

# **Village of Withee**

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The Village of Withee Board met on September 23, 2024, in the Municipal Building, Conference Room at 6:15 p.m. for a Special Board meeting.

## **ROLL CALL**

President Lindgren called the meeting to order. Roll call was answered by Trustees Lindgren, Shelton, Mueller, Kalepp, and Kroeplin. Clerk Niemi recorded the minutes. Also present was Cindy Cardinal, Michael Loskot, Grace Dale, Officer Jacob Haugstad, Chief Patrick Fehlman, Bob Wilczek, and Pam Jaffke.

## **VILLAGE BUDGET**

The Board reviewed the draft of the 2025 Village budget which is not complete with figures. The budget included the 2025 updated budget figures for the O-W police department with third officer and O-W-C fire department increasing their on-call pay. Line items for donations, economic development loan, municipal building savings, and comprehensive plan savings were eliminated which put \$17,500 to other areas of increased expense. Health insurance was figured with a 7% increase and wages figured with a 3% increase, although those figures are unknown until regular budget meetings. The rough budget has \$36,199.70 left for savings/expenses this year. As expenses rises approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year for police, fire, and Village increases, the Village can sustain paying for a third police officer for about three years, contingent on no unexpected expenses or equipment needed. In approximately 3-4 years, the Village would have to make cuts, seek referendum, or take monies from savings. An area to cut would be not to budget a street every year. In six years, the municipal building will be paid off and then \$16,782.72 will be available annually. Once the savings monies are used, they won't be replaced. Referendums can only be held during certain elections. A Kroeplin/Mueller motion to postpone approval of the Village budget until the next budget meeting carried with all ayes.

## **O-W POLICE UNION CONTRACT**

The Village Board reviewed the union contract with updates that was presented at the September 16, 2024 O-W Police Finance Committee meeting. A Kalepp/Shelton motion to approve the Labor Agreement between the Owen/Withee Police Committee and General Teamsters Union Local 662 Law Enforcement League covering January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027 carried with all ayes.

## **O-W POLICE BUDGET WITH THIRD OFFICER**

Trustee Mueller asked for the changes from the September 3, 2024 police budget to the September 16, 2024 police budget. Chief Fehlman included the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) and workmen's compensation figures, and decreased wages and benefits and public relations figures. In 2023, the amount paid for police WRS, social security, and other expenses were reimbursed to the City of Owen as approved on the O-W police department monthly accounts payable statements. A Shelton/Kroeplin motion to approve the 2025 police budget with the third officer carried with all ayes.

## **O-W POLICE THIRD OFFICER**

President Lindgren allowed Grace Dale to voice her support for employment of a third officer due to increase in assaults and thefts in the area and the intent of the supplemental aid for fire, police, ambulance, public transportation, and public works. Clerk Niemi explained that due to TID#1 closing, the Village is receiving approximately \$35,000 less from the past budget so the \$42,687 supplemental aid is being used to help maintain the apportioned amounts for fire/ambulance and police with no cuts to those line items. Dale mentioned that with a third officer, it should mean less overtime and more straight pay which Chief Fehlman answered in the affirmative.

Trustee Mueller spoke of concerns for maintaining the expense of a third officer with possible future cuts to the Village needs, cutting the third officer, and seeking resident-funded referendum. Mueller also spoke about the coverage of police protection with Clark County officers being visible in the Village. Chief Fehlman responded that Clark County officers are seen because their gas pumps and northern office for filing reports are in this area. Chief Fehlman said he could address Trustee Mueller's concerns about the coverage in a one-on-one conversation, not at the meeting. A Kroeplin/Kalepp motion to approve hiring a third officer carried with four ayes and Mueller voting nay.

A Kalepp/Kroeplin motion to adjourn at 6:43 p.m. carried with all ayes.

Ellen Niemi  
Village Clerk