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**From:** Rick Reichkitzer <[firechief@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:firechief@townoflapointewi.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 6:18 AM

**To:** Micaela Montagne <[clerk@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:clerk@townoflapointewi.gov)>

**Subject:** Fire chiefs report January 2021

Well we spent a lot of time with the "ice rink " this month. We had a few mindsets while creating a rather nice rink this year.

We chose to use our portable pumps to fill tanker 1 and tanker 2 after they dropped their loads of water on the rink...these portable pumps have been dialed in to fill tanker one's 2800 gall payload in just over 5 minutes. We tried to rotate personnel to get as many members as possible the valuable pump and pumper training this public service provided.

I also figured a nice smooth ice rink will maybe keep people from attempting to play on the big lake that really was sketchy as it began to freeze over....we have seen lots of islanders young and not so young enjoying the rink and have received many thanks for this service. Side note is we dumped, pumped, and hauled over 60000 gallons of water to achieve this. A fuill blown house fire generally may use 30 to 50000 gallons to put down.

Filling the fire suppression system was onother sorry... we set up "avery 2" slightly ten times bigger trailer pump to fill the tankers for this project. We started with all three tankers for this water shuttle, after first 3 tankers pulled up to THE ESB to take their turn filling the 30000 work of tanks (one 18000 gallons and one 12000) we took tanker 2 out of rotation as its dump shut wasn't working as well as tanker 1 and tanker 2. We did some quick math at 14 tanker loads and it indeed took 14 tankers.

We were doing great planning for our move to the ESB as the project manager was calling pretty much daily to help answer questions and concerns. It was very unfortunate they had a covid 19 outbreak amongst the workers. We had our APPARATUS meeting last month as we need to address issues before the move. Being scolded and a written reprimand from the town administrator was unwarranted and will prolong our stay at the SRE. This kind of action only brings down morale and basically stopped the progress we were making.....so as soon as the crews are done and James price grants us occupancy permits we will pick up where we stopped and continue forward anticipating for the move of 12 pieces of equipment and lots of gear.

Respectfully

Chief Reichkitzer

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(5) TB, Lisa, Barb, Micaela,  
Fire, Public

**Dorgene Goetsch**

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**From:** Micaela Montagne  
**Sent:** Monday, March 8, 2021 8:09 AM  
**To:** Dorgene Goetsch  
**Subject:** Fw: Fire chiefs report Feb 2021

Micaela Montagne  
La Pointe Town Clerk  
PO Box 270 La Pointe, WI 54850  
715.747.6913  
clerk@townoflapointewi.gov

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**From:** Rick Reichkitzer <firechief@townoflapointewi.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 8, 2021 7:02 AM  
**To:** Micaela Montagne <clerk@townoflapointewi.gov>  
**Subject:** Fire chiefs report Feb 2021

February was another busy month prepping and trying to get prepared for the move to our new fire hall. The gear lockers showed up at olsons building materials as planned on feb 25 and Friday February 26th we organized a large group of volunteer fire fighters along with workers from Rick Reichkitzer construction and Clayton Douglass crew to get the 6 very large pallets over the ice crack and to the newly built fire hall. Someone asked why they showed up now....the answer we were lucky to get them this quick and storing them on the mainland and dealing with them one extra time was out of the question. We hed the same large crew lined up for March 6th to put the lockers together and in the new hall but the town administration for some reason thought that this could somehow mess up a llife and safety mechanical inspection scheduled for March 9th. It is public knowledge im not happy with this uncalled for changing of plans. James price isn't coming to see if the floors are clean. Tyler andreas and chief lined up the moving of the breathing air compressor and cascade systems to the new fire hall .....this when well with the help of a technician from Jefferson safety out of Madison and little Evan and Roy from the town crew. Steve from Brown electric was on hand to get the power switched over. We the fire department have done an amazing job over the last two years rebuilding the largest of the emergency services with 25 members and 11 replacement apparatus and have planned a smooth transition to our new hall. We have a five day schedule laid out for our move. We will now incorporate the gear lockers assembly to this time-line. Be safe  
Chief Reichkitzer

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MAR 8 2021

Initial dg

(5) TB, Lisa, Barb, Micaela,  
+1 Rick, Public

**From:** Rick Reichkitzer <[firechief@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:firechief@townoflapointewi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 12, 2021 7:37 AM  
**To:** Micaela Montagne <[clerk@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:clerk@townoflapointewi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fire chiefs report March 2021

Well it was a very busy month with the occupying of the new fire hall.

