# Town of Winchester

8522 Park Way, Larsen, WI 54947

## Public Hearing for

## Review of the 2027 Town of Winchester Budget Proposal and 2026 Tax Levy

## Minutes

Wednesday, October 28, 2026—7:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order
   1. Pledge of Allegiance
   2. Verification of Notice

Present were 21 electors.

B. Public Hearing regarding the proposed 2027 Town of Winchester Budget and 2026 Tax Levy

1. Presentation of the 2027 Town of Winchester Budget Proposal

Clerk Stevens presented the following report:

**Budget Policy**

The Town of Winchester Budget is the Town Board policy document which uses data to plan for operations throughout the upcoming year. The Strategy taken by the Town in recent years has been to use conservative calculations for revenues and balanced spending within the revenue limits. This produces a policy which keeps the town operating within its means, not overspending.

**Budget Summary**

The proposed 2027 Budget includes projected year-end estimates for the Town's 2026 operations. The 2026 budget year looks to close in a positive position with revenues coming in slightly higher than expected, and spending kept in check with only minor category adjustments. The final numbers will be calculated and reported after the budget year has concluded, but all in all, the Town is in a healthy financial position.

The 2027 budget is a continuation of the spending practices of the past seven years. The Board has worked to maximize the effect of every dollar to facilitate projects and provide services to the community. This has been accomplished through competitive bidding, strategic project planning, contract negotiations, and frugal spending.

The 2027 budget has no major increases in revenues or expenses. Again, this budget is strategically developed using conservative calculations for revenues and balanced spending within the revenue limits. This practice has proven to provide continued operations without overspending. In other words, the Town is operating within its means.

**The Levy**

The Town of Winchester allowable levy for the 2026 tax year payable in 2027 is $290,500. This number is based on the previous year's levy plus a net new growth calculation and debt service. The 2026 net new growth for Winchester is 1.031 percent (+$2,324). The debt service payment due March 15, 2027 is estimated at $64,000 (Line 42) and is the first of three amortized payments for the Lakeview Road, Breezewood Lane, and Oakridge Road project loan necessary to complete the work in 2026.

It is worth noting that the Town completed the three road projects for a total cost of $1,002,274. Of that, $791,731 was funded through grants and $35,543 was paid from the General Fund, reducing the obligation (loan) of the Town to $175,000 which will be amortized for three years. Most importantly, the borrowing will not affect the Town's tax rate.

**2027 Budget Revenues**

Revenue changes for 2027 are minimal. The State Shared Revenue is increasing by 2.1 percent, adding $2,081 for a total shared revenue total of $101,187. This increase is based on sales tax revenue. State Transportation Aids increased slightly to $144,644. This money is used to directly offset the Town's road maintenance expenses. Also, the Town Board recently reviewed the known 2027 increases for garbage and recycling services and raised the annual fee from $245 to $250 per household. The fee is expected to generate $187,500 (Line 28) to specifically pay for the services. Other revenue categories remain essentially unchanged with the total anticipated revenues of $813,942.

**2027 Budget Expenditures**

Like the revenues, the 2027 expenses are much the same as previous years' with only minor adjustments.

**General Government Expenses**

The electors voted to increase the wages for elected officials beginning with the new term that begins in April 2027. The Chairman's wage will increase from $9,000 to $10,500; Supervisors will increase from $4,500 to $7,500; the Clerk will increase from $26,500 to $35,000; and the Treasurer will increase from $10,000 to $14,000. Because the first three months of the year will be paid at the current rate and then in April the new rates will be implemented, the budget numbers are calculated accordingly (Lines 43, 44, 45). Budget Line 50 Legal Counsel has been increased by $2,000. Unexpected and unavoidable issues have resulted in increased costs for the past couple of years. In 2026, numerous antiquated ordinances were updated, and the town was negotiating the land purchase with the Historical Society and the Michiels. It is anticipated that significantly less legal work will be needed in 2027.

In 2026, budget Line 54 Clerk's Office was increased by $5,500 to allow for the appointment of a Deputy Clerk/Treasurer. To date, no one has expressed an interest in filling that position. We are hoping to find the right person interested in making a long-term commitment to learn the essential supportive role. In the interim, the elected Treasurer continues to serve as Deputy Clerk and the elected Clerk continues to serve as Deputy Treasurer. While this is efficient and logical, the expansion of duties and added responsibilities that have developed over time for each of these positions require significantly more training and expertise. While the elected officials will continue to cross train, the continued funding of a paid, appointed Deputy position(s) will better serve the community by adding another trained, back-up staff member with the knowledge and expertise to execute Town business. Wis. Stats. §§ 60.331 and 60.341 provide for the appointment of a Deputy Clerk and Deputy Treasurer by the elected Clerk and elected Treasurer respectively.

