

Garbage Collection

Wis Stats 66.0627 lists services a municipality (city, village, town or county) may provide and charge for. Garbage collection is listed as a service. The cost of a service may not be charged to a taxpayer until the service has been provided. (Wis. Stat. 60.55(2)), that means the town has been paying the monthly bill for the service. The money was taken from our contingency fund, and will be repaid as the taxes are collected. Because we had money set aside to pay for unexpected expenses, it was not necessary to borrow. Some of us pay our taxes in two installments. By state law, Wis. Stat. 66.0627(4) a service charge must be paid in full with the first installment, if the charge is not paid in full, the property becomes tax delinquent.

The decision to contract for garbage collection has not pleased everyone but as a large majority were in favor it should please most.

This year when planning the budget, we attempted to clearly delineate expenses, listing salary and expenses for the clerk, treasurer and board members as well as other costs such as insurance.

Blacktopping

When it was decided at the annual meeting in 2006 to begin a blacktopping program, the voters agreed to an increase in the levy to pay for the blacktopping.

The levy in 2006 was \$70,000. In 2007, the levy was \$101,576. From 2008 thru 2017, the levy was never less than \$100,881 nor more than \$104,399. In 2018 the levy is \$107,179.

How was that money spent?

In 2007 and 2008, a mile of road each year was blacktopped. Why did the board discontinue blacktopping? The cost of oil skyrocketed and the program was put on hold as the amount of money collected was not going to allow 1 mile of road blacktopping every 2-3 years.

During the ensuing years, our cost to provide the government and services for the public have increased. Other fixed costs are Fire Protection and Ambulance Service. In 2006, Fire Protection was \$29,663, and Ambulance Service was \$12,713 for a total of \$42,376. In 2007, that became \$49,181. From 2008 thru 2017, that charge was never less than \$54,386 nor more than \$63,555. In 2018, that charge is \$69,328

Although our expenses continued to increase, some money has continued to accrue and is kept in the town accounts. Our town hall was in need of repair or replacement, and at the 2009 annual meeting the voters elected to remodel the town hall. That expense, (roughly \$61,000) was taken from the accumulating money, and we did not need to borrow funds. The money continued to accumulate and soon the town needed a replacement truck for snow removal. The purchase of the truck (\$131,184.50) in 2013 was also accomplished without raising the tax

levy to pay for the truck, by utilizing the funds accruing from the 2006 decision. This year, the repairs to the roofs of shop building 1 and 2 and the replacement of the steps and ramp to the hall and landscaping to improve drainage, as well as a new furnace for shop 1, were undertaken with no additional tax levy.

Forest Crop Land Removal

The town has accrued funds from land that has been removed from forest crop (FCL) or managed forest (MFL). When forested land is removed from those programs, the landowner must pay the unpaid taxes for the time period when the land was enrolled. Those taxes have been shared between the town and the county, and when we received the money from the state we sent a share to the county.

Those monies have been combined with the unspent tax levy and allocated this year as follows.

Garbage Fund: \$9,000 This represents about 6 months of expenses for the garbage collection. Next year the fund will grow to about double that as taxes are collected and then each month the payment for the collection will be drawn from that account.

Road Improvement: \$50,000

This could be used toward a blacktop project or other road surfacing.

Equipment Fund: \$48,000

The Cruz aire will need to be replaced soon.

Contingency Fund: \$50,000

WTA recommends having enough money on hand to cover 6 months of expenses to help with unexpected projects or repairs. For example, heavy rains have caused road and culvert washouts in recent years.

The monies are kept in an interest- bearing account and as necessary, deposits or withdrawals can be made.

Road improvement

In the 2019 budget will included beginning to clean some of the ditches in our town. The last date recorded for ditch cleaning was in 2006. Expected costs for this will be about \$2,000 per mile, both sides of the road, plus the cost of removing the spoil. This is an estimated cost as the project has not been let. This project will necessarily be done in stages over a few years.

Road Signage

This year, the replacement of nearly all the street signs in the town should have been completed by December 31, 2018. You will notice the signs are both larger and more reflective than our old signs. I can now see them, day or night, which resolves half of the (doesn't know where he is, or where he is going) dilemma. We are now in compliance with state law, at this time.