3/1 -3/13 we had small groups of fire department personnel pretty much every day moving equipment in anticipation of final occupancy of new hall. Almost daily we would load trucks and trailers with everything our department owns and recieved from donations after the fire. On 3/13 a large group assembled our 30 new gear lockers witch was no easy task. Throughout the following week everything was moved except the apparatus.

3/20 all apparatus moved to hall where we shuffled everything around and still had to put one vehicle back at the old county garage. With all the services in the new fire hall we are at maximum capacity already. The displaced truck is a 2019 dodge 5500 chasis that that that is now back outside of the old county garage. We have this vehicle high on our agenda of fitting it out as a brush truck to replace the Washburn brush truck now in service. I guess we will have to plead with the town to get the new dodge 5500 under a roof until its fitted.

We cleaned the SRE ond the old county garage throughly as we left our barrowed accommodations. The checklist for things big and small that need to be addressed before subcontractors warranties expire at the new building is growing. I have talked with Roy the facilities manager on compiling one list for the builder and not a dozen smaller ones.

Very happy with the new hall.

Chief Reichkitzer

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
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APR 12 2021

Initial: dg

(5)TB, Lisa, Barb, Micaela,  
Fire, Public

**From:** Rick Reichkitzer <[firechief@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:firechief@townoflapointewi.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 10, 2021 6:35 AM  
**To:** Micaela Montagne <[clerk@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:clerk@townoflapointewi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fire chiefs report April 2022

We recently were given a presentation of how to incorporate Arial " drones" into our fire departments tool box. Island resident Troy Lutz brought his knowledge of drones and search and rescue to our planning meeting. We had looked into this before but troy really filled in some blanks. The use of drones could be incorporated at almost every call we get toned out for. When it comes to search and rescue alone the idea of sending team after team into the search area can be substantially reduced with the assistance of drones.....drones can actually drop a radio to victims or in the case of an ice rescue a rope and life preserver. This was an eye opener for bringing a little more technology to the department to save on personnel. We will update more on this as we explore pricing and training for a emergency services drone team.

Be safe  
Chief Reichkitzer  
Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
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**From:** Rick Reichkitzer <[firechief@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:firechief@townoflapointewi.gov)>

**Sent:** Sunday, June 6, 2021 8:22 AM

**To:** Micaela Montagne <[clerk@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:clerk@townoflapointewi.gov)>; Michael Kuchta <[administrator@townoflapointewi.gov](mailto:administrator@townoflapointewi.gov)>; Evan Erickson <[isg@cheqnet.net](mailto:isg@cheqnet.net)>

**Subject:** Fire chiefs report may 2021

I want to thank my staff and the entire fire department for the extreme efforts they endured during the recent years that included rebuilding a complete fire department from literally the ground up. I have met and talked with numerous chiefs and fire fighters that understand what we accomplished in a couple years normally takes a minimum of a decade or more that usually doesn't result in what we accomplished. Besides the building that ended up being an achievement in itself we had to replace every apparatus and the enormous amount of tools and gadgets that go with effectively being able to fight fires, perform the delicate tasks evolved in search and rescue and the programs that promote fire safety in general. The work will never be done as our training programs are an endless road to getting to to know and master all these new tools and apparatus as well a living breathing building that we are merely the stewards to keep it that way.

When I took over as chief and with the help of my officers and staff as well as the town officials many thing have come a long way besides dwelling on the tragedy of loosing a fire hall. We have a actual retirement plan, a fire inspection program that's had to be built twice during my time as chief. A fire awareness with the community that has resulted in less calls due to our diligence in enforcement of burning permits and the rules that need to be followed with said "burning permits " we also now have the ability to ticket and fine violators is these common sense rules are not followed. Not everyone is happy when this gets explained to them, especially if it evolves unattended fires during moderate to extreme fire danger. All these programs and rules are aimed towards life/safety protection with the preservation of properties and dwellings. Any time the department gets toned out to calls whether its a false alarm or not the cost to the town and taxpayers generally is around \$500 and goes higher from there depending on the extent and duration of the call and resources used. Not everyone is happy being told what to do on there own properties but they need to realize the danger and cost to the the taxpayers when we need come running.

