

**Village of Shorewood Hills
Finance Committee
Approved Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 14, 2018**

1. **Call to Order** Finance Committee Chairperson Fred Wade called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.
2. **Roll Call Committee** members present were Mr. Wade, Dave Ahmann, Karl Wellensiek, Gard Strother and Sean Cote. Carl Gulbrandsen and David DeVito were excused. Also in attendance were Village Administrator Karl Frantz, Administrative Services Manager/Deputy Clerk David Sykes and three members of the Parks Committee (Trustee Anne Readel, Roma Lenehan and Sue Denholm).
3. **Note Compliance with open meeting laws** Mr. Frantz confirmed the meeting had been properly posted and noticed.
4. **Review/approve October 25, 2017 minutes** Mr. Ahmann moved and Mr. Cote seconded a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was approved on a vote of 5-0.
5. **Discussion and possible recommendation on fees for service including Forestry and Public Fire Protection** Ms. Readel provided a review of the Parks Committee's discussion regarding a Forest Utility over the past few years. She also referenced an extensive memo prepared by the Village Administrator for the Committees. The utility could cover costs for tree planting, maintenance and removals. Other parks and forestry costs could be included in the utility. The total budget is roughly \$160,000. The Parks Committee is bringing the recommendation for a Forestry Utility now as State imposed levy limits continue to affect the Village budget. The members of the Parks Committee left the meeting.

Mr. Cote indicated he has changed his mind regarding adding fees in light of the tax law changes. With the \$10K limit on property tax and income tax deductions, how much is a utility fee going to affect most residents?

Things to consider:

- Is the cost per month going to be a hardship on residents?
- It is another bill being charged to residents.
- Can the Village find an equitable fee that is not too difficult to administer.
- If the fee/utility is put in place, the Village is probably not going to reduce the levy by the same amount since we have had deficits in recent years.
- Is it possible to implement a fee for emergency costs related to EAB and Oak Wilt for a few years, and then end it at some point in the future?

The Committee decided to defer action until after its consideration of item 6 on the agenda.

6. **Review and possible recommendation to retain Baker Tilly to provide an analysis, options and possibly assist with implementation of a public fire protection fee** Mr.

Frantz discussed the Public Fire Protection (PFP) charge on the tax levy that could be moved to a fee based charge. An advantage to a PFP fee would be that it includes properties that are tax exempt. 40% of the municipalities in Wisconsin charge a separate PFP fee rather than include it in property taxes. The Village would need to hire a consultant to help figure out the apportionment of the fee and find the most equitable/easily administered process.

Mr. Cote said the PFP fee seems like the more obvious choice to pursue, rather than a Forestry fee and other Committee members concurred. They noted that it appears the forestry budget appears to be about \$15,000 short to fully fund removals, maintenance and emerald ash borer and they should try to close that gap in 2019 when preparing the budget.

Mr. Strother said he believes everyone should be paying for fire protection.

Mr. Cote moved and it was seconded to prioritize the PFP fee/utility, engage Baker Tilly to provide analysis and possibly assist with implementation of a PFP fee. The motion passed on a vote of 5-0.

7. **Update on Village computer system hard drive crash and restoration of system progress and any recommendations** Mr. Frantz reported that the auditors were in the middle of their field work this week and should be able to provide an estimate of the audit cost by the end of the month. With that in hand, the Village can finalize the insurance claim.
8. **Set next meeting dates** No meeting date was selected.
9. **Adjourn** Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Sykes
Administrative Services Manager/Deputy Clerk