

MEMO

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

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Sept. 9-Sept. 22, 2022

1. Accomplished/Completed

- **Harbor Commission.** Prepared a presentation for the Sept. 20 informational session on the Town's potential purchase of the ferry line, which was attended by more than 70 individuals in person, and at least 75 individuals online. Harbor Commission application is now available.

2. Coming Up

- **Treaty Days.** Anishinaabe individuals and organizations will hold events at the Rec Center and elsewhere on the island Sept. 30-Oct. 2 in commemoration of the Treaty of 1854.
- **WTA Convention.** I will attend the convention Oct. 9-11 in Appleton. I will attempt to return in time to attend the Oct. 11 Town Board meeting in person, but may need to call in from the road.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **Auction of surplus Town property.** Public Works requests permission to auction off various surplus items; a list is in your packet.
- **Amended contract with Cooper Engineering.** The new draft revises the contract for the Big Bay Town Park accessibility study, which the Town Board approved on Sept. 13. The vendor requests that we modify our standard language to make it more appropriate for engineering services, rather than for generic contractor services. The copy you have highlights the proposed changes. The bulk of changes are in Sections 6 and 7; in addition, all previous references to "contractor" are changed to "engineer." There are no changes in price or other terms of the contract.
- **Community Awards Committee.** Under committee bylaws, members are appointed by the Town Chair from among department heads and the Town's other boards, committees and commissions. Appointments must be ratified; members serve until Dec. 31.
- **Grant Update.** The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee has received two grants from the Apostle Islands Area Community Fund to support their housing needs assessment: \$1,000 from the Michael Madeline Island Fund and \$3,000 from the Grutzner Madeline Island Fund. Under Town policy, accepting the grants requires Town Board approval.
- **Budget Timeline.** A draft calendar of workshops on the 2023 budget is in your packet, to adopt or modify as necessary.
- **Propane Contract.** The bid from Midland Services is the lowest responsible bid. See the separate memo for the calculations used in that assessment.
- **Ashland County Law Enforcement Agreement.** The county's Executive and Finance committees had the agreement on their Sept. 22 agenda, but tabled the item without discussion. The Law Enforcement committee is scheduled to discuss the agreement on Monday Sept. 26.

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Housing Needs Assessment.** The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet on Sept. 26 to review the three proposals and make a recommendation for Town Board approval. The new Apostle Islands grants will help support the study.
- **Big Bay Road sidewalk.** Property owners Dave Johnson and Mike Rasmus have signed the necessary easement. The final property owner has the paperwork but has not yet returned it.

5. Grant Report

In addition to the grant approvals on the agenda:

- **BIL Funding.** The state Department of Transportation notified us that La Pointe will receive federal BIL funding to rebuild the entire two-mile stretch of Hagen Road, sometime between 2023 and 2026. The project requires only a 20 percent local match. Because Hagen is the only road into the state park, which generates most of the traffic, we intend to ask the DNR to pay half the local match. The total cost of repaving Hagen is estimated at \$2.03 million; that would place the local share at \$406,000. Mondamin Trail and South Shore Road were not selected for BIL funding. We will explore state LRIP funding for one or both of those projects; estimated total costs are \$991,000 and \$2.01 million, respectively.
- **Assistance to Firefighters Grant.** The La Pointe Ambulance Service and Fire Department will receive part of a FEMA grant to purchase up to six WISCOMM-compatible radios each. The Town Board approved joining the regional application on Dec. 14, 2021; the Town share will be 10 percent of the purchase price. The application is being spearheaded by the Grandview Fire Department, which will issue an RFB.
- **Dock Passenger Shelter.** Wisconsin Coastal Management reimbursed us the full \$15,000.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- The insurance company expects to have final settlement language in place. Attorney Elizabeth Reeths will be able to join us remotely if necessary.

7. Other Information

- **Flags.** Rep. Janet Meyers donated a dozen U.S. flags to replace tired flags she observed along Main Street, plus a new flag to fly at Town Hall (which had flown over the State Capitol).
- **North Shore Road Bluff.** There has been social media and island chatter about a very visible section of bluff on North Shore Road that appears to have been clear cut. Zoning administrator Ed Schaffer looked into it; in truth, the bluff collapsed and now is being restored. The property owners have permits from Ashland County. Nelson Construction is doing most of the work; they are regrading and stabilizing the bluff; adding French drains, pipe and breaker rock; and re-seeding the soil. Most of what people see from the water is mesh put in place to encourage grass growth this season. An arborist intends to add more vegetation in spring.