

TOWN OF LA POINTE
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2022
6:00pm at the Emergency Services Building/ Zoom
Approved Minutes

Town Board Members Present: Chair Glenn Carlson, Supervisor Michael Anderson, Supervisor Aimée Baxter, Supervisor Sue Brenna, Supervisor John Carlson

Public Present: 60 members of the public attended in person, 75 members of the public via Zoom

1. Call to order: 6:00pm

2. Presentation/ Introduction of information to establish a Harbor Commission and explore the possibility of acquiring the Madeline Island Ferry Line:
Chair Glenn Carlson began with an overview – the Town is considering the purchase of the Madeline Island Ferry Line (MIFL) and thus establishing a harbor commission because the families that currently own MIFL need a succession plan, other private owners may not have the townspeople in their best interest, and it is a lifeline for the Island.
Town Administrator Michael Kuchta gave a presentation on the information: The Harbor Commission would acquire the Ferry Line, not the Town; the Commission will likely be 5 or 7 members, members must have been a La Pointe resident for at least 3 years, a qualified elector and not owe any debts to the town. Finances are still being explored, and the purchase will only happen if it makes sense to do so, the Town could just be a 51% owner or buy just some assets/ property from MIFL. Borrowing will need to happen to cover costs, options include revenue bonds, general obligation bonds, state trust fund loans, or bank loans. There will be lawyers involved including a maritime lawyer. If the purchase goes through, operations could be contracted out, the town could run it, or the Town could lease it all out.

3. Discussion / Questions/ Public Comment on the same topic: Clerk Montagne read a comment from the Madeline Island Ferry Line Board of Directors stating they are in favor of the Town’s possible acquisition of the Ferry Line and will provide information necessary to see if it is feasible.
Comments/ discussion on the make up of the Harbor Commission: maybe financial background, critical thinking skills, there could possibly be an advisory committee to the commission for those who do not meet the commission requirements.
Other Islands with Ferries may be helpful to see how they do it.
The Harbor Commission will not deal with winter transportation or Windsleds.
If a private entity is interested, they could outbid the Town, but the Town still owes the Town dock, so maybe negotiate.
Discussion on if the Town owns MIFL- can there be better rates or discounts or passes for residents? Can the Townspeople have a say in schedule?

4. Application for Harbor Commission: Motion to approve the application with the deadline of September 30, 2022, A. Baxter/ S. Brenna, 5 Ayes, Motion Carried.
The Town Board will hopefully have the Commission in place by mid-October. No timeline on the actual purchase.
5. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn, J. Carlson/ S. Brenna, 5 Ayes, Motion Carried. Adjourned at 7:02pm.

Submitted by Micaela Montagne, Town Clerk.

Approved as submitted September 27, 2022. M. Montagne, Town Clerk.