

**Village of Weston, Wisconsin**  
**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES & FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
held on Monday, October 4, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., in the Board Room at the Municipal Center.

**AGENDA ITEMS.**

1. **Finance Committee Call to Order & Welcome by Chairperson Ermeling.**  
Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Finance Committee Chairperson Ermeling.
2. **Board of Trustees Call to Order & Welcome by President Maloney.**  
Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Board of Trustees President Maloney.
3. **Roll Call by Recording Secretary.**  
Roll call of Finance Committee indicated 3 members present

<u>Member</u>	<u>Present</u>
Bender, Robert	YES
Ermeling, Barb	YES
Meinel, Steve	YES
Oldenberg, Mark	NO
Simmons, Ryan	NO

Roll call of Board of Trustees indicated 6 members present.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Present</u>
Ermeling, Barb	YES
Fiene, Nate	NO
Maloney, Mark	YES
Meinel, Steve	YES
White, Loren	YES
Xiong, Yee	YES
Zeyghami, Hooshang	YES

4. **Approval of minutes from previous Joint Meeting: September 20, 2021**

***Finance motion by Meinel, second by Bender, to approve previous Joint Board and Finance Committee Meeting minutes from September 20, 2021.***

Yes Vote: 3    No Votes: 0    Abstain: 0    Not Voting: 2    Result: PASS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Voting</u>
Bender, Robert	YES
Ermeling, Barb	YES
Meinel, Steve	YES
Oldenberg, Mark	---
Simmons, Ryan	---

***Board motion by Xiong, second by White, to approve previous Joint Board and Finance Committee Meeting minutes from September 20, 2021.***

Yes Vote: 6    No Votes: 0    Abstain: 0    Not Voting: 1    Result: PASS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Voting</u>
Ermeling, Barb	YES
Fiene, Nate	---
Maloney, Mark	YES
Meinel, Steve	YES
White, Loren	YES
Xiong, Yee	YES
Zeyghami, Hooshang	YES

**5. Public Comments.**  
None.

**ACKNOWLEDGE WORK PRODUCT TRANSMITTALS.**

None.

**EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS.**

**6. Review and discussion of 2022 budget**

A PowerPoint presentation was given on the 2022 budget for other funds and General Fund revenues.

*TIF 1 and TIF 2.* Board members asked how much of a tax decrease per \$1,000 of valuation taxpayers would see if the TIFs are closed. Trautman responded approximately \$0.07 per \$1,000 in valuation for the TIF 2 closure and Trittin added that TIF 1 could decrease taxes approximately \$0.89 per \$1,000 (both calculations assume the full allowable levy increase is taken upon TIF closure and are estimates). Trautman added that the tax rate drops because the Village may only increase the levy for 50% of the percentage of the TIF increment divided by equalized value. Trautman also stated when the TIFs close, any excess funds are distributed to the other taxing jurisdictions.

Xiong questioned if there were projects to be done yet in TIF 2. Donner responded that the TIF 2 project plan amendment was denied by Plan Commission except for the boundary amendment. Donner stated current costs exceed the original TIF 2 project plan; with that, to incur additional costs the Village would need to bring another plan amendment forward or consider obtaining an attorney opinion on whether the project plan costs could be exceeded for new projects. Trautman stated a decision should be made on TIF 2 before the April TID termination deadline. There was discussion on the TIF 2 plan amendment and the concerns that some Plan Commission members had.

*Weston Aquatic Center.* There was discussion on the 2021 season and the desire to investigate a different software program and credit card processor.

*Grants Fund.* Xiong asked if the ARPA funds could be invested to earn higher interest. Trautman responded the funds are in the checking account which does earn interest; Trautman and Bender stated interest rates are very low right now. Trautman also stated a discussion on the plan for ARPA funds will occur in the future.

*Civic & Social Fund.* White asked if any scholarships have been given out. Trautman responded no scholarships have been given because interest earnings have been too low.

Maloney asked if there was a wage allocation to the farmers market. Trautman responded there was not because the farmers market likely does not have the revenues to support wages. Maloney stated he would like to see costs allocated to the proper activities, so the true costs of each activity are easily visible.

Meinel asked if we have considered having the farmers market run by a core group of people rather than by the Village. Maloney stated that option should be explored. Board members stated they would like to know the average number of hours spent on the farmers market each week.

Xiong asked what the fund balance in the Civic and Social fund is spent on. Trautman stated the funds are used for improvements to the farmers market and that the fund balance will be decreasing yet as improvements were recently made to the stalls. Maloney asked who requested the farmers market stall improvements. Trautman responded the stalls were under water. Trittin added she thought the rationale was that since the vendors pay a fee to sell there, those vendors should have a stall in good condition. Maloney asked if the Village provides electricity at the site; Wodalski responded we do.

There was discussion on if the farmers market impacts the surrounding businesses. Bender added that events like Art in the Park in Wausau can have a positive impact on the business community.

Higgins stated that when the farmers market was originally created the intent was to have the farmers market sustain itself and be run by the farmers.

*Park Trust.* Osterbrink stated parkland dedication fees are proposed to be replaced with park impact fees where funds would be split for maintenance and new improvements. Higgins stated the project was set aside due to the focus on the TIF 2 amendment. Meinel asked when the park impact fees would be brought back; Higgins responded it could be brought back for the November meeting.

*Debt Service.* White asked if rate increases are anticipated to pay utility debts and whether rate increases will be done as infrequent large increases or as more frequent small increases. Wodalski stated the plan is to propose more frequent small increases with the use of a simplified rate case.

