

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

To: Town Board

From: Michael Kuchta

DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Aug. 18-Sept. 8, 2023

1. Accomplished/Completed

- **2024 Budget.** Deadlines and a calendar of workshops are set; department heads have budget files in hand. Capital requests are due Sept. 21; operating budget requests are due Sept. 29

2. Coming Up

- **WTA Fall Workshop.** Lauren Burtaux and I plan to attend Sept. 20 in Cable.
- **WTA Unit Meeting.** I plan to attend Sept. 25 in Moquah.
- **Treaty Day.** Events are scheduled for Sept. 30. We anticipate a rental or special event application for the rec center.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- See separate memo

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Airport.** Micro-finishing and restriping of the airport runway are scheduled to begin Sept. 11, weather permitting. The BOA selected SEH as the contractor for the terminal/hangar renovation; airport manager Paul Wilharm and I were scheduled to attend the project scoping meeting on Sept. 8.
- **Auction.** The auction of Town property grossed \$13,033.01; that includes the winning bid on the decommissioned police squad: \$9,047.
- **BBTP.** Ben Schram and I are meeting Sept. 19 with James Lemke from the DNR's real estate division to discuss possible easements or other land arrangements.
- **Budget Transfers.** Nearly \$40,000 in budgeted transfers will take place from the General Fund to various designated funds: Police Communication (\$2,000), Fire Department Truck Replacement (\$16,500), Winter Transportation (\$10,000), Affordable Housing (\$4,000), Public Arts (\$4,300), Energy (\$2,000), Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (\$575), Community Awards (\$175).
- **Cell Tower.** Harmoni Towers raised their offer for a perpetual easement of the AT&T to \$162,000, a slight increase from the \$157,410 offer you rejected on June 13.
- **EMS Ball.** To date, the event grossed \$31,396.
- **Gravel Road Survey.** Roughly two-thirds of survey participants oppose paving North Shore, Benjamin or Schoolhouse: 65.69% of seasonal residents, 66.06% of North Shore property owners, and 67.3% of year-round residents. A slight majority (50.3%) favored reducing the speed limit on those roads; 45.8% favored keeping the limit at 40 mph. 288 people participated in the advisory survey, which was taken in response to requests at the April Town Meeting.
- **Public hearing: Comprehensive Plan.** At least 39 people attended at least part of the hearing on Aug. 24: 23 members of the public in person, 6 members of the public online, 5 TPC members, 3 Town Board members, and 2 staff.

- **Public hearing: Rental Ordinance.** At least 76 people attended at least part of the hearing on Aug. 30: 46 members of the public in person, 20 members of the public online, 4 TPC members, 4 Town Board members, and 2 staff.
- **Sanitary District.** District manager Zach Montagne and I met Sept. 5 with the DNR's basin manager and staff from the DNR's clean water loan program about logistics and potential funding for moving the RV waste disposal site. Meetings are scheduled Sept. 19 with James Lemke from the DNR's real estate division (which is signatory to the MOU that requires the Town to maintain a free disposal site) and Sept. 22 with BBSP's David Lindsley and his regional supervisor, Bob Skalitzky.
- **Treaty Day.** Tribal members are organizing a canoe flotilla from the mainland; we are working out logistics for them to land at the O'Brien Approach.

5. Grant Report

- **Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.** At Ted Michael's request, I applied to the Michael Madeline Island Fund for a contribution to the Town's legal fund. Mr. Michael urged a request of \$4,000; the fund application allows a maximum request of only \$1,000. We'll see how this plays out.
- **Energy Committee.** The committee's application to the US Department of Energy for a resilient microgrid grant was *not* selected for further review. Only 59 of 659 applications were selected.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- **Ashland County.** I had brief phone conversations with County Board Supervisor Matt Mackenzie and County Administrator Dan Grady, and shared via email the elements the Town Board requires in a new law enforcement agreement. There has been no follow-up from the County.
- **DOR Petition.** Town attorneys were finalizing their brief, requesting a review by the state's Tax Appeals Commission of the DOR's ruling. The deadline to file is Sept. 18.

7. Other Information

- **Vacation.** I am out of the office on Sept. 11-12, 15 and 18.