

Town puts county on short leash for roads

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Resenting the monthly maintenance charge, officials want to have say on all highway services

The Saukville Town Board approved a two-year road maintenance contract last week with the Ozaukee County Highway Department, but officials made it clear no town dollars will be spent without close scrutiny.

The board started the contract review in a contentious mood after Town Chairman Barb Jobs noted that the town is billed a monthly \$850 overhead charge for storage and maintenance so that county snowplows are available when needed.

“We pay them \$850 a month whether the equipment is needed or not, and we get a bill from them for doing the billing,” Jobs said.

Those practices put the board in a miserly mood while reviewing the 25 service options the county offered in its contract.

Plowing and salting of roads were left as requested services, but most other services were itemized as being “as directed” by the town.

Jobs said the town needs to show restraint on things like having the county crews cut trees and brush along town roads.

“If we said ‘yes’ on cutting brush, we would have nothing left in our budget,” she said.

Supr. Curt Rutkowski said the town should also be selective in authorizing the county to erect snow fencing.

“I question the effectiveness of snow fence at all,” Rutkowski said.

Things like the replacement of damaged signs, grading of shoulders and roadside mowing will only be done if requested by the town.

Ultimately, the only service options the board wanted eliminated from the county job list was the inspection of new driveway installations and the plowing of snow from private roads that meet town minimum specifications.

The county highway contract runs through 2012.