

**TOWN OF KIRKWOOD
WORK SESSION**

September 7, 2021

Present: Supervisor Lewis Grubham
Councilman Robert Weingartner
Councilwoman Katie Legg
Councilman William Diffendorf, Jr.
Councilman Arthur Shafer

Also Present: Robert McKertich, Attorney
Kelley Diffendorf, Town Clerk
John A. Finch Jr., Commissioner of Public Works

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Done prior to the Public Hearing

- 1. Resolution ratifying a resolution authorizing advertising for Sealed Bids for the Concrete Foundation for the Salt Barn, with bids returnable to the Town Clerk's Office on September 7, 2021 at 12 noon and to be publicly opened and read at that time. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham explained the bids were due today rather than last week when initially scheduled due to design timing issues from Griffiths Engineering.

- 2. Award Sealed Bids – Salt Barn Project. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said six bids came in and the low bid was about \$40,000 cheaper than the last time. The design changes helped change the bid amounts this time around.

- 3. Resolution scheduling a Grievance Day Hearing on the 2022 Unit Assessments for September 28, 2021 at 6:00 PM. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said this will be held on the same night as our next work session.

- 4. Discussion – Resolution ratifying a resolution authorizing the Supervisor to sign a contract with Municipal Solutions, Inc., to provide assistance for General Financial Services, in accordance with the attached contract. (LCG)**

Supervisor Grubham said this is something we do each year.

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5. Discussion – Authorizing the Town of Kirkwood to open accounts with People Security Bank & Trust, listing all signers and who has responsibility with the account. (LCG)

Supervisor Grubham explained the account is being opened up with People's because their interest rate is substantially higher than any other bank, it is close to .35%. We will still use M & T for many of our regular banking accounts. **Resolution.**

6. Discussion – Inspiration Playground. (KML)

Councilwoman Legg presented her information for the Inspiration Playground. Originally in 2018 it was proposed to go in at Valley Park, but with flooding concerns, the new idea is to relocate it to Veteran's River Park. Councilwoman Legg explained the Inspiration Playground Committee formed a non-profit and is able to write their own grants and fundraise on their own without going through a Pass-Through Fund through Community Foundation. The playground would be located near the tennis courts and walking track. The price of the playground will go down since there is already a pavilion nearby, a walking track, and the redesign is a little smaller to fit that space. The Board gave permission to put the playground at Veteran's River Park.

7. Discussion – Highway Superintendent salaries in Broome County. (JAF)

John Finch explained that he has been comparing salaries for Highway Superintendents and highway personnel in surrounding areas. Right now the highway employees are locked in with the union for the next three years so there is not much that can be done with their salaries. John Finch compared his salary with nearby towns and asked for a 4% increase over the next three years. Supervisor Grubham suggested John Finch's salary is already comparable to many towns in Broome County and getting his requested raise would make his salary substantially higher than many of them.

John Finch explained that he is not only comparing salaries, but the job he has done in the past five years. He gave examples such as, saving the Town money, selling equipment on the auction site, paving more roads than other Supervisors, and keeping all the equipment up to date. He said the Town is in a much better place now than five years ago, even with the 2018 flood setbacks. Councilman Weingartner reminded John Finch that he knew what he was going to get paid when he ran for the position and does get a yearly raise. Councilwoman Legg would have liked to have seen a

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comparison of duties between other towns and Kirkwood to get a better idea of what extra is being done. She recommended that could be done and brought to the Board in the future. Councilman Diffendorf explained that when comparing roads, Kirkwood has nowhere near the number of miles than many other towns do. All Board members mentioned John Finch was doing a great job for the Town. But, they were not able to support a raise at this time because they feel he is already paid very well.

8. Discussion – Selling the 2018 zero turn Kubota – Model ZD1211L Mower – Serial # 24755 – Inventory # 1088. (JAF)

John Finch posted the zero turn mower on Auctions International and would like the Board to approve him selling it, if he can get \$9,000-\$10,000 for it. If he sells it he would like to buy a new one which would cost approximately \$14,000-\$14,500 on a State bid. If agreed on, a new one would be ordered in the spring of next year then it would come with a full warranty at that time, instead of sitting all winter under warranty and not being used. The Board agreed on trying to sell this tractor.

Resolution.

John Finch discussed selling a second zero turn mower in the spring and getting a new one then as well. He explained it would be better to sell it before the season starts to keep the hours down and not having it be another year older when trying to sell it. Supervisor Grubham said we can revisit this second sale in the spring.

9. Discussion – Pay increase for William Tozer. (JAF)

John Finch presented information regarding a pay increase for his Deputy, William Tozer, who is also the mechanic at the Town Garage. John Finch said he saves the Town a large amount of money. Current mechanic labor rates for local mechanics were listed from \$90 to \$119 per hour, along with \$138 per hour for brake service. William Tozer is able to change the brakes on all the Kirkwood trucks, perform clutch and brake adjustments, rebuild transmissions, make attachments by welding, and much more. John Finch is requesting for William Tozer an extra \$1.50 per hour raise plus his annual \$.50 per hour raise for 2022 and the same for 2023, which is a total of \$2 per hour each year for the next two years.

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Councilman Weingartner said he has knowledge of how the mechanical field works and feels that William Tozer is grossly underpaid and saves the Town a lot of money. Councilman Diffendorf agreed with Councilman Weingartner and said it's very important to have a good mechanic, especially one that can also do welding. The entire Board was in support of William Tozer getting a raise. **Resolution.**

10. Discussion – Pay increase for Sue Glovich and Mary Kay Sullivan. (LCG)

Supervisor Grubham explained that Sue Glovich and Mary Kay Sullivan are very important to the operation of the Town. It has been a while since they have had a raise outside of their annual raise. Supervisor Grubham proposed they each get their annual raise plus \$1,000 in 2022 and the same for 2023. The Board supported the raises.

Resolution.

11. Discussion – Resolution authorizing the Supervisor to sign an agreement with Broome County for Court Security, in accordance with the attached agreement. (LCG)

Supervisor Grubham explained this has been done the past three years. Security is not needed as often so the total cost is a lot less than it was three years ago.

12. Audit of Claims.