Another program that has come a long way is the paying proper respect to our fallen firefighters when they pass away. We will always have a traditional firefighter honor guard funeral when possible. Scott stoltz fire department honor guard funeral unfortunately was the third in my time as chief, Josh Reynolds and Larry Whalen preceded Scott's. This was a very tough send off for the whole crew and took its toll on me being his friend since the early seventies. I feel we did a very honorable job by waiting for the earliest possible time to get his family to the island and negotiate the covid awareness formalities. I can't thank my crew enough for assisting me in getting through this terrible loss of a friend and firefighter.

Our training calander is full and fire inspections will be completed generally before the 4th of July now that the restrictions imposed due to covid are being slowly lifted.

Be safe

Chief Rick Reichkitzer

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy Tablet

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**Micaela Montagne**

(5) TB, Michael, Barb, Micaela,

Fire, Public

**From:** Rick Reichkitzer  
**Sent:** Monday, July 12, 2021 11:02 AM  
**To:** Michael Kuchta; Micaela Montagne  
**Subject:** Fire chiefs report June 2021

6/3 1673 Hagen road, responded to report of smoke in residence by private alarm company. Responded to apparatus stand by at airport. Our equipment was there as the final blacktopping was being finished at esb. 11 fire personnel responded. On scene stand down orders issued.

6/20 146 old fort road, private caller reported unattended fire that's been burning for hours. We responded 12 personnel at 22:28, the crew proceeded to put out rather large unattended fire. Chief investigated the following morning and located person in charge of fire. A ticket was issued by Washburn DNR as there were more than 1 violations.

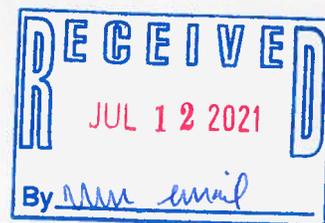
This is why I insist on abiding by the rules that go along with a state issued burning permit.

6/25 lift assist at 3437 big bay road. Fire department toned out to assist ems on a bicycle accident with injuries.

6/27 canoe in distress at big bay town park. Two canoes with 2 fire fighters in each went out in the lagoon at the town park to assist a lone paddler back to the safety of dry ground.

As always let be safe as our population explodes during the summer.  
Chief Reichkitzer

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(5) TB, Michael, Barb, Micella,  
Rick, Public

## Fire Chief's Report July 2021

7/4 Lift assist with emergency medical technicians

7/6 Fire reported on detached break wall immediately following the Forth of July fireworks show. Chief and Fire Fighter Lucas Montague had just returned to hall after monitoring the fireworks show with engine/pumper #2 as this call went off. We returned to the ferry dock and talked with the pyrotechnicians, who had extinguished the excitement and issued stand down orders as we again returned to the fire hall.

7/8 Residential smoke alarm. La Pointe Fire toned out 1014 Stony Road. Chief responded to residence under construction to see the construction crews had been trying to get us information that it was indeed a false alarm. Chief issued stand down orders to the responders.

7/16 Smoke alarm at the Harmony Lane music camp. This alarm was triggered by students vaping in the common space area. They were questioned of the school's rules regarding this and promised not to have it happen again. They apologized for the midnight inconvenience to the fire department. As always, we happily respond to any call at any time and a false alarm is always better than an active fire.

7/19 I received a phone call from the Roads Foreman Pete Wiggins informing me that Steve and Deb Wakum spotted smoke coming from the town pit on School House Road. I went to investigate and found a fire had rekindled after laying dormant since February. This was determined by town employees who had covered the burn pile in question with plenty of snow and soil. I contacted Ashland County dispatch and had them alert the fire department. The roads foreman commandeered a front-end loader and met us at the scene. We dispatched our engine #2 and tanker #3. We hit the pile with 150 gallons of water before we dug into the mound hiding a very sneaky fire. Our hand-held thermal imaging devices showed the firefighters how far the fire had reached into the pile. After dissecting this fairly large pile and dousing it with 1800 more gallons of water, we deemed it finally safe and no longer an issue. With the lack of rain this year and the condition of the surrounding forest, this could have turned real bad real quick. Hats off to the Wakums, Peter Wiggins and the fire department on pulling the lit fuse out of this powder keg.

7/27 Fire department toned out for vehicle accident on Middle Road. Protocol on any car accident is that fire department will investigate any safety issues following an accident and assist emergency responders if requested. Car had been on its side and then righted by passengers. It was deemed safe, with no fuel leaks, so stand down orders were issued.

