

Village seeks better accounting of capital projects

Written by CAROL POMEDAY

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The Village of Belgium has unallocated money in a capital projects fund that had been used for emergency items, but there was no accurate accounting for the money, Treasurer Kelly Romanini told the Village Board Monday.

"I know how much is in the fund, but the books for that fund wasn't accounted for," she said.

Romanini is setting up a spread sheet for the account that will show where the funds came from, how it's used and the remaining balance.

The issue was raised when Public Works Director Dan Birenbaum submitted quotes for a snow plow for a truck.

Trustee Jeff Thiel said he couldn't approve the purchase because it isn't in the budget.

"It's more a want than a need," Thiel said.

Trustee Vickie Boehnlein agreed, adding the Finance and Personnel Committee should decide how the fund should be used, rather than the board approving projects without clear direction.

In a related budget matter, resident Scott Gilson said he was pleasantly surprised to find his taxes had gone down, but he questioned the garbage collection fee on the tax bill.

"When is the next fee coming and where is it coming from?" Gilson asked.

Boehnlein explained the board received less in state shared revenues and other sources and had to make up the shortfall. Because village employees were not in a bargaining unit and were paying a share of their insurance and contributed to their retirement fund as required in the state budget repair law, the village did not benefit from the law as other communities did, she said.

Gilson said he noticed other communities are also charging fees and hopes more aren't added in Belgium.

Beginning in January, Village President Richard Howells said he intends to hold office hours at Village Hall from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. once a week.

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