Fire Department may contract out cleaning services, Comptroller McKane asked Town Engineer Gary Campo to review the janitors schedule and to discuss with the Parks Department the possibility of reallocating some of the time to the cleaning of bathrooms on the Rail Trail and other park locations.

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Vestal Museum 2014 Budget Review

In the course of doing a line by line budget review, the Board engaged Vestal Museum Director Virginia Wood and the newly hired Curator Katy Ellenberger in a lengthy discussion about the future plans for the Museum. The following items were highlighted as part of the discussion:

- The Museum is undertaking an aggressive effort to remake itself into a quality operation. We are the only town museum in the County and we can turn it into a showpiece with many new and interesting programs and displays.
- An improved museum will improve access to more grants.
- The Town needs to be willing to make a short term investment to achieve long term benefits. The Museum needs a sense of stability to move forward.
- The Museum is fortunate to have many dedicated volunteers.
- The Farmers Market at the library location is very beneficial to the Museum.
- The building and grounds line has money to repair the ramp. The money is for materials; the work will be done by volunteers.
- Some of the additional hours that are being requested will be dedicated to grant writing.
- There are some phone issues that can be resolved by the IT Department.
- The requested amount for labor (\$14,968) will allow the Museum to return to the 2012 schedule of operation and to proceed with the improvements in programs and collections.

Supervisor Schaffer noted that what is being asked for is not unrealistic but cautioned that the tight finances will continue to require that the Museum aggressively pursue outside funding sources to achieve its long term goals.

Town Clerk 2014 Budget Review

Town Clerk Emil Bielecki explained that his budget consists of 3 components: town clerk, records management and dog control.

Comptroller Laura McKane noted that with the exception of the contractual wage and benefit increases and an increase in the software maintenance contract, the total for the remaining budget lines is lower than it was last year.

The Work Session was adjourned at 1:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk