

**VILLAGE OF BETHALTO
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 26, 2026, 6:00PM
VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Members Present:

Gary Bost	Jeff Mull	Jay Wright
Maria Perkhiser	Rachel Sontag	

Also Present:

Village Clerk Sue Lowrance	Finance Administrator Aleisha Randolph
Public Works Director Rod Cheatham	Police Chief Ryan Dugger
Fire Chief Jay Grant	

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gary Bost at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers of Village Hall.

Public Safety Code Amendment

Mayor Bost is proposing that the Public Safety Code be updated to reflect a change to the appointment requirements for the position of Deputy Chief, which is an appointment made at the discretion of the Police Chief. Making this update will broaden the pool for eligible appointees, as Bost is recommending that Section 30-2-2 APPOINTMENT be updated to state that the Deputy Chief must have at least five years of full-time service in the Bethalto Police Department *or in the State of Illinois* to be considered for appointment. Bost noted that this language change does not limit anyone within our department from being appointed but widens the pool to allow an experienced individual from an outside agency to be selected as well. There were no objections, so this amendment will be considered for adoption at the June meeting.

Budget Presentation

Treasurer Aleisha Randolph presented the proposed FY 26/27 as follows:

The recommended FY26/27 budget expenditures total \$15,572,434. This represents a 7.54% increase in expenditures compared to the prior fiscal year. The increase is primarily due to planned capital projects for FY27, which are summarized below.

General Fund:

Expenditures exceed budgeted revenues by \$507,693 in the General Fund. Over the past several years, the Village has been diligent in building reserve funds. The Village is now in a position to utilize a portion of those reserves for much-needed projects while still maintaining healthy fund balances. A primary focus of FY27 is completing several street improvement projects, which are detailed later.

Property taxes were levied at the same amount as the prior year. State tax income continues to show growth each year. A separate Grocery Tax revenue line has also been added, as this revenue was previously included within the sales tax category. Miscellaneous income increased due to anticipated insurance proceeds related to two police squad car claims. Overall, budgeted revenues increased by 4.75%.

Expenditures increased significantly due to planned capital outlay items for FY27. Administrative expenses remain generally consistent with last year, with increases primarily related to medical insurance and software costs. Building & Zoning expenditures also remain similar to prior year levels.

Police Department expenditures increased by approximately 13% due to capital-related purchases. The Village has historically followed a replacement cycle of upgrading at least two squad cars annually. Due to recent accidents involving officers, additional vehicle replacements are necessary this year. Some of these costs are expected to be offset by insurance claim proceeds. Chief Dugger has worked diligently to secure competitive pricing for these purchases. The FY27 budget includes approximately \$252,000 for three new squad cars with equipment and two used vehicles. In addition, the department plans to utilize designated DUI and forfeiture funds for the purchase of needed firearms, ammunition, and computer upgrades, totaling approximately \$50,000.

Fire Department equipment expenditures decreased by \$113,048 following the fire truck purchase approved in FY26. However, \$30,000 was added back into the equipment budget due to the sale of SCBA gear, with the associated revenue offsetting the expenditure.

Street Department expenditures increased by 26%, primarily due to the planned mill and overlay projects and additional street improvements. Streets will also share costs with other Public Works departments for several equipment upgrades. These include a tandem truck that was budgeted in FY26 but delayed into FY27 due to delivery timing, as well as a backhoe, two new Public Works trucks, and a new roof for the salt house.

Parks Department expenditures also increased due to shared Public Works equipment costs, along with the purchase of a new mower and expenditures related to the all-inclusive park project. Municipal Buildings includes planned flooring upgrades for the Police Department.

Motor Fuel Tax Fund:

Expenditures increased to help cover the costs associated with the planned mill and overlay projects.

Business District Fund:

The façade program budget was increased by the amount remaining unused in FY26. Infrastructure improvement expenditures were also increased to assist with the planned mill and overlay projects.

Water Fund:

Revenue remains similar to last year. Expenses increased slightly to account for employee pay increases and increased supply costs. However, Rod anticipates reduced plant repair expenses following the substantial upgrades completed in FY26. The Water Department will also share costs with Public Works for the equipment purchases previously mentioned.

Sewer Fund:

Revenue remains similar to last year. The Sewer Department will also share costs with Public Works for the equipment purchases previously mentioned.

Conclusion:

The FY26/27 budget continues the Village's commitment to responsible financial management while addressing infrastructure and equipment needs throughout the community. Through careful planning over the past several years, the Village has built reserve balances that now allow for strategic investment in capital improvements while maintaining financial stability. The Mayor, Village Board, Management, and Staff remain committed to providing quality services to residents in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible, and this budget was prepared with those goals in mind.

Mayor Bost noted that FY26 expenditures came in at \$2 million under budget, even with the expenses for a new fire truck and extensive updates at the water plant. Bost added that we are not a "for profit" agency but have done an outstanding job over the past couple of years to build our reserves. Bost stated that this budget will be "in the red" but that some of those built-up reserve funds need to be put into services during this budget cycle. Bost further added that he would like to see a policy passed in ordinance form that states either a dollar amount or percentage of funding that should be kept in Village reserve funds, and that we would be working toward that goal in coming months.

Chief Dugger reviewed the additional expenses built into his budget, noting that the two officer-involved accidents will require the purchase of replacement vehicles beyond the one initially planned, plus two additional used vehicles to be purchased as investigator vehicles. There is also the need for department-issued rifles for patrolmen who have been carrying their own rifles in their cars, which is likely a liability to the Village.

Mayor Bost noted that the Public Works budget is where most of the reserve fund expenditures will originate; the mill & overlay budget for last year was \$200k and will be nearly \$1.4 million this year. Cheatham has prioritized the streets planned for this cycle and noted that as prices may increase, we may need to cancel or postpone projects from the bottom up on that list. Cheatham added that water & sewer have been prioritized of late and are running smoothly, so it is time to focus on streets as we move toward fewer oil & chip streets and more mill & overlay streets. Some grants may be available for larger projects; we finished 4th for one grant submission for Second Street from Old Bethalto Road to Ashbrook so didn't receive funding but will continue to apply as funds are available.

Trustee Mull asked if some of our reserve funds should be invested, as rates are up and we could gain some interest income. Treasurer Randolph noted that we do keep our funds in interest-bearing accounts, and that income was nearly \$170k this past year. Randolph added that we can research longer-term options if the board chooses to do so.

Having no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:26pm.

Sue Lowrance, Village Clerk