

(5)TB, Michael, Barb, Micaela,
Public

MEMO

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

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Jan. 21-Feb. 4, 2022

1. Accomplished/Completed

- Nothing to report that is not covered elsewhere.

2. Coming Up

- Nothing to report that is not covered elsewhere.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **Angelo Luppino Change Order #5.** This is the price deduction for a 100-amp electrical panel v. a 200-amp electrical panel inside the Rec Center. We are awaiting a load calculation worksheet from the contractor to verify whether 100-amp service is adequate (because of load reductions since renovation plans originally were drawn up). If the worksheet arrives before the meeting and confirms that, you can act on this change order. If the worksheet determines that the building requires 200-amp service, we will disregard the change order and require the contractor to replace the 100-amp panel that is installed with a 200-amp panel, as originally required in the plans.
- **Plat review of Hartzell Expandable Condominium Parcel.** The zoning administrator and I are still awaiting advice from the town's attorney on questions raised at the Jan. 11 Town Board meeting. If we receive answers in time, we will forward you an updated memo.
- **Contract with Marina Lachecki and Robert Goslin to create interpretive sign for Gateway Sculpture.**
- **Contract with Little Big Bay Shop to design interpretive sign for Gateway Sculpture.** These contracts for the authors and designer were tabled at the Dec. 14 meeting because the Town Board wanted the Public Arts Committee to follow through on its statement that no taxpayer money would be spent on the sculpture. Since then, the La Pointe Center has raised the money necessary to pay for the sign without using public dollars. Because the sign would be installed on Town property, best practice would suggest that the contracts should be with the Town. The Town then would invoice the La Pointe Center to reimburse the cost (similar to how the Chamber reimburses the Town for pump-out services).
- **Workshop with Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.** Kellie Pederson from UW Extension is prepared to provide a presentation on the status of the Chequamegon Bay area affordable housing coalition's work, including the upcoming pilot project with the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority. The Town's committee was scheduled to meet earlier on Feb. 8; I expect to have their recommendations for workshop or presentation dates in time for Tuesday's meeting.
- **Madeline Island Ferry Line.** I met Feb. 3 with Robin Russell about 2022 schedules. See the separate memo for more details.

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- **Workshop with Fire Department.** The department's apparatus committee suggests a meeting on Wednesday Feb. 16 at 5 p.m. to discuss their request to purchase a new main fire engine. The meeting could be in person at the ESB, or take place remotely.
- **Use of Town text system.** Because of increases in propane and other heating costs this winter, I am proposing to use the Town's text service to notify residents of energy assistance available from the state. The message would state: "Struggling to pay for heat this winter? Or to keep the lights on? Or know someone who is? Wisconsin can pitch in. Get details at <https://tinyurl.com/mr2f65mz>"
- **Police Department.** As you know, the Ashland County Board's Finance Committee voted Feb. 1 not to cancel the law enforcement payment to the Town for 2022, with the expectation that we will negotiate something different for 2023. That recommendation still must be approved by the Executive Committee (Feb. 10) and the full County Board (Feb. 22). The decision, if ratified, gives us breathing room. But we have much work ahead of us in talking with residents and businesses about what kind of law enforcement they expect on the island and what they are willing to pay for. More immediately, we should give the police chief guidance about whether to try hiring a third full-time officer this spring, as budgeted.
- **Fire Department.** This is an annual renewal of our agreement with the Ashland County Sheriff's Department; the service is used by all three emergency service departments.

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Fire numbers.** The zoning administrator, fire chief, ambulance director, airport director and I met Feb. 4 to outline an island-only approach to updating fire numbers, now that Ashland County has told us they do not have the capacity to be directly involved in the project.
- **Energy Committee.** Consultants have installed eGauge monitors in Town Hall, the Clinic, Library, Dock and La Pointe School to gather data for the microgrid feasibility study.
- **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.** The zoning administrator, public works director and I continue to do research for the committee as they seek to uncover data of existing conditions, and assess progress in the existing plan. Committee members are building a consensus toward developing an updated plan that focuses on a smaller number of specific goals, with concrete recommendations on how to achieve them. The committee meets this Thursday, Feb. 10, at 4 p.m. with a focus on the Plan's economic development and transportation sections.
- **Community Awards.** The new committee held its first meeting on Jan. 25; it intends to meet again March 1, after the public nomination period closes.
- **Covid protocols.** The procedures adopted by the Town Board on Jan. 28 were forwarded to all department heads. I have obtained a supply of N95 masks from Ashland County Public Health. I have not been able to find a bulk supply of "at home" test kits.
- **Ambulance billing.** The ambulance director, accounting administrator and I meet Feb. 4 to discuss problems with the current billing, in anticipation of an RFP when the current contract expires in March.

5. Grant Report

- I gave a brief online presentation Jan. 27 to support the Town's application to the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program for an engineering study on better accessibility at Big Bay Town Park. Program staff recommended our project for funding; the full coastal management council makes final decisions later this month.
- We received the first state reimbursement for trail work done last year at BBTP.

- The grant supporting installation of the passenger shelter at the Dock was extended until June 30.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- **Defoe lawsuit.** No updates at this time.
- **Mattingly judgment.** After the Jan. 25 Town Board meeting, we heard from the party attempting to purchase the land that a plan is in place. I asked the town attorney to follow up for details and, if a closing date was not set by the end of January, to proceed with the action approved by the board in closed session. No further updates at this time.

7. Other Information

- **Wind Sled training.** I met with the fire chief and ambulance director to outline training needs for EMS transports that utilize a wind sled. A training session is tentatively scheduled for Saturday Feb. 12.