

MEMO

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

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: April 22-May 5, 2023

1. Accomplished/Completed

- **Airport.** Submitted Petition and related paperwork to Bureau of Aeronautics.
- **Gazette.** Submitted a long "Report from Town Hall." It attempts to keep residents up to speed on the Ashland County legal cases, upcoming work by the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee and Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Hagen Road repaving, the BBTP feasibility study, committee vacancies, and other topics.

2. Coming Up

- **Madeline Island Marathon.** Saturday May 20; full and partial road closures.
- **Island Closet.** Opens for the season at the MRF on May 20.
- **WTA County Unit Meeting.** May 22.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **Chef's Expo.** Chamber of Commerce has updated its request; it now seeks permission to *close* LeSueur and Bell Streets entirely on June 15 so it can place a tent on the street.
- **Big Bay Town Park Accessibility Study.** You received a copy of the feasibility study from Cooper Engineering. The study outlines four ADA-compliant options for replacing the existing staircase and bridge. Options are projected to cost roughly \$2.1 million to \$2.6 million. Next steps: decide on a preferred option, begin pursuing outside funding support.
- **Cemetery.** A draft RFP is in your packet, seeking a cleaning service for the cemetery chapel. This work previously was done by seasonal Parks crew; payment would come from the cemetery designated fund.
- **Zoning Board of Appeals.** Appointment of David Ehlen would fill the vacancy left by Dale Whittaker's appointment to the Town Plan Commission. We will continue to post for alternates.
- **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.** Recommendations from the committee are in your packet. These are initial steps for the Town Board to pursue in order to accomplish recommendations from Maxfield Research. Their report sees a need for 20 new year-round rental units, 10 new single-family homes, and 16 new seasonal rental units in the next 5 years.
- **Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.** The committee's current charter expires on May 31. They are seeking an extension until Sept. 30. That will give them time to complete an initial draft, submit that draft to the Town Plan Commission for initial review, make revisions, seek additional community feedback (including through a formal public hearing), then make additional adjustments before submitting a Plan to the TPC and Town Board for final action.
- **Sanitary District.** See separate memo.
- **Compensation Resolution.** This codifies wage rates (and changes) that were approved previously by the Town Board or Library Board through individual hiring motions.

- **HVAC Service Provider.** A draft RFP is in your packet. The RFP seeks a primary service contractor for HVAC equipment in Town buildings. The previous contract expired April 23.
- **Police Squad.** The department seeks Town Board permission to decommission and sell the 2015 Ford Explorer, once the new Dodge Durango squad is fully equipped and operational. If no Town departments are interested, the vehicle would be put up for auction on Wisconsin Surplus.

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Accounting Administrator.** Barb Nelson and I were scheduled to meet with representatives of Ehlers and Pierce on May 9 to discuss the potential of them performing accounting operations for the Town.
- **Cell towers.** American Tower, which manages the original tower, expects to provide the Town a nonionizing electromagnetic radiation (NIER) report by mid-May. AT&T, which installed an antenna on the new tower, provided an RF Safety Categorical Exclusion Letter on April 25. That letter states, in part, "AT&T has evaluated the RF exposure from Tower FA 14680932 and confirmed that the RF exposure to the general population complies with the FCC exposure limits." Finally, AT&T expects to dismantle its old antenna and related equipment from the original tower by the end of May.
- **Dog park.** Organizers are requesting guidance on whether the Town Board would: A) want a lease, MOU, or similar arrangement on use of Town property for the dog park, and B) waive the permit fee to pursue a conditional use permit use of the Rec Center land.
- **Sidewalk.** Public Works and I have not yet drafted an RFP for the sidewalk and other concrete work approved April 25.

5. Grant Report

- No update.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- **Department of Revenue petition.** Our attorneys submitted briefs on May 5. They have until May 19 to send reply briefs. The DOR has until the end of July to issue its determination.
- **Claim against Ashland County.** The County Board has until July 8 to act on The Town's claim. If the County Board rejects the claim (or does not act), the Town Board can decide at that point whether or not to sue.
- **Costs.** Through the end of April, the Town received \$6,513 in donations to help offset attorneys' fees; the Town's total legal costs through the end of April are \$30,245.

7. Other Information

- **2022 Audit.** Auditors from Baker Tilly completed their on-site review on May 4.
- **Bayfield School District.** Glenn Carlson and I were scheduled to meet May 8 with district administrator Beth Papp to discuss plans for the island school building.
- **Fire Department.** The fire department failed to submit information for the annual 2% dues audit in time. Thus, the state considers it a "failed audit," which means the department will not receive an estimated \$7,400 in funding this year. Also, the chassis for the new Engine 1 is scheduled to arrive at Custom Fire Apparatus in Osceola on May 23. Under contract, the completed vehicle should be delivered by late August.