



Emerald Lake Village District
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Emerald Lake Village District (ELVD) Commissioners' Budget Meeting

Thursday, January 15, 2026

In attendance:

Sara Auger (Chairman/Commissioner)
Brett Taber (Commissioner)
Mark Przybyla (Commissioner)
Lorinda Giarrusso (District Clerk)

Other people in attendance:

None

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Roll call of officials completed. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by Commissioner Auger. We had a quorum.

Public Comments:

None

The purpose of tonight's meeting was to review the **Water System Budget** and come up with a **Proposed Draft Budget for 2026**. The following categories (Expense Lines) were discussed:

EXPENSE CATEGORY **PROPOSED AMOUNT** **2025 BUDGET AMOUNT**

Administrative Expenses:

<u>4331.1 (Legal)</u>	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00
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<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
<u>4331.11 (Rent at 50%)</u>	\$7,000.00 (for each side)	\$6,700.00

Commissioner Taber reported that our current lease expires in September. We should consider the same increment of increase per month. Commissioner Auger stated that it increases every year. The membership for GSRWHT (based on population size) is \$310.00/year.

<u>4331.13 (Audit)</u>	\$6500.00 (for each side)	\$6,500.00
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Commissioner Taber said we are estimating \$13,000 as a safety net in case we have to have a Federal Audit done. We should look at the State and Federal fees. We will need to maintain a draft value of \$6500.00 for both the General Budget and the Water Budget

<u>4331.15 (Insurance)</u>	\$1.00	\$1.00 PLACEHOLDER
<u>4331.16 (Hills Water Bill Invoicing)</u>	\$1,100.00	1,000.00

Commissioner Taber stated that we expended \$1,050.00 vs. \$1,000.00 because postage went up. I would suggest \$1100.00 for this Draft Budget and offer assistance to the Town for the Water Audit. We can provide paper and envelopes for much less money than they would spend. We can supply an entire case of paper vs. what they'd charge us, for much less. Commissioner Auger stated she was fine with this.

<u>4331.2 (Prof. Services)</u>	\$1,100.00	\$ 350.00
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We expended \$350.00 FOR THE ESRI subscription. This should be valid through 4/11/27.

<u>SECTION TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$17,261.001</u>	<u>\$17,836.00</u> *reduction of 3.22%
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Maintain and Repair Water System:

<u>4332.1 (Maint – Other)</u>	\$8,000.00	\$7,000.00
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Commissioner Taber stated that initially, this line was applied to Media change at the end of the year; we were going to apply/offset - \$10,000.00 (Media), We still need this for this year for Projects and/or maintenance failures. The servers and Transducers are inoperable right now. Commissioner Przybyla stated, we have 90-104 PSI and we only have 75%. There are too many unknowns. Commissioner Taber stated that initially we used \$8,000.00 because of unknown costs. We could expect \$25,000.00 - \$30,000.00 for a vessel change.

EXPENSE CATEGORY	PROPOSED AMOUNT	2025 BUDGET AMOUNT
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4332.5 (Zone Meters) \$3,500.00 \$3,500.00

Commissioner Taber stated we have eight (8) zones – Badger zone meters working with our own Water System. We need investigate any other meters, similar to our hydrants that we have, and look at any other sensors, to have more encompassing ideas to what would be covered and have options to have it covered. \$3500.00 covers one (1) zone meter if it fails. Commissioner Auger stated we should keep this at \$3,500.00.

4332.11 (WSO Monthly..) \$103,800.00 \$103,800.00

Commissioner Taber stated that our Agreement ends 12/26. We will need a new Contract and an understanding of the other workloads. Will it be more of a remote issue or daily, on hand? As well as any rate changes. Tanya has told him that their labor rates are staying the same. We will need to adjust the fuel surcharge. Every extra vehicle that comes is now going to be \$50.00. I asked about excavation. They said that the Excavation charges are as follows – same day there is one (1) charge and if it's Multiple days, there will be separate charges. Commissioner Taber said we should keep it at \$103,800.00. He reminded us that we will not have revenue coming in until May of next year.