Big Water Apparatus has been going through our fleet of equipment per contract. As a today, August 6, all the apparatus is in good shape, with fairly minimal repairs. We were donated approximately 12 100-amp emergency radios to be installed in the new and replaced apparatus. It became VERY apparent after a few of the calls this year that we needed these radios installed immediately. The fire department put Steve Adamski on this task. We now have high-powered radios in every truck and also the UTV emergency rescue apparatus. The call on the north end town pit prompted this in a big way. August 4 we re-enacted the fire at the pit and focused a lot of effort on testing and training with the newly installed radio equipment, with excellent results. The only cost to the town and fire department for this communication necessity was installation.

Last month, we also did some serious water shuttle and portable pump training as we filled the community garden's irrigation pond.

Be safe,  
Chief Reichkitzer

RECEIVED

AUG 9 2021

Initial: df

(5)TB, Michael, Barb, Micaela,  
Rick, Public

## Fire Chief's Report August 2021

Well August came and went very quickly. It was an extremely busy month all around. I'll highlight our calls and important tasks and adventures the best I can.

8/2 Fire department toned out for swimmers in distress at Big Bay Town Park. We responded and as with a previous call this summer, we commandeered two canoes for the lagoon and Lake Superior side of park. We sent firefighters down the boardwalk as well as sending a truck to the state park side. We ran into communication issues once again, as a state park worker had information she could not provide over the parks radios. The information was the swimmers were safe and we could stand down. Our ICS (incident command system) on calls of this nature is lacking some luster. Multijurisdictional communication training with all agencies at the island level is needed to alevate some basic shortcomings in communication. This is no easy task or training. A call like this involves Madaline Island EMS, fire, the parks department, public works, law enforcement and goes up the ladder to Coast Guard if a situation gets more involved. We will be revisiting this communication situation and do what we can to tidy up the communication aspect of calls of this nature at these locations -- our busy parks!!

The very next day

8/3 Fire Department toned out at state park for person who slipped on the rocks he was navigating and hit his head, resulting in the 911 call. We responded immediately with Chiefs Truck 1 with the UTV trailered behind. Communication on this call seemed adequate as we located individuals involved in the accident in short order. Individual was transported to waiting ambulance via UTV.

8/13

Fire Department provided lifting assistance to the ambulance crew. We were toned out as 2 firefighters needed at this call. 4 responded and everyone lent helping hands. The fire department is always more than happy to help in these situations under the direction of our fellow ambulance personnel.

We have been exploring a search and rescue team that uses drones to assist in these calls. An islander with extensive training in this field has given our department two in-depth presentations of the effectiveness in using aerial drones to assist in search and rescue on land, lake, and ice. We are convinced that putting together this program will reduce risk to our searchers and provide a more timely result in search/rescue operations. This program is to receive a generous donation to get the program off the ground (pun intended); we will be having further discussions in the near future and get this into our toolbox so to speak. Drones could definitely have been a part of 4 calls this year alone. The individual who is offering his services is willing to also give the Town Board and TA a presentation of the advantages of this program. There will be a lot of work to do this right, but we feel it is 100% worth it.

We finally are happy and squared away with the procedures and operations at our dry hydrant located at Umbridge and Big Bay Road thanks to the diligence of Evan Erickson, with a little help from Joe Noha tidying up some issues.

The population growth on the island is on our minds as we roll along the road into our future of life/safety on our secluded island that receives little mutual aid.

Be safe  
Chief Reichkitzer

RECEIVED

SEP 9 2021

Initial. dg

(5)TB, Michael, Barb, Micaela,  
Fire, Public  
10-6-21

## Micaela Montagne

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**From:** Rick Reichkitzer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 6, 2021 7:31 AM  
**To:** Michael Kuchta; Micaela Montagne; Evan Erickson  
**Subject:** Fire chiefs report September 2021

Well Sept was gentle in the way of calls as we had none.

We have been diligently going through our budget process. This year we spent a bit of time and discussion on the items written up in our equipment and improvements.

Highest on our critical list for the very near future is getting around ten firefighters into compliant turnout gear. We have members still wearing hand me downs from generous donations from other departments after we lost our fire hall. We have been hoping and waiting on a grant Red wrote to get up to funding to achieve compliancy. This grant didn't pan out so we will be on our own. All turnout gear has a 10 year shelf life and after the fire we immediately replaced 10 sets with plans to replace 3 a year to alieveate one huge purchase \$\$\$ every ten years. Last year we received no funds in our turnout gear budget. We need to get on track to being able to purchase 3 per year again. We will look into using some funds from our 66.06 funds to get fighters into nfpa compliant turnout gear. This is an urgent issue and we are doing what we can to make it happen.

