TOWN OF COTTAGE GROVE
TOWN BOARD 2026 BUDGET WORKSHOP
OCTOBER 22, 2026

1. Notice of the meeting was properly posted at the Town Hall and on the Town's website. Town Chair Steve Anders, Supervisors Mike Fonger, Troy Eickhoff, Kristi Williams and Patrick Buchholz were present, as well as Clerk-Treasurer Kim Banigan, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Jennifer Millage, Court Clerk Stephanie Farwell, and Highway Superintendent Dan Dresen. Public Works Employee Dan Anderson was present through item 5. DGEMS Chief Eric Lang was present initially, logged off for the closed session, and then logged back in when open session reconvened.
2. Anders called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.
3. Consider/Adopt Motion to rescind September 21, 2026 motion to approve Dane County Ordinance Amendment 2026-OA006 regarding cemeteries: Anders learned at a recent DCTA Executive Committee meeting that the Dane County Zoning Administrator recommended what Anders considers excessive requirements for the private burials that would be permitted under this amendment, and said that several Towns are rescinding their prior actions to approve it. There was some confusion expressed by Board members about what message the Town Board would send by rescinding their approval. Opinions that private burial should not be an easy process and grave sites should be clearly identifiable were expressed. **MOTION** by Buchholz/Williams to rescind the September 21, 2026 motion to approve 2026-OA006. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**
4. CONSIDER/ADOPT MOTION TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO WISCONSIN STATUTE 19.85(1)(c) for the purpose of considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility: 2027 Employee Staffing and Compensation: **MOTION** Williams/Eickhoff to move into closed session for the reason stated above. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0 by roll call vote.** The door and virtual meeting were locked, and recording was paused. The closed session began at 6:42 PM.
5. CONSIDER/ADOPT MOTION TO RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION to take any action necessary from closed session: **MOTION** by Williams/Fonger to reconvene in open session. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0 by roll call vote.** The closed session ended at 7:24 P.M., the door and virtual meeting were unlocked, and recording was resumed. The Budget Worksheet supported what was discussed in closed session. No action was taken.
6. Review of Town Fees as per TCG Ord. Sec. 07.01(2)(a): No changes were deemed necessary, and no action was taken.
7. Discuss/Consider Town budget for Fiscal Year 2027: Banigan had prepared a proposed budget in preparation for tonight's meeting.
    a. Revenue Estimates: The Budget Worksheet as filled by the Clerk-Treasurer included known revenues such as the tax levy as calculated on the State's levy limit worksheet, state aids and funding, intergovernmental revenue and charges. Estimates for other revenues were discussed and adjusted as deemed appropriate. Notable changes from 2026 included $24,150.63 in LRIP funding to reconstruct Nora Road.
    b. Expense Estimates: Expense estimates were reviewed and adjusted as deemed appropriate. Notable changes from 2026 included a significant increase in Clerk compensation due to the plans for a full-time Clerk-Treasurer to replace Banigan when she intends to step down next spring. $28,500 was penciled in for an Interim Market Update by the Town Assessor to bring the Town back into compliance with State Statutes. (Quote to be considered below).
    c. Capital Outlay: The Fire Department planned capital outlay includes tires for the Brush truck, battery operated saws, a SCBA facepiece fit-testing machine, and a command vehicle. The

Emergency Services Building budget includes $10,000 in capital outlay to resurface the parking lot southeast of the building. Local Highway outlay is $269.369.10 to build turn lanes on US Hwy 12/18 at North Star Road, as the Town has agreed in order to move the Ironstone Commercial Park development ahead. The Board plans to fund the project with a 5-year loan in 2027. Half of that cost will be recouped with impact fees charged with building permits for commercial properties on North Star Road. $2,256 in other capital outlay is the first of two installments of the Town's 20% match for the County's plans to replace two DS200 tabulators and two ExpressVotes in 2027. Highway Equipment Capital Outlay was penciled in to include $135,500 for a new loader to replace the 2018 John Deere, with a trade-in value of $66,500 shown in the 42010 Sale of Highway Equip & Property line item under revenue. (Quote to be considered below.)

d. Use of Fund Balances: As of the end of 2025, the Town had 39% of the 2026 budgeted expenditures as Unassigned Funds. Policy states this should be 20-25%. No unassigned funds have been allocated so far this year. The Board agreed to fund the $140,383.98 deficit left after completing the budget worksheet with unassigned funds.

1. Discuss/Consider approval of Associated Appraisal Consultant's quote for a 2027 Interim Market Update: Discuss/Consider approval of Associated Appraisal Consultant's quote for a 2027 Interim Market Update: **MOTION** by Williams/Fonger to approve the quote for an Interim Market Update in 2027 for $28,500. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0**
2. Discuss/Consider quotes to replace the 2018 JD Loader in 2027: Two quotes were considered: 1) Fabick Cat for a 2026 CAT model 908-14 compact wheel loader for $135,500 less a trade in value for the 2018 JD Loader of $66,500, for a net cost of $69,000 and 2) from Miller Bradford & Risberg, Inc. for a 2026 Case model 321 compact wheel loader for $121,250 less a trade in value of $50,750 for a net cost of $70,500. Discussion was that, in addition to a slightly lower net cost, the CAT comes with a larger bucket, and operating controls are similar to the larger CAT that is familiar to the operators. **MOTION** by Buchholz/Williams to approve the purchase of the 2026 CAT model 908-14 in 2027, at a net cost of $69,000. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**
8. Set the date for:
   a. A Public Hearing for the Town of Cottage Grove Budget for Fiscal Year 2027.
   b. A Special Meeting of the Electors, pursuant to s.60.12(1)(c), Wis. Stat., to adopt the 2026 town tax levy to be paid in 2027 pursuant to s.60.10(1)(a), Wis. Stat.
   c. **MOTION** by Williams/Eickhoff to hold the Public Hearing for Tuesday, December 1st, beginning at 6:30 P.M., immediately followed by the Special Meeting of the Electors to adopt the 2026 payable 2027 Town Tax levy. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0**. Discussion was to move the December 7th regular Town Board meeting to that date as well.
9. Adjournment: **MOTION** by Williams/Eickhoff to adjourn. **MOTION CARRIED 5-0.** The meeting ended at 9:49 P.M.

Kim Banigan, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved 11-05-2026

Closed session minutes approved and kept closed until the 2027 budget is adopted