4332.12 (Ayer & Goss) \$5,000.00 \$4,500.00

Commissioner Taber reported that we have (prior to any adjustments being sent over) had just over \$5,700.00 in costs. Propane costs appear stable. Sixty percent (60%) of the cost was for fuel transport from Aquaman not actual propane costs. Commissioner Auger stated she felt we should leave it at \$4500.00 or \$5,000.00. Commissioner Taber stated that \$5,000.00 is still less. Commissioner Przybyla suggested we start at \$5,000.00.

4332.13 (Eversource) \$25,000.00 \$25,000.00

Commissioner Taber stated we spent just under \$25,000.00. When Mary Rowe was running, it ran a high electric bill. He reminded the Board that Mary Rowe was down for two and a half (2 1/2) months, so we had no charges then, but we had higher costs for trucking in water. Once Eastman comes online, it should be a 1-to-1 swap. Commissioner Przybyla said We should review transportation charges. Commissioner Taber stated that he is getting costs for solar plans for all well sites and see if possibly we'll do a Warrant Article, as options to cover the costs, should we choose to go that way.

4332.14 (TDS) \$3,700.00 \$3,600.00

Commission Taber reported that we have spent just under \$3,200.00. Rates changed halfway through the year. We will have to monitor SCADA costs. It appears we may have been charged between \$85.00-\$93.00 for overused data. We have to find out why and if this will be a “standard”

charge now. As of 6/25, it will be \$3,700.00/year. I know that Xfinity is offering a fixed, 5-year rate right now. We'll have to find out if that is for residential or commercial. Is there a \$50.00 connection fee? He will try to get some cost reviews. Commissioner Przybyla stated two other choices might be Fidium or Granite State – two (2) other players in our area for fiber.

<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
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4332.15 (Powers Gener)	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
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Commissioners Auger stated we have spent just over \$3500.00 and she would be OK with \$3500.00. Commissioners Taber and Przybyla are looking at other companies, maybe to do a possible swap. Commissioner Taber said we had one for \$301.50 for majors and minors. Next week, Powers is coming for planned maintenance. Two (2) of our generators need service. Our current contract is a rolling contract and does not need to be re-signed every year. January and July are our major and minors. It's year contract. We wouldn't owe a default payment if we switched. Commissioner Auger stated that we should continue with them, to at least get this January maintenance now, and then review again.

4332.16 (Incidental Snow)	\$1.00	\$1.00 (PLACEHOLDER)
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SECTION TOTAL:	\$153,001.00	\$151,401.00 *1.06% increase
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<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
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Emergency Leak Repairs:

4332.2 (WSO Labor)	\$23,000.00	\$25,000.00
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Commissioner Taber reported that we have spent \$15,664.00. Not all documented leaks were actually leak repairs. The average was \$3,000.00 per leak. It also depended on the size of the excavator used and labor rates for two (2) people to fix the leak plus parts. My estimate for 10-12 leaks is \$30,000.00. He stated that \$23,000.00 would give us coverage for eight (8) repairs with comfortable coverage. We will ask how many people are necessary when a crew comes for repair.

4332.21 (WSO & Excav)	\$7,000.00	\$6,000.00
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Commissioner Taber reported that we have spent over \$9,015.00. Commissioner Auger stated we spent just over \$2,400.00 in 2024.

4332.22 (WSO Parts)	\$10,000.00	\$9,000.00
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Commissioner Taber reported that we have spent \$14,777.00 vs. our \$9,000.00 Budget. It was agreed to go up to \$10,000.00.

<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
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4332.23 (Trucking of Water) \$60,000.00 \$40,000.00

Commissioner Taber reminded the Board that we had a well-site down for three (3) months. We now have a sensor and three (3) newly designed connections leaking. We have spent \$104,430.00. Commissioner Przybyla stated that Buxton took us to the cleaners with what they charged us for loads. It was agreed by all to use \$60,000.00.

