



2022 TOWN NEWSLETTER

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Ardy Robertson Retires: Ardy retired as our Town Clerk effective October 12, 2022. The Board has appointed Adrian Swanson as our new Clerk. Ardy served our Town exceptionally well for 18 years. Our Town is very fortunate to have had such a caring, dedicated person working in our behalf for so many years. Town Clerks must have strong technical skills, understand government operations and procedures and a willingness to donate a lot of their time. Government record keeping and accounting systems are complicated and detailed and require regular system updates and hours of training. Continuing changes to election laws require even more hours of training. Then there's licensing and permitting ordinances, snowplow contracts, meeting minutes, E911 signing, insurance contracts, website updates, inventory, numerous County, State and Federal reports, employee records, bidding and posting procedures, board of review and a number of other jobs that seem to inadvertently pop up. I'm sure Ardy is glad not having those responsibilities anymore. However, she is sharing her years of experience with Adrian and has offered to help the Town whenever she has time. Thank you, Ardy.

2022 Property Taxes: Treasurer Clark Walker is responsible for collecting our 2022 property taxes and helping to redistribute them to each of the taxing districts listed below. Our property tax dollars are then used as a portion of their 2023 budgets.

1. Osseo Fairchild School District Levy: \$658,482.00
2. Jackson County Levy: \$458,476.46
3. Town of Garfield Levy: \$175,000.00
4. Chippewa Valley Technical Levy: \$55,200.87

The \$175,000 of property taxes, (levy) the Town receives is *NOT* set by the Town Board but rather at a special town meeting of the Electors that is held annually in November. Only Towns use this method to set their levy. Your portion of the property tax levies listed above is determined by State Statutes passed by our Legislators and the administrative rules created by the State Department of Revenue. They didn't make it simple to understand. For more detail about your tax bill, please attend a Town meeting and I will do my best to explain.

Garfield's Budgeted Revenues for 2023: Total = \$630,000.00

1. **\$330,000:** General-Purpose Revenue, (\$175,000 is from our Property Taxes)
2. **\$200,000:** Grant Awards
3. **\$100,000:** From our Road, Bridge and Culvert Fund if Necessary

(Continued on back)

Garfield's Budgeted Expenditures for 2023: Total = \$580,000.00

1. **\$200,000:** Moe Road Project Debt (Will be Paid from Grant Awards)
2. **\$161,000:** Winter & Summer Road Maintenance (\$50,000 is from the Road, Bridge and Culvert Fund Balance and we may use another \$50,000 from this same fund)
3. **\$75,000:** General Government; Assessor Contract, Heating Fuel, Utilities, Supplies, Insurance, postage, etc. and Clerk, Treasurer and Board Wages
4. **\$28,000:** Fire and First Responders (Our share of operating costs for the ORFD)
5. **\$42,000:** Debt Service for Town Shop & Osseo Rural Fire Dept., (ORFD)
6. **\$50,000:** Maintenance and Repair of Buildings and Equipment, Election Security Updates, May Need to Replace a Brush Mower
7. **\$24,000:** Waste and Recycling (Costs are escalating as State grants decrease).
8. Our Road Maintenance Staff will receive \$15-\$18 per hour, no benefits and work "as needed only." Our Waste, Recycling and Election Staff get \$14 per hour and no benefits. Our budget for all employee wages is only \$25,000. Board members volunteer their time for maintenance work to help reduce our labor costs.
9. If we're fortunate enough to have money left at the end of the year it goes into a fund balance for emergency road, bridge and culvert repair.
10. For more detail, please contact me or come to a Town Meeting.

Budget Concerns: It's a constant struggle to find money for road reconstruction and improvement projects. I know there is much more that could be done but we must first try to maintain the roads we have. I can only guess what Winter maintenance costs will be and now Summer maintenance has become equally unpredictable. Last Spring Road construction costs increased 30% over the previous year and increased another 25% this the Summer. In the past several years I have applied for at least 20 grants. Our Town has received over a million dollars for road, bridge and culvert projects from these grants. I will continue to apply but this is very time consuming and there are no guarantees. The only other way a Town can increase their budget is with property taxes. And, that can only be done by a majority vote of the Electors, (you) at a special Town meeting. The Electors have only voted twice to raise our Town property taxes; Once for the Town Hall and again for the ORFD building. The Board is not asking you to increase your taxes. We'll leave that up to you. That is how Town Government operates.

WWW.townofgarfieldwi.com: We have a new website provider and now can keep you informed of all Town activities in a timelier manner. Please check it out. Meeting agendas and minutes, Forms and Permits, and Contact information are now regularly updated and easily accessible.

Final Comments for 2022: I used a lot of space this year to discuss the budget. The Electors, (you) tell us how much we can tax and the budget determines what the Town can or cannot do. I want you to know what your Town taxes are being used for. If you're interested in more detail, please contact me and consider attending a Town meeting.

This Town belongs to all of us and it's our money that pays for it. The Board is honored to serve and does its best to use our taxes wisely.

Steven V. Dickinsen, Chairman