*Water Utility.* Wodalski gave an overview of the utility funds. There was discussion on rate increases and on Weston's utility rates vs. surrounding communities. Wodalski stated the Village is eligible for a simplified rate increase in January 2022 which should allow for a 2%-3% increase in rates. Donner stated Weston's rates are low comparatively.

*Sewer Utility.* Wodalski stated Rib Mt. Metro fees are projected to increase for 2022, but the increases should be temporary.

*Stormwater Utility.* Wodalski stated stormwater has not had any rate increases in several years. Wodalski stated the preliminary findings from a phosphorus study indicate Weston is not meeting the DNR required phosphorus removal so a plan will need implemented to address that. There was discussion on what compliance will entail.

*Capital Project Funds.* Trautman clarified there is a difference between the capital project funds and the capital improvement plan. The capital project funds do not track any utility projects whereas the capital improvement plan does. Trautman stated the capital improvement plan will be brought for review in November and that the budget as presented only includes projects currently in progress. Wodalski gave an overview of the ongoing projects.

*General Fund Revenues.* Trautman stated the Village has used up the levy flexibility from the debt service exemption as of the 2022 budget. Trautman stated if net new construction remains at 0.82%, the Village may only increase its levy \$58,974 for the 2023 budget, a 0.7% increase. Trautman stated we do not currently have a long-term solution to the Village's revenue issues; the revenue shortages will be coming up every year.

Potential solutions discussed include borrowing for street maintenance, maximizing revenues through new or existing fees, usage of levy limit adjustment for joint fire/EMS, closing TIF 1 in phases, lobbying for a CPI levy increase and/or other taxes, referendum, borrowing for ongoing costs, or finding other ways to generate revenue or reduce expenditures.

White asked if there are concerns of losing the expenditure restraint payment. Trautman responded we likely will not be at risk because our levy increase will be below the allowable increase for the expenditure restraint program. Trautman stated our expenditures steadily increase every year, but our revenues are stagnant and cannot keep up with costs.

Xiong mentioned proposing a gas tax to the state as an alternative to the wheel tax.

Trautman stated a referendum will require well planned community outreach and education to gain support. Concerns were expressed with proposing a referendum with the new building project going on. Trautman added there is a lot of confusion between debt-based expenditures, where the Village can increase the debt levy to cover costs, and operational costs, where the general tax levy increase is restricted by the state levy limits.

White asked if there was general fund balance surplus that could be applied to cover revenue shortfalls. Trautman responded that we do have more in fund balance than Village policy requires, but do not have one-time uses to apply it towards.

There was discussion on cutting expenditures and how everything will be on the table. Trautman responded that it could be done; however, the issue is compounding so those cuts would need made each year to cover expenditure increases.

Trautman added the Village will need to think outside the box to generate solutions. There was discussion on how annexation would impact the tax levy. Trautman responded she did not know the levy limit impact off hand; Bender added that additional costs would be taken on as well. Utility extension impacts on the water utility payment in lieu of taxes paid to the Village were discussed.

Trautman suggested a Village wide service analysis to see what services are currently provided and what the service priorities are. The board and committee liked the idea of a service analysis.

Xiong asked if there have been any internal efforts to review potential budget cuts, even just as an exercise to see what the departments could cut from their budgets if it was needed. Donner responded there have not. Xiong also asked if the Village had considered priority-based budgeting. Trautman responded that would be a long-term goal to work towards as there is a lot of strategic planning to be done prior to putting that in place.

There was further discussion on reviewing what each person at the Village does as far as how they spend their day vs. what the needs of the Village are. Maloney stated the only way to get an unbiased view is to have the study conducted by a third party.

Discussions were had on health insurance costs. Bender stated that an organization he used to work for was able to substantially cut their health insurance expenses while keeping the same coverage; Bender will find out how they accomplished that and get back to the Village.

Trautman stated the budget will be brought back October 18<sup>th</sup>. Then if more discussion is needed on the budget after the 18<sup>th</sup>, a meeting will be held October 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **POLICY ISSUES – DISCUSSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS.**

None.

### **RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES.**

None.

### **FUTURE ITEMS.**

#### **7. Next meeting date(s):**

- Mon, Oct 18, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m., or immediately after Tourism Commission

#### **8. Topics for future meetings.**

- Budget
- HSA contributions
- Approval of CVB Contract
- Health insurance for 2022

#### **9. Remarks from staff.**

None.

#### **10. Remarks from Committee Members.**

None.

#### **11. Remarks from Board Members**

Xiong stated a new CVB director should be in place within a few weeks.

#### **12. Announcements.**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE**

***Motion by Meinel, second by Bender, to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 8:24 p.m.***

Yes Vote: 3    No Votes: 0    Abstain: 0    Not Voting: 2    Result: PASS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Voting</u>
Bender, Robert	YES
Ermeling, Barb	YES
Meinel, Steve	YES
Oldenberg, Mark	---
Simmons, Ryan	---

**ADJOURNMENT OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

***Motion by Xiong, second by Zeyghami, to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 8:24 p.m.***

Yes Vote: 6    No Votes: 0    Abstain: 0    Not Voting: 1    Result: PASS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Voting</u>
Ermeling, Barb	YES
Fiene, Nate	---
Maloney, Mark	YES
Meinel, Steve	YES
White, Loren	YES
Xiong, Yee	YES
Zeyghami, Hooshang	YES

The next meeting will be held Monday, October 18.

Jenna Trittin, Recording Secretary