

TBS Michael, Barb,
Micaela, public

MEMO

To: Town Board
From: Michael Kuchta
Re: Town Administrator's Report

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Nov. 19-Dec. 9, 2021

1. Accomplished/Completed

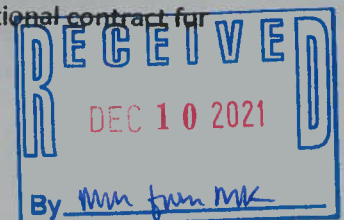
- **2022 Budget.** Barb Nelson and I completed budget worksheets based on the final Town Board workshops, then compiled the Budget Book for the Dec. 6 public hearing and Town Meeting.
- **Exit interview** with Officer Richard Laakonen.
- **Insurance.** I completed a review and updates to the Town's 2022 policy for property and related insurance through Glatfelter Public Practice. You will vote during your meeting on approving the renewal.

2. Coming Up

- **Microgrid Feasibility Study.** The Energy Committee was scheduled to meet Dec. 13 to review contracts with two consultants who will lead the study. The contracts are expected to be ready for approval at the next Town Board meeting. (I also met with David Robinson from Xcel Energy about their potential role in microgrids.)
- **Holidays.** After consulting with department heads and other staff, we will close Town Hall on Friday Dec. 24, Monday Dec. 27, and Friday Dec. 31 for the Christmas Eve, Christmas, and New Year's holidays.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **Russell Land Donation.** The Russells have signed the quit claim deed. The land transfer becomes official once you officially approve the accompanying covenants (Exhibit A), and the Town Attorney files the paperwork with the county. If you approve the donation, the Town Planning Commission is recommending that the two parcels be combined. Finally, board members have talked previously about naming the land Russell Park. Gary and Robin are OK with that choice.
- **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.** You have two actions to consider: Appointing members and a chair for the Steering Committee, and establishing operating guidelines for the committee.
- **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.** Jane Vogt has been participating in meetings the past few months as a member of the public. She now is applying to become a formal committee member.
- **Contracts for Gateway Sculpture interpretive sign.** One contract hires Marina Lachecki and Rob Goslin to conduct research, write the text, and suggest photos that will be part of the informational sign for the sculpture, which the La Pointe Center is donating and installing on the Russell land. The sign would go in the existing kiosk near the sculpture, facing Grampa Tony's. The second contract hires Little Big Bay Shop to design the sign, using content that Marina and Rob provide; they design the tourist-oriented signs that currently exist on the site. Funds will come from the committee's existing line-item budget. (There will be an additional contract for printing the sign next spring.)



- **Budget Amendment.** See the separate memo outlining the changes.
- **Contract with Workhorse Software Services.** The purchase covers a series of accounting software modules in 2021 and 2022. Workhorse is able to begin this project on Dec. 15, if the Town Board approves.
- **Contract with Vantage Flex.** This company administers the Town's pretax Section 125 benefit for eligible employees. You are being asked to renew the agreement for three years. Note: You have the option of including a debit card option, which would allow employees to pay for covered medical expenses upfront, rather than seeking reimbursement. The debit card cost to the Town is 75 cents per employee per month, or approximately \$125/year.
- **Discussion of 2022 Budget Process.** Barb Nelson and I are always assessing how to make the process more effective. Potential topics: What kind of spreadsheets are most useful for you? What kinds of narrative? Is there information we should supply automatically that you are not getting without asking? Would you like more direct access to department heads? What would you like to know in advance about department operations? How many years into the future should departments project operating budgets and capital needs? How many years into the future should we project revenue? Should we do more to designate current funds for longer-term capital and debt expenditures? How can we improve the information we make available to electors for the public hearing and Town Meeting?
- **Attachment E to 2021 Compensation Resolution.** This closes the loop to formalize the new pay rate you approved last month for a Temporary Truck Driver.
- **2022 Compensation Resolution.** This formalizes the pay scales, cost-of-living raises, and merit raises that were calculated into the 2022 budget for employees, appointed officials, and compensated volunteers.
- **2022 Fee Schedule.** See the separate memo outlining proposed changes. (Note: The Zoning Administrator's report has additional details on increasing the rental permit fee, a recommendation he supports.)
- **General Insurance Renewal.** The proposal is to renew the Town's insurance for property and related losses. I have distributed a summary packet for you to review; it gives an overview of the major coverage categories, category limits, and values of Town property and equipment. The total premium is \$76,871 – an increase of \$5,152 from this year. Much of the increase is because we specifically added MRF and other equipment to the coverage, added the ESB pumphouse for fire suppression to the coverage, and increased coverage for the Town's "outdoor property" from \$850,000 to \$3 million. "Outdoor property" includes infrastructure such as the dock, playground equipment, park amenities, signs, retaining walls, pavilions, and storage sheds. A complete list of changes is on the third page of the summary packet
- **Resignation of Richard Laakonen.** As the police chief's memos report, Officer Laakonen resigned to take a position in Bayfield County. Officer Laakonen expressed a willingness to be available to La Pointe on a part-time basis; however, because Bayfield County does not allow him to take outside employment until he has been with the department for a year, we needed to terminate his employment with La Pointe effective Nov. 26. We have notified him that we would welcome him back on part-time status when the time arrives.
- **Hire Jonathan Rahlf FT.** Officer Rahlf, who has been on the force part-time since July, would replace Officer Laakonen as full-time.
- **Memorandum of Understanding: FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant.** The Fire Department and Ambulance Service request your approval of the MOU, in which they would partner with 11 Bayfield County agencies in applying for a FEMA grant to purchase emergency radios. If the

regional application is successful, our fire department would acquire six new radios and EMS would acquire six new radios. FEMA would pay 90%; the Town's 10% share would be approximately \$3,200 for the fire department and \$2,100 for the Ambulance Service. The Town's share would be paid from Fire Equipment Account 52210-07 and Ambulance Capital Outlay Account 57230-00. Each department's capital plan is to acquire two radios per year, so a successful grant would accelerate those plans. The FEMA applications are due Dec. 17. Awards typically are announced in September.

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Passenger shelter.** The manufacturer has informed us that, because of material and staffing shortages, the shelter is not likely to ship until January 2022.
- **School District of Bayfield.** Glenn Carlson and I met Nov. 20 with Beth Papp, the district administrator, and sat in on the district's first community listening session in Red Cliff.
- **Cemetery shed.** Delivery of the new shed, which originally was scheduled for Dec. 8, had to be rescheduled for this week because of logistics problems at the supplier.

5. Grant Report

- No other updates.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- **Defoe.** Mike Anderson and I were scheduled to join attorneys representing the Town's insurance company in a conference call on Dec. 10 to discuss potential settlement terms with the plaintiff's attorney. We expect to update you in closed session.
- **Mattingly.** The Town Attorney has provided an update, which I will share with you in closed session.
- **Overnight compensation for police officers.** The Town's personnel attorney has provided an update on legal options, which I will share with you in closed session.

7. Other Information

- **Organics composting.** Northland College is selling its in-vessel composting machine, which turns food scraps and other organic waste into compost. Ben Schram, Marty Curry, and Joe Abhold are planning a visit on Dec. 16 to see if it could make sense for the island.
- **Wisconsin Towns Association.** I participated in a webinar Dec. 3 on legislation that the association believes has the potential to override local zoning and assessment discretion and practices. I sent you an email and PowerPoint on Dec. 6 with more detail.
- **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.** I listened in to a presentation Dec. 3 from regional directors of the organization on small-town and rural development programs. I talked later with one of the directors about the need to boost cell phone coverage on the island and other parts of the region.