4332.24 (Water Bought) \$10,000.00 \$10,000.00

4332.25 (Leak Detection) \$12,000.00 \$10,000.00

Commissioner Taber reported that we have spent just over \$20,000.00 and we budgeted for \$10,000.00. It went up, quite a bit, because Aquaman had to mark out all the valves which was approximately \$6,000.00-\$8,000.00 that we did not plan on. We have leaks in the zones that are not identified and days and days of leak detection. We should be able to reduce this cost this year. It was asked, "do we have another Leak Detection Grant coming?" Commissioner Auger suggested dropping the State leak detection and leave out \$10,000.00. All agreed to leave it at \$12,000.00 for this Draft Budget.

<u>SECTION TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$122,000.00</u>	<u>\$102,000.00</u>
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Commissioner Taber reminded the Board that this is \$53,000.00 less than what we spent because we had to take it out of Capital Reserves.

<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
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Non-Leak Repairs

4332.3 (Labor & Excav) \$40,000.00 \$35,000.00

Commissioner Taber brought to the attention of the Board that sometimes there were more than two (2) people (sometimes 3 or 4) that came to do the repair. We need to ask WHY. Labor costs developed quickly.

4332.31 (WSO Replace

Curb Stops) \$500.00 \$500.00

Commissioner Taber told the Board that if we have costs to residents, we need to know that to offset the revenue. Sometimes the curb stops are bent, or the tops are ripped off. Last year, we got our own black pipe and did the repairs ourselves. It was an approximate cost of \$40.00 vs. \$800.00 to minimize the cost.

<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
<u>4332.32 (Well Maint)</u>	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00

Commissioner Taber stated that, every year, well maintenance or well repairs cost \$13,000.00 - \$20,000.00, even if we can't get Grants or do a Warrant Article. Well 6 or 9 failed being accepted this year. Do we need to clean or fix them? Do we need Engineering support? Well 11 is reducing its capacity. It may regenerate when the others are online.

<u>4332.33 (Replace pipes)</u>	\$1.00	\$1.00 (PLACEHOLDER)
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<u>4332.34 (Bldg Repair..)</u>	\$6,000.00	\$1,000.00
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There is \$1,000.00 co-pay for any insurance claim. We have to have a tank inspection, this year, which will cost \$5,000.00. This inspection is required every five (5) years. Commissioner Taber offered some suggestions of possible maintenance/repair items for this year: A ladder suspension and or concrete so we can clean the algae which is degrading the existing concrete.

<u>SECTION TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$61,501.00</u>	<u>\$51,501.00</u>
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<u>EXPENSE CATEGORY</u>	<u>PROPOSED AMOUNT</u>	<u>2025 BUDGET AMOUNT</u>
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Miscellaneous:

<u>4332.4 (H.O. Curb stops)</u>	\$1.00	\$1.00 (PLACEHOLDER)
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Water Treatment Costs

<u>4335.1 (East. Analytical)</u>	\$7,000.00	\$800.00
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Commissioner Taber stated that PFAS testing costs are not covered. Eastern does not have it as part of their Master Schedule. I have asked Aquaman for the cost.

<u>4335.11 (Monson)</u>	\$10,000.00	\$11,000.00
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Commissioner Auger stated that in the past, we used this to replace media.

<u>4335.12 (Qual Reports)</u>	\$2,400.00	\$1,800.00
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Commissioner Przybyla reminded the Board that over an ounce, postage costs are going up. We spent \$2300.00 this year and the new LCCR requires annual mailings.

<u>4335.13 (Mailing..)</u>	\$1.00	\$1.00 PLACEHOLDER
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<u>4335.14 (WSO+..)</u>	\$1.00	\$1.00 PLACEHOLDER
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Commissioner Taber reminded the Board that when we have fines to residents (certified letters being mailed), do we want to focus on these individual lines or blend as we have in the past? Commissioner Auger stated she was not worried about it.

Commissioner Taber asked should we get rebuild kits or chemical feeds or dosing pumps in case any of the chlorine analyzers fail? They are \$16,000.00/piece. How do we save up? If we can't do it automated, we would have to do it manually.

SECTION TOTAL:	\$22,402.00	\$16,602.00
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EXPENSE CATEGORY	PROPOSED AMOUNT	2025 BUDGET AMOUNT
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Water Conservation

4338 (Water Conser)	\$1.00	\$1.00 (PLACEHOLDER)
4339.1 (Leak Testing)	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00

This will continue to be an ongoing cost that will be consumed.

