

Town still looking for a new home

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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Committee not interested in moving into current village offices when new Village Hall is complete

The Town of Belgium has nixed the idea of moving into the Village of Belgium's current office space at 195 Commerce St., rejecting the village's rent proposal for when it moves next year into a new Village Hall.

"The village's proposal was not acceptable to anybody," Supr. James Blick, chairman of the Town Hall Committee, told the Town Board on Monday.

"It started at \$8,000 for operating costs, which is the current bill. We potentially could pay \$8,000 or it could be more or less. If they did something to the building, we had to pay for it, whether we wanted it or not. I think we want to own our Town Hall."

The committee decided to start over by first deciding what is really needed in a new Town Hall, Blick said.

The hall must be handicapped accessible, have an office, vault for town records, computer capabilities, a restroom and storage space, he said.

"I didn't know Ginger (Murphy, town clerk) takes all the voting machines home and stores them in her basement," Blick said. "We definitely have to have storage for that."

He recommended the town start setting money aside for a new Town Hall and look for ways to finance it without raising taxes.

Town Chairman Tom Winker said the Town Board can continue to meet in the current Town Hall, which was built in 1852 and hasn't changed much since, except for the addition of a noisy heater and air conditioner. It's not handicapped accessible and there is no indoor plumbing.

"We can stay here. We don't need a Taj Mahal like others do," Winker said.

The Town Board took the following action in other matters.

n Agreed to pay \$46 per month retroactive to Jan. 1 for the cost of a land line and voicemail at Murphy's home that is used only for town business. "I use a cell phone and wouldn't have a land line except for town business. My children are not allowed to use it or answer it," said Murphy, who keeps a log of all town-related calls.

When a new Town Hall is found or built, Supr. Bill Janeshek said, the number can be transferred to a phone line there, but until then the town should pay for the line.

- Reluctantly accepted the resignation of Janet Coeur as treasurer and decided to advertise for two weeks for candidates to fill the remainder of her term, which runs until April 2015.

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Applications will be accepted until Sept. 1. Coeur said she will stay until a new treasurer is appointed, but prefers that happen by Oct. 1.

A workshop for a new county tax system will be held in mid-October and the new treasurer should attend that, she said.

- Approved a certified survey map for a land division for John Risch at 6203 Sauk Trail Rd. The preliminary plan was previously approved by the board.
- Expressed appreciation that building materials stored by John Theune on land owned by James Ellioff at 7144 Sauk Trail Rd. have been removed