

Town budget input sought on Monday

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2012 spending plan would yield a 12.6% reduction in local taxes

Town of Belgium residents will get a chance to voice their opinions of the town budget and set the tax levy on Monday, Dec. 5.

The hearing on the proposed \$580,665 budget that calls for a tax levy of \$434,000, a 12.6% decrease from last year, will be at 7 p.m. in the town hall.

Although the levy is almost \$63,000 less than last year, town resident Jeff Coeur told the board last month that was not enough in light of the 48% increase last year. The town raised its levy to pay \$150,000 for a new fire truck for the Belgium Fire Department.

However, town officials said the need to maintain roads combined with a decrease in state grants and shared revenues and loss of \$28,500 in county road paving aid makes this a lean budget.

The town received a \$12,800 TRIPP grant for tourism this year that it will not receive next year. State shared revenue will be \$19,300, which is \$6,600 less than last year. In addition, its recycling grant will be \$600 less as will payments from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The town's recycling grant will be \$600 less than this year.

The town's biggest expense — \$367,000 — is for roads, a \$50,550 increase over last year's budget. The board has budgeted \$182,000 for paving, which is 20% more than last year, and \$25,000 for drainage and culverts, which is a 66% increase.

Expecting a snowy winter, the board increased its snow removal budget from \$40,000 to \$50,000. Last year, it spent \$52,000.

The town also plans to spend \$18,900 for blue fire number signs that are visible at night. The signs were requested by the fire department and the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department and are similar to those installed in other townships.