

Motor Pool – the Motor Pool fund was established years back with the sale of City property, about \$551,000. The original intent was to have a pool of funds to purchase items, with each department contributing on an annual basis. It has become a means of making installment purchases for the most part, much like the Capital Improvement Fund.

I will again propose this year during budgeting that departments contribute the actual value to fund purchase and maintenance of their respective vehicles. I was told last year that would cause a “reduction in services” from those departments. It is impossible to make a logical decision on the cost effectiveness of a service if you don’t know the actual costs. As an example; the Police Department has 4 Patrol cars and 1 unmarked Detective car and pays \$31,000 into the Motor Pool funds. One Patrol Car was purchased last year, and 3 are being purchased this year. The Patrol SUV purchased last year was \$38,000. The 3 purchases this year are estimated a \$132,000, or an average of \$44,000 each. Patrol cars are replaced on a 3-year cycle, so not counting the Detective car, if you add the cost of the 4 vehicles (\$170,000) and divide by 3 (the life cycle) you get an annual cost of \$56,666. That does not include routine servicing, tires, or other maintenance of the vehicles (or the Detective car). The result is the cost of equipping and operating the Police Department with vehicles is well understated.

When I challenge a process or how things are Budgeted, I am not challenging the professionalism or dedication of general City employees. It is past practice and how funds move around that gets my attention. Public Works, Public Safety, and other City workers do a commendable job daily. We just need to know the real costs of services we provide. I believe that every department should be contributing the full amount necessary to the Motor Pool to acquire and maintain their respective equipment.

Transport – Mayor Pro Tem Zielinski has been inquiring about and investigating EMS Transport, it will be on the March 13th Work Session (ambulance billing). This began not as a necessary service, but because the City was not collecting revenue. It was first presented as BLST (Basic Life Support Transport) with a low initial cost in equipment and training, and an estimated “net” revenue stream in the \$40,000 to \$50,000 range. It was immediately recognized that nearly half of the transports required ALS (advanced life support), which necessitated a higher level of training (Paramedic) and equipment. This was estimated to result in a “net” revenue of \$200,000. There was an existing ambulance service through West Shore (now Munson). Mr. Zielinski was distressed that this service was being billed to City taxpayers, when it was presented in the beginning to be part of their tax service. It is now stated that a resident is “soft billed” on two cycles, then the billing written off if not paid. Non-residents are referred to collection at that time. So, Mr. Zielinski’s question is, “how many residents (taxpayers) have been billed and paid that already paid taxes for the service?” My question is – what has it costs taxpayers to duplicate a service already available and what is our actual “net” gain? Look at the Budget over the last 5 or 6 years and see what has taken place. **Again, we have some of the best Paramedics I’ve ever seen, it is the process and how we got there I question.**

Council Meetings - very few attend and there is no process to determine how many people view the recordings. Citizens are afforded 5 minutes to speak in favor of or against any listed agenda item before the meeting, and 5 minutes to address City services or comment after the agenda items and reports are given. Please note that comments on agenda items are intended for citizens to express an opinion, not engage a Council Member or staff in discussion. I try to be very accommodating as Presiding Officer and afford all an opportunity to speak.

Council Members – are all listed in the City Directory with email and telephone number contact information. Call them, email them – they are elected and represent the public “at large.” I’ve arranged to have all Council members “meet and greet” at the Council on Aging and encourage all to participate in various training and education opportunities.