

Town of Verona
Financial Sustainability Committee Minutes
Town of Verona Community Room, 7669 County Highway PD, Verona, WI
7/11/2019

Present: Laura Dreger, Tom Mathies, Douglas Wolf, and John Senseman

Absent: Julie Bass-Devries

Staff Present: Amanda Arnold – Planner-Administrator, John Wright – Clerk-Treasurer, and Chris Barnes, Project Manager

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda – Chair Dreger called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM. Mathies moved to approve the agenda; 2nd by Wolf. Motion carried.

Approve Minutes – Motion by Senseman to approve the May 1, 2019 minutes; 2nd by Mathies. Motion carried.

Discussion of Draft Capital Improvement Program and Other Cost Projections – Town Project Manager Chris Barnes introduced a draft CIP for Public Works expenses for a ten-year period. He noted that capital costs include roads and larger equipment items such as trucks. This draft focuses upon roads; a future version will include equipment. There is approximately 42 miles of roads that the Town is responsible for maintaining. Typically, a higher travel road can go 13 years between hot asphalt overlays. Secondary and neighborhood roads such as Sugar River and Horseshoe Bend are designed to be maintained by the chip seal process. Ideally these would be sealed every six to seven years; this scenario assumes a ten-year schedule for recoating. The CIP breaks each road into the segments defined by the Wisconsin DOT in their online WISLR system. A road with traffic volumes greater than 6,000 vehicles per day are considered as high volume (e.g. Fitchrona and Woods Road).

Member Senseman asked if property developers should contribute to road upgrades. There followed a brief discussion regarding special assessments. Administrator/Planner Arnold stated that she will plug in these annual cost estimates into the five-year budgeting spreadsheet designed by member Doug Wolf. Barnes noted that certain equipment needs by the Town might be best handled by leasing the equipment rather than outright ownership.

Budget Schedule – Clerk/Treasurer Wright presented last year's detailed budget schedule. He noted that since this year's Board of Review is not scheduled to close until August 1, 2019, that some of the dates would have to be pushed into the future by two months.

Continued Discussion of Potential Funding Options

- Moving a portion of fire protection costs from the levy to a special charge – the amount that can be deducted from the general tax levy and moved to a tax bill as a special charge is capped by the Town's 2013 cost for fire protection. A special charge of this type can apply to exempt properties as well as taxable ones. There followed a brief discussion of how to establish values for exempt properties and whether to tax the total value, the improved value, or the land value. Member Mathies noted that Clark County was found not exempt from the special charge levied by the Town of Hoard as established in Town of Hoard v. Clark County.
- Wheel tax – Member Senseman stated that there approximately 1,800 registered vehicles in the Town of Verona. If the Town enacted a wheel tax of \$22 per vehicle, he calculated approximately \$40,000 in revenue. The Public Works Committee made the Town Board aware that the supported imposing this charge, but it was not presented as an action item. Once implemented, it would be a permanent charge unless rescinded by the Town of Verona Board. Wolf felt the fire fee special charge would be received better by the public than would another tax. Administrator/Planner agreed to contact Carly Roehl, Wisconsin DOT Motor Vehicle Program Specialist-Senior about the process for implementing a wheel tax and will report the results at the next meeting; without objection.

- Exceeding levy by referendum – although the Department of Revenue provided Clerk/Treasurer Wright with a list of Towns with populations less than 3,000 who have exceeded their annual allowable levy by referendum, no further research has been conducted. It was noted that the next increase due to the third Verona Area School District referenda issue that was approved by the electorate in their district will not begin until the 2021 pay 2022 tax year. The group agreed that further exceeding our local levy by referendum would not be a popular option. It was noted that the fire protection special charge could be implemented in stages. Member Senseman thought it would be best to let the public know of the budgetary needs for the Town and seek their approval to increase the local levy.

Schedule Next Meeting and Agenda Items – the next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 1:00 PM. Items on the agenda will include:

Call to Order, Approval of Agenda

Approve Minutes from July 11, 2019

Update on Town Board Reaction to Capital Improvement Program

Update on Interim Market Update and Budget Schedule

Update on Potential Movement of a Portion of Fire Protection Costs from the Annual Levy to a Special Charge

2013 fire protection budget numbers

Value of tax-exempt property

Update on How a Wheel Tax is Implemented Locally

Update on Five-Year Budget Projections

Schedule Next Meeting and Agenda Items

Adjourn

Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 AM.

Approved: August 15, 2019

Prepared by: John Wright with Amanda Arnold Review