We are very close to submitting our choices of our #1 pumper replacement. One of the vendors is sticking out in the crowd by achieving the specs we need on an engine to effectively fight fires on madaline Island. We have a time-line that puts us ordering this replacement as soon as possible as each apparatus is 8 to 14 months to assemble. We have plenty of funds for this purchase remaining in the insurance apparatus replacement settlement and the hard part has been getting the blueprints and vendors lined up and functioning.....we have an apparatus committee that has been meeting 3 to 4 times a month to get this done. The time and energy put into replacing everything has been nothing short of amazing and I know I sound like a broken record but hats off to the men and women volunteers that are still diligently attending meeting after meeting to keep our service strong.

Assistant chief Alan Hardie has taken up the challenge of assisting Troy Lutz in getting the search/rescue drone program further off the ground (yup...punny) it will be a feather in madaline islands hat to introduce this type of search/RESCUE technology to northern Wisconsin and the Apostle Islands.

Big water apparatus has a few more small items to complete and the fleet is in a far better condition to perform thier duties effectively. The engine/pumper trucks passed thier annual pump testing.

As always.....be safe  
Chief Reichkitzer

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OCT 06 2021

Initial: ck

(5)TB, michael, Barb, Micaela,  
Fire, Public

11-4-21

## Fire Department Report

October 15. Alex Nelson (member of EMS) called in: A tree had fallen on powerlines just past the Big Bay Town Park on Big Bay Road. Tree was causing visible arcing and flames. Xcel Energy was contacted and La Pointe Fire responded to the scene. We blocked off part of one lane of the road and waited for the power company to release us. After all was safe, we were informed by the power company that the tree that enhanced our morning was weakened by beaver activity.

The town crew installed the storage container behind the ESB that was proposed quite recently. Very professional job indeed and the coincidence that the paint match happened to be perfect was amazing. We will personally thank those involved for a job well done as this is valuable space needed to keep the new hall as pristine as a new building should be. I cannot stress enough how impressed we are that this happened so quickly.

The department voted 100% to use funds from our 66.06 fund to the tune of \$16,000 for getting our drone aerial search-and-rescue program moving. \$5,000 was earmarked by a generous donation from Hugh Madson and we cannot thank his family enough. The FAA training for Alan Hardie has begun and, with the guidance of seasoned pilot Troy Lutz, we will be ahead of the curve in our area to offer this "safer" aspect to our search/rescue capabilities.

So now getting the whole department into compliance with turnout gear is our next priority. We will put our heads into this now, as we did not receive the grant we were hoping for to purchase the remaining gear we desperately need to fight fires safely.

The last training night, we shuttled water from the Paul Wilharm dry hydrant on Umbrage Road. We have now removed all the bugs from this water source and are very confident with how we use this valuable resource with any fire call towards that side of our island.

We will be leaning towards winter operations from here on out until spring.

Remember to check those batteries in your smoke detectors as we head into the heating-of-your-houses season. It's a fact: early detection will save lives.

Be safe,  
Chief Reichkitzer

RECEIVED

NOV 4 2021

Initial: dg

TBS Michael Barb,  
Micalh, public  
Fire

Fire Department  
November 2021

We are coming to the end of a very busy year with the fire department. The good news is we only needed to respond to 19 fire calls, and this was a needed statistic as we were in transition into a new hall and new equipment. Members were called upon instead to perform 21 special tasks, most of which involved moving into the new fire hall. We had 12 training meetings, 12 planning meetings and 14 apparatus committee meetings to carefully plan and spec out our #1 pumper replacement. We had the luxury of taking this time and extreme effort to plan our #1 engine/pumper due to the donation of a 1991 pumper from United Fire in Central Wisconsin. While this donation has passed its pumping test and has filled the gap left when we lost our 2014 Rossenbauer engine/pumper to fire, it is well past being compliant to the need of fighting fires on an island without mutual aid. Thanks to the insurance settlement to replace apparatus and our diligence in finding our #1 replacement with everything we need to effectively fight fire, we will be back to a "complete" department within the new year.

We have our brush fire truck getting closer to completion by swapping the tank and pumps with the bells and whistles from the replacement brush truck we received from Washburn fire department. We are doing our best to do most of this work "in house," fully knowing we need to protect the remaining apparatus insurance settlement monies to replace the #1 engine/pumper.

We wish everyone a safe Christmas and new year.  
Chief Reichkitzer

