

## MEMO

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

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: March 18-April 7, 2022

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### 1. Accomplished/Completed

- Covered elsewhere in this report.

### 2. Coming Up

- **Great Lakes Islands Alliance.** The organization holds a webinar on Monday April 18, noon Central Time, to discuss affordable housing issues facing islands.
- **Town Planning Commission.** TPC holds a special meeting on Monday April 18, 4:30 p.m. They face an April 22 deadline to recommend that the Town Board approve or deny the request from Craftivity for a conditional use permit to build two six-room dormitories. The Town Board then has 21 days to vote on the TPC recommendation.
- **Chamber of Commerce.** The chamber resumes monthly board meetings beginning April 20. I intend to discuss with them your Community Award recommendation, the sanitary district's request on portable toilets, the concept of a continuation of business ordinance if you express interest, and business-related questions from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.
- **Public Hearing.** TPC holds a public hearing on Wednesday, April 27, at 5 p.m. on a request from Ken and Marnie Myhre for a conditional use permit to hold yoga and health-related classes on their property at 900 Big Bay Road.
- **Special Town Board Meeting.** Joint meeting with Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and TPC, April 27, 5:30 p.m. (of after TPC public hearing, whichever is later)

### 3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **TPC Appointment.** The commission recommends the reappointment of member Samantha Dobson.
- **Zoning Administrator.** With Ric Gilman's passing, we have two needs:
  - To fill the position temporarily. A draft job posting is in your packet. Town Hall staff are handling some inquiries; we are steering others to the new zoning administrator in Ashland County. But we do not have the time or expertise to provide the detailed research and guidance that property owners and contractors need for permitting and other issues. We also need to decide how to provide staff support to the Town Plan Commission.
  - To fill the position long-term. The current job description is in your packet.
- **Public Art Committee.** Members are planning the June 30 dedication ceremony for the crane sculpture. They plan to invite drummers from the Red Cliff or Bad River tribes for the ceremony. A typical honorarium would be \$500 (plus a tobacco offering). They request that you authorize them to spend money from their committee budget for these dedication expenses.

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- **Special Event Permit.** The Wisconsin Historical Society has withdrawn its request to close Col. Woods Ave. during the opening celebration of a beading exhibit at the Madeline Island Museum on May 13. They expect to be able to contain events to museum property.
- **Enbridge Line 5.** The DNR has extended the comment period on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for Enbridge's proposed Line 5 expansion in northern Wisconsin. The new deadline is Friday April 15. Details: <https://tinyurl.com/line5deis>
- **Paid Time Off Sharing Program.** See the draft policy in your packet, which also contains additional background information. This policy would allow Town employees with unused paid time off to donate it to a general pool; employees who exhaust their paid time off could draw from the pool if their situation qualifies. The policy is structured to meet IRS requirements, incorporate best practice guidelines, and be simple to understand and administer. If you approve the policy, Barb Nelson and I would create the necessary forms.
- **Overnight Compensation.** See the separate confidential memo.
- **Emergency Services Building Warranty Work.** You received an email March 30 with written commitments from the project manager and subcontractors to perform unfinished warranty repairs even though the one-year period has expired.
- **Continuation of Business Ordinance.** State statute limits La Pointe to three regular "Class B" liquor licenses; those currently are held by the Beach Club, Pub, and Seiche. (Burned Down has a 'reserve' license; Bell St. Tavern has a license for establishments that can seat 300. Other establishments have beer and wine licenses.) A "continuation of business" ordinance would require license holders to be open a minimum number of days, weeks, or months of the year, as determined by the Town. Model language from the Wisconsin Towns Association is in your packet.
- **Next agenda.**
  - **Revaluation.** Assessor Steve Nordquist is available to join the Board (via Zoom) on April 26 to discuss the process, costs, and other factors involved in doing an island-wide property revaluation.
  - **Engineering consultants.** The Town Board will need to evaluate firms that respond to our request for Statements of Qualifications to help the Town apply for federal funding for road reconstruction in 2023. (*see BIL Funding item below*)
  - **Big Bay Town Park.** Town Board will be asked to approve a contract to install a new slide at the Town Park playground, once posting requirements are satisfied.

#### 4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Ashland County Law Enforcement Agreement.** We are scheduled to meet on Monday April 25 to begin discussing a follow-up agreement for 2023 and beyond. I expect Glenn Carlson and Bill Defoe to join me in representing La Pointe; we expect to meet with the sheriff, administrator, and a county board member.
- **BIL Funding.** Ben Schram and I sent letters to six engineering firms seeking Statements of Qualifications for developing design plans for proposed reconstruction of Hagen, Mondamin, and South Shore Roads. Responses are due April 21. Town Board would have to evaluate the responses at the April 26 meeting, select a preference, and approve a contract in time for the firm to perform services and help submit applications before the June 3 deadline. (We also sent information to the Wisconsin Towns Association, with is trying to get small bridges qualified for BIL funding.)

- **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.** The committee meets again April 14. They expect to review their community engagement plan (including survey and focus group topics), and to review proposal for assistance from UW-River Falls, Northland College and, potentially, UW-Superior.
- **Madeline Sanitary District.** I met March 31 with Zach Montagne about the Sanitary District's concerns with high-strength septic loads. They do not know why their ponds are not working properly. However, they suspect the RV pump station and portable restrooms contribute to the imbalances they see. They seem to believe that removing these high-strength sources are part of a long-term solution. Zach is in frequent contact with the DNR about both treatment standards and the DNR contract that requires the Town to maintain the RV dump station. Ben Schram and Dorgene Goetsch are researching what historical records might exist to assist DNR staff. DNR has hinted that it could help the district pursue facility upgrades; it seems logical that expanding district capacity and infrastructure would be the best solution for handling these high-strength loads and the island's population growth.
- **"Qualified Payments."** Barb Nelson and I continue to work with our payroll company on how to resolve the fact that they did not notify us, nor apply a change in federal tax code, that exempts up to \$600 a year in federal taxes for our compensated volunteer fire and ambulance department members. They want to charge us \$3,000 to send corrected W-2s and refile quarterly and annual tax forms for 2021.
- **WHEDA Rural Affordable Workforce Housing Initiative.** In March, the first meeting for Ashland and Bayfield Counties selected small-scale development, government resources, and infrastructure as topics on which pilot project research groups will focus. I joined the government resources group; we meet every Friday through June.

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## 5. Grant Report

- No updates.

## 6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- **Judgment on Michael Mattingly Properties.** The judgment was satisfied on April 1. The Town received a payment of \$63,055, including interest.

## 7. Other Information

- **Wisconsin Towns Association District Meeting.** I attended the quarterly meeting March 28 in Moquah. Much of the discussion concerned recruitment, retention and costs of EMTs. I also connected with UW Extension, which is studying creating a food network in Ashland County; I forwarded information to the Island Harvesters group.