

Planning & Zoning Administrator Town of La Pointe, Wisconsin February 2026 Report

February continued to be a busy month. Described in more detail below, but in short, I was able to accomplish the following:

- Continued an in-depth review of the Public Comments received on the Zoning Ordinance Re-Write. The DRAFT document was shared with TPC for review on December 30th and was discussed at three TPC meetings in January and two TPC meetings in February. On February 11th the TPC completed their review, and I incorporated all comments into a DRAFT Final document that was shared with the TPC Members on February 19th. Discussion on the next steps and timing will occur during the Monthly TPC Meeting on March 4th.
- Continued identification & preparation of grant applications for the Town of La Pointe to pursue. I worked with the Madeline Island Ferry Line and the Harbor Commission and submitted two BUILD Grant applications; one for repowering and super structure work (approximately \$1.9M) on the Island Queen and a second planning and design grant (\$700k) to map out the vessel future for MIFL as the fleet continues to age. Both applications were submitted on February 18th.
- Attended and participated in, along with representatives from MIFL, LLC, the Passenger Vessel Association MariTrends 2026 National Convention in Covington, Kentucky from February 20th to February 27th. This is an annual event that brings together over 400 leaders, key government officials and influencers in the passenger vessel industry. I participated in seminars, workshops and roundtables each day and met many key people in the industry. My attendance and participation have prepared me for future public funding opportunities to ensure we remain competitive.

Zoning Ordinance Re-Write

- During February, the Town Plan Commission Working Group continued an in-depth review of all the Public Comments received. The TPC met a total of 5 times in January and February and reviewed the draft document page by page. On February 11th, the TPC completed their review of the document. I took all their comments, edits and modifications and prepared an updated draft document for a final review. This was completed and distributed to the TPC on February 19th. The revised DRAFT Zoning Ordinance (with public comments addressed) is on the Agenda to be reviewed at the next TPC Meeting on March 4th. Also, during the March 4th TPC meeting, the Team will discuss the next steps including scheduling a Public Hearing and the notification requirements. Legal and Town Board review will also have to be scheduled.

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Passenger Vessel Association (PVA) – MariTrends National Convention (Covington, Kