

# MEMO

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

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Nov. 19-Dec. 9, 2022

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## 1. Accomplished/Completed

- **Budget.** In collaboration with Barb Nelson and Micaela Montagne, completed Budget Book for posting and public use in advance of Town Meeting.
- **Insurance.** Met with EMC about Town's workers comp procedures.

## 2. Coming Up

- **Workshop with Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Town Plan Commission.** Thursday Dec. 15, 4 p.m., ESB training room.
- **Christmas Eve, Christmas.** These holidays fall on a Saturday-Sunday; under the personnel policy, the Town will observe them on Friday Dec. 23 and Monday Dec. 26.
- **New Year's.** This holiday falls on a Sunday; the Town will observe it on Monday Jan. 2
- **Erickson land swap.** Town Plan Commission holds a public hearing Wednesday Jan. 4, 2023, at 5 p.m. They propose rezoning the piece of land that the Town is trading; zoning would change from G-1 (government and institutional) to R-3 multi-family residential, which is the same zoning as the adjacent Erickson land.

## 3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **Public Works job posting.** This request is for back-up plow drivers. Actual hiring would take place at your Dec. 27 meeting.
- **MRF Solid Waste service contract.** The proposed contract with Republic Services would replace the existing contract with Waste Management, which expires Dec. 31. Republic's proposal (a flat \$80 per ton, no surcharges) is a better value than Waste Management's proposed prices for 2023 (\$83.45 per ton for disposal, a \$30 environmental surcharge per load, plus a fuel surcharge that fluctuates weekly). Waste Management received the contractually required 30 days' notice of termination, plus the required 15 days' notice allowing them to provide a "competing offer." As of Dec. 8, they had not sent revised pricing.
- **Energy Committee.** See the separate memo on the committee's grant request.
- **Attachment G to Compensation Resolution.** This codifies the actual 2022 pay rates for the new payroll coordinator and Harbor Commission secretary.
- **2023 Fee Schedule.** These changes would ratify the proposals discussed during budgeting. Changes are highlighted, with explanations where needed. (See the note below about Ashland County's zoning permit fees for 2023.)
- **2023 Budget Report.** See the separate memo about options for how detailed a budget to adopt formally.
- **Police Department.** I am scheduled to meet Dec. 20 with Sheriff-elect Brian Zupke to discuss logistics of the sheriff's expanded responsibilities in La Pointe beginning in 2023.

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- **Fire Department Change Order.** The department's apparatus committee approved change orders in October that add \$11,560 to the cost of the new fire engine. Town Hall was not notified of these changes. The Town Board can authorize these changes retroactively, or require the department to pay for the changes out of their own resources – presumably either donations or their self-directed 66.06 fund.

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

- **ESB.** We received the long-awaited \$1,500 payment from Five Star Electric; that is the final reimbursement of Town costs for replacing the failed air compressor. No updates on hooking up Metasys; Johnson Controls tells us there is no annual or subscription fee for utilizing the Metasys programming.
- **Wisconsin Commercial Ports Association.** Harbor Commission president Michael Childers and I met with three DOT staff members about an upcoming report that hopes to give a higher profile to the economic impact of ferry operations.
- **Zoning.** I am monitoring (and intervening as appropriate) on zoning issues while zoning administrator Ed Schaffer continues to recuperate.
- **WHEDA Rural Affordable Workforce Housing Initiative.** I continue participating in a work group that is refining three pilot project concepts. The concepts receive their first public rollout on Dec. 9 and Dec. 14 (4-5:30 p.m., <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83602913129>).
- **Town Hall.** I continue to work on logistics for rearranging desks and acquiring equipment necessary to provide work stations for the new payroll coordinator and Harbor Commission secretary. I also continue to provide information and seek quotes from potential vendors for Town Hall AV system, including from SHI, AVI Systems, Audio Architects, AVI-SPL, and Blum Technology.
- **Ashland Daily Press.** Talked twice with reporter Tom Stankard for a potential article on the county's defunding of the La Pointe Police Department.

#### 5. Grant Report

- No updates.

#### 6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- Closed session.

#### 7. Other Information

- **Ashland County Zoning Permits.** The county released its 2023 fee schedule for zoning permits. Most prominently, the fee for a county building permit increases by \$200 (to \$500); there is a new \$100 permit for "placement" of a recreational vehicle; and the fee for adding an address to the 911 system increases by \$50 (to \$250). Also, in another example of the county targeting La Pointe, the county is now requiring property owners to pay the ferry fees for a sanitary inspection. (There is nothing in the fee schedule suggesting that property owners elsewhere in the county are charged for an inspector's transportation costs.)