Budget line 55 Elections has been decreased by $2,500 as a 2-year election cycle wraps up. 2026-2027 election cycle has four elections in 2026 and two elections in 2027. However, in the next couple of years, the county is looking to purchase new election equipment which is expected to cost $10,000 to $12,000.

The Facilities line 58 remains largely unchanged. However, it has been recommended that the Town Hall roof be sealed to extend the life. The roof is believed to be original to the building and is now 36 years old. The project will be bid and funded using the Capital Expense (Line 87). Depending on the project bids, the town may have to fund the project across two fiscal years.

**Public Safety Expenses**

Fire Protection and EMS Budget lines 70, 71, 72, and 73 continue without change in 2027 totaling ~$107,000 for their operations.

**Public Works Expenses**

The garbage and recycling collections contract provides for an annual increase for services which is tied to the Consumer Price Index. The index is on target for an increase of 3.6%. Additionally, the Winnebago County Solid Waste Management Board has approved increases to tipping fees. Recycling is slated to increase from $10/ton to $12.50/ton. Garbage is slated to increase from $56/ton to $57/ton. Additionally, the recent diesel fuel prices have triggered the fuel surcharge included in the GFL contract. The surcharge is tied to the current cost per gallon and may or may not continue to be charged depending on the market. With all these increases in mind and using historic data from collections, the Board has been asked to consider an increase in the per household charge. As presented, the related budget lines reflect these changes. Revenue line 28 is calculated based on a per household fee of $250, and Expense lines 80 and 81 are calculated based on historic tonnages and the new tipping fees.

Total planned expenses for 2027 are $813,942.

**The Mill Rate**

The mill rate calculation worksheet has been updated to include the current tax year values. The recent market adjustment to assessments has significantly lowered the mill rate. The changes in the assessment values are expected to result in slightly lower tax calculations. The Mill Rate for Winchester is expected to be approximately $0.86.

As a direct result of the responsible commonsense policies implemented by the Town Board, Winchester is in good financial condition and will be able to continue serving the needs of the community while providing a reduction in the Town taxes.

2. Public Comments regarding the Proposed 2026 Town of Winchester Budget

   Shelley Olson, 6182 Furman Road, asked if the Town has any control over which voting equipment is selected for purchase.

   Clerk Stevens explained that because the County Clerk's office has to oversee all the municipal elections, they generally make the selection with input from the municipal clerks. She noted that all the equipment must come from a single supplier so that the system from programming to results transfers must work together.

   Ernie Delikowski, Roads Chair, noted that he plans to continue the systematic maintenance of the Town's roads, but he is concerned that the cost of oil and by extension, the cost of asphalt might limit the amount of work that can be completed. He said he will continue to work with the Board to maximize the maintenance completed.

C. Adjournment of Public Hearing Sine Die

Chair Olson called for a motion and second to adjourn Sine Die.

**MOTION:**
**Motion by Andy Miller, 8454 Steeple Hill Drive**
**Second by David Pavlik, 5179 Fairview Road**
**Motion to adjourn the public hearing at 7:17 p.m.**

**Motion carried by unanimous voice vote**

# Town of Winchester

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## Special Meeting of the Electors to Approve the 2024 Tax Levy Minutes

October 28, 2026

Immediately following the Public Budget Hearing

A. Call to Order – the meeting was called to order at 7:17p.m.

B. Business

1. Electors' Approval of Resolution 2026-03 A Resolution approving the 2026 total Town Tax Levy payable in 2026/27, pursuant to 60.10(1)(a) of Wis. Statutes

   Chair Olson noted copies of the Resolution were provided for everyone. He said if the Electors are satisfied with the levy presentation, a motion to approve was in order.

   **MOTION:**
   **Motion by Howard Miller, 5468 Grandview Road**
   **Second by Ernie Delikowski, 7849 Sorenson Lane**
   **Motion to approve Resolution 2026-03, A Resolution of the Town Electors to Adopt the 2026 Town Tax Levy payable in 2026/2027 for a total amount of $290,500.**

   **VOTE: Ayes 21, Nays 0**

   **Motion carried**

2. Town of Winchester 175th Anniversary Celebration Information

   Clerk Stevens announced that the Town will be working with the Winchester Area Historical Society to develop some special events for the 175th Anniversary. She noted there are informational flyers available and announcements will be made as the plans develop.

   Clerk Stevens also noted that the Fire Department will be out in the community for trick or treating on Saturday. They will also have their Santa Parade and Santa Meet and Greet on Saturday, December 12, 2026.

   Clerk Stevens also reminded everyone of the Wreaths Across America Program will be at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 19, 2026 at the Town Hall with the laying of wreaths immediately following the program at all three Town Cemeteries.

B. Adjournment of the Special Electors Meeting Sine Die

**MOTION:**
**Motion by Andy Miller, 8454 Steeple Hill Drive**
**Second by David Pavlik, 5179 Fairview Road**
**Motion to adjourn Sine Die at 7:22 p.m.**

**Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.**

Holly Stevens, Clerk