

TO: Town Board
FROM: Michael Kuchta
RE: Town Administrator's Report

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Sept. 10-23, 2021

1. Accomplished/Completed

- No updates

2. Coming Up

- **Wisconsin Towns Association Convention.** At your suggestion, I registered for the convention for one day, Monday Oct. 11. I expect to attend workshops on USDA rural development funding, updating a town comprehensive plan, and road funding. I should be back on the island in time for the Oct. 12 TB meeting.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **Purchase Agreement for Passenger Shelter.** In March and again in May, the Board rejected bids for a passenger shelter at the end of the Town Dock because costs far exceeded the \$27,000 budget. Public Works is recommending that you approve a scaled-down, 20-by-10-foot aluminum and tempered glass shelter, which more closely resembles a heated, curbside transit shelter. The estimated purchase and delivery cost is \$27,050; that does not include staff time for installation, additional site work, and an electrical contractor. A Wisconsin Coastal Management Program grant will cover 55 percent (up to \$15,000); that grant already has been extended twice, but expires on Dec. 31, 2021. The purchase agreement and supporting documentation is in your packet.
- **Update Policy and Procedures for Boards, Committees and Commissions.** The draft eliminates outdated portions of the policy and makes minor technical or grammatical changes to improve readability. It also makes some changes in substance; see the separate memo for details.
- **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.** The committee is asking for two commitments from the Town Board:
 - That you allocate the Town's first installment of federal American Rescue Plan funding toward research and development of affordable housing on Madeline Island. The first installment -- \$13,659.52 -- was deposited earlier this year in a segregated account. (A second installment of the same amount is due in 2022.) There are 15 broad categories in which ARP funding can be spent; housing is one of the few in which there is a logical match for La Pointe.
 - That the Town update the housing component of the Comprehensive Plan, and utilize them to lead the work in that area.
- **Update Grant Policy and Procedures.** At your Sept. 14 meeting, members asked me to review our policy for seeking and accepting grants. See the separate memo for details of suggested revisions.
- **Wisconsin Coastal Management Program.** Public Works and I are seeking your go-ahead to pursue a grant for engineering work to design accessibility improvements to the lagoon and beach in Big Bay Town Park. The goal is to replace and widen the existing stairs and bridge, plus create additional ADA-compliant access. Preliminary estimates from 2016 put engineering at

roughly \$40,000; we expect updated figures before the application deadline. The local match would be 50 percent. The grant application deadline is Nov. 5.

- **Great Lakes Island Alliance.** GLIA has cancelled its summit, scheduled for Oct. 3-6. Please decide whether we should a) seek return of our \$100 registration fee or b) donate it to the organization.
- **Passenger Landing Fee.** Our town attorney continues to investigate the possibility of an “embarkation” fee for passengers and vehicles arriving at and using the Town dock, short of new language in state statute. He believes the route he is pursuing would be allowed by existing statute and lease language.
- **Purchase Agreement with Pete’s Trailer Sales.** The Fire Department is asking that you approve this purchase of a truck bed, which will be mounted on an existing Dodge chassis. This will be the platform for the department’s new brush truck; the existing truck will be decommissioned and put up for auction.

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Ferry Line.** Robbin Russell shared the revised fall ferry schedule with us a few days before it was published. The new schedule (through Nov. 28) runs the same number of boats as published earlier this year; however, it generally extends the day to include earlier and later boats to and from the island. (Of course, that means there are longer gaps between service during parts of the day.) A summary: The earliest boat to the island is now 7 a.m. (vs. 7:30); the latest boat to the island is 5:30 weekdays (no change) and 8:30 Fridays (vs. 7 p.m.). However, this eliminates the current 6 p.m. weekday boat, which benefits the school district. The earliest boat to Bayfield is now 7:30 a.m. (vs. 8 a.m.); the latest boat to Bayfield is 6 p.m. weekdays (vs. 4:30) and 7:30 p.m. Fridays (vs. 6:30 p.m.)

5. Grant Report

- **Office of Energy Innovation.** We received word on Sept. 17 that we will receive a state grant to study the feasibility of building one or more power microgrids for critical infrastructure in La Pointe. Estimated grant value is \$47,000. Except for ferry fees, all Town contributions would be in-kind. We have not received the paperwork yet for you to approve executing the grant.
- **County Road H Erosion Mitigation.** U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin’s office informed us on Sept. 16 that our joint application with Ashland County remains under consideration by the Senate’s Appropriations Committee. They expect to know more by the end of September.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- No updates

7. Other Information

- **Russell Land Transfer.** Gary and Robin would like to schedule a dedication ceremony for transfer of the Main Street parcels for Friday Oct. 15.
- **Friends of Madeline Island Historical Museum.** I continue to facilitate discussion among residents who plan to form a Friends group to support and advocate for the museum. About a half-dozen residents met with representatives from the Wisconsin Historical Society on Sept. 16. I will be phasing out my participation as the residents get closer to adopting bylaws, incorporating as a 501.c.3 organization, and create a memorandum of agreement with the historical society.

- **Bayfield School District.** Glenn Carlson and I met Sept. 20 with Beth Papp, administrator for the School District of Bayfield. We talked primarily about ferry schedules, the district's proposal for new classroom space for the La Pointe School, and resistance within the district to that kind of investment on the island. She hopes to set up listening sessions on the island and mainland in late November/early December to discuss the proposal, her vision for the school's role in the district, and different viewpoints.
- **La Pointe Post Office.** Sen. Baldwin's office called to ask how well the Postal Service has resolved service issues the Town had raised in spring. I will forward any comments you wish to share.