

TOWN OF LA POINTE
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022
Immediately following a Public Hearing
At Town Hall
Draft Minutes

40 Townspeople present as per the attached sign-up sheet.

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Glenn Carlson at 5:18pm.

II. Consider the adoption of a resolution by the town meeting endorsing a Town Board Resolution (#2022-1117) which proposes that the town levy exceed the state allowable levy limit under Ss. 66.0602 of Wisconsin Statutes, specifically a proposed tax levy which would exceed the allowable town tax levy for 2022/Payable 2023 by 5% percent which would be a dollar increase of \$89,114 (for a total of \$1,871,395).

Motion by Mike Starck to approve the levy at the State allowable limit with no increase, second by Steve Lennick. Discussion on how it would be a mistake as the increase still does not cover the full impact of inflation, and there is already talk of the town borrowing money, and borrowing is currently not cheap. 3 Ayes, 37 opposed, Motion Failed.

Motion by Robin Trinko Russell to approve the tax levy with the 5% increase as presented, second by Dale Whittaker, 37 Ayes, 3 opposed, Motion Carried.

III. Approve the 2022 total Town Tax Levy to be collected in 2023 pursuant to Sec. 60.10(1)(a) Wisconsin Statutes:

Motion by Peter Ross to approve the tax levy at \$1,871,395, second by Debbie Knopf, All Ayes, Motion Carried.

IV. La Pointe Police Department Budget: Staffing and Funding:

Discussion included the overview of the dilemma with the WI Department of Revenue (DOR): their original opinion was that since Ashland County is discontinuing their payment to the Town for a service, the \$135K could be transferred from the County's tax levy to the Town's Levy- meaning no change for the taxpayer, just that the Town could keep the money. The DOR reversed their opinion, and now the Town is planning of filing a petition on the reversal.

Mike Starck mentioned that the County Administrator is interested in meeting again with the Town Administrator and Town Board after January 3, 2023 when the new County Sheriff begins to discuss the issue.

Further discussion and comments on the pros and cons of not having the La Pointe police department provide full coverage (the current 2023 budget includes $\frac{3}{4}$ La Pointe coverage and $\frac{1}{4}$ County coverage). Many comments on supporting the Town in the fight to have Ashland County continue to provide some funding for the police department as the town does not get much return on their tax money in county services. Many people also interested in providing funding for the full coverage by the Town so there are no options to be open to vulnerability or exposed because of lack of police presence.

Townsppeople advisory vote on borrowing more money (\$135,000) to have the La Pointe police department provide 100% coverage, 23 Ayes, 6 Nays, and 7 Abstain.

V. Adjourn: Motion by Mike Anderson to adjourn, second by Steve Lennick, All Ayes, Motion Carried. Adjourned at 5:51pm.

Submitted by Micaela Montagne, Town Clerk.

DRAFT