Water Bonded Debt

Commissioner Taber stated he does not have numbers from the State, yet, on Patten Hill. The total loan was \$84,000.00. The Road Infrastructure is completed. The Grant Trust closed (minimum value of \$30,000.00 on the table). The SRF is not closed, yet. The estimate – across five (5) loans and adding two (2) loans is \$280,000. Last year it was \$208,000.00 The total Net Bonded is \$334,002 and last year it was \$342,000.00. Commissioner Taber stated that even with the increase, it is under \$8,000.00.

Bond Repayment (Princ.)	\$280,000.00	\$207,694.11
Bond Repayment (Int.)	\$40,000.00	\$46,000.00
Admin Fee	\$14,200.00	\$15,835.00

TOTAL WATER WITHOUT

BOND & WA:	\$378,167.00	\$342,342.00
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TOTAL:	\$712,169.00	612,107.29
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Commissioner Taber stated that it is higher than last year's budget (16 %). The biggest part was loan payments. He asked the Board, should we consider doing Capital Reserves? - \$10,000.00 for residential meters and \$10,000.00 for Media replacements?

OTHER MATTERS:

Commissioner Taber reported that Dumais Heating sent in their initial invoice (for **Patten Hill**) requesting a 40% deposit to buy materials. They are ready to start next week if we can send in the deposit (approximately \$1500.00-\$1800.00). Commissioner Przybyla asked, “do we have the cash”? Commissioner Taber stated, yes in our Water Account”. The amount has already been approved by a previous Motion.

This week, Aquaman activated the filter treatment in Patten Hill. Water is flowing. Arsenic Treatment is not required. It is being treated with chlorine. When it’s online and has been online for a couple of weeks, we can have the Q1 test done.

Overwatch:

We have still not received the outstanding \$1400.00 check owed to us.

Communication:

All Commissioners discussed possibly changing our current communications to something other than Google. Commissioner Taber, how do we maintain access to the last five (5) years of our existing google emails? Would we have access going forward? They will discuss further ideas.

Assumed Leak on Alpine:

Commissioner Taber reported that Aquaman is coming to fix the assumed leak on Alpine. It is overflowing onto the roadway. The Property Owner never put in a culvert when he had the new ditch line put in and the ditch line now overflows. Commissioner Przybyla asked, “did we require a culvert?” Commissioner Taber stated, “yes”. The winter freeze came early, and they never got the culvert done. They need to put in some type of barrier. This property owner has also not paid his payment due for a Water Application. Instead of a Sleeve repair, it was suggested that they put in a curb stop so when we move forward with the Water Application this will already be done and it will be less of a cost.

Air in the Lines:

The Commissioners discussed this issue. Commissioner Taber stated he was assuming it was the well pumps. It may be that the main gate valve is leaking (off of Gould Pond Road). Commissioner Przybyla stated that it might be a bigger issue. They will investigate further.

Quote for Spring:

Commissioner Auger will reach out to Bo to see if he wants to do a Quote for Spring.

Ferguson:

Commissioner Taber reported that Ferguson gave us quotes regarding fixed-base or AMI (main collector) or cellular-based. They feel cellular based is more cost-effective. Commissioner Taber asked, regarding the residential meters, in the meter pits, are we using a mixture? Commissioner Taber stated he will put together the information from the three (3) vendors and see what concepts they have for comparison purposes.

Hummingbird Well Project:

Commissioner Taber reported that Wright Pierce sent in the next invoice on this Project for \$85,000. (ARPA).

Commissioner Auger **MADE A MOTION** to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 PM. Commissioner Przybyla **SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL IN FAVOR.**

TIME MEETING ADJOURNED: 7:59PM.

Sara Auger, Chairman/Commissioner

Date

Mark Przybyla, Commissioner

Date

Brett Taber, Commissioner

Date

Respectfully submitted by Lorinda Giarrusso, District Clerk.

Lorinda Giarrusso, District Clerk

