

Total town tax rate to decrease

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Largest budget item is \$345,525 for road work

Following a public hearing Monday at which no one voiced objections, Town of Belgium officials adopted a \$544,000 budget that calls for a \$397,920 tax levy, which is .7% higher than last year.

However, the total tax rate will decrease 3% to 4%, depending on the school district.

The tax rate for town expenses is \$1.41 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Taxpayers in the Northern Ozaukee School District will pay the highest total rate, \$14.05 per \$1,000 of valuation. That includes school, local, county, state and technical college taxes. That is 3.8% less than last year.

Those in the Cedar Grove-Belgium District will pay \$12.47 per \$1,000 of valuation, a 4% decrease, and those in the Random Lake District will pay \$12.27 per \$1,000 of valuation, a 3% decrease.

The biggest expense is for roads, with \$345,525 earmarked, including \$172,100 for paving, \$41,545 for snow removal and \$30,000 for chip and seal work. The town wants to pave one mile of road each year.

Clerk Ginger Murphy said a \$98,000 balance, which is left because no roads were paved this year, will carry into 2013. However, a large culvert that was replaced on Jay Road is expected to cost \$20,000, which will be paid from this year's funds.

Jay Road will be the priority for paving next year. Paving of the gravel portion of Silver Beach Road, which is also considered a priority, will wait until after Main Street is reconstructed in the Village of Belgium.

Fire protection, which was budgeted for \$96,400, will cost a little more. Repairs to fire engine 762, in which one of the valves came loose in a piston and caused considerable damage, cost \$9,000. The town's share of the expense will be 60%, with the village paying 40% based on property valuations. Fire Chief Dan Birenbaum said the fire department will also pay something toward the repairs.

The transfer site for garbage and recyclables will cost \$32,650 to operate. Wednesday night hours will be held from May to November, two months longer than this year.

The board also budgeted \$10,000 for the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to update the town's zoning code. The update will cost \$20,000, with the remainder to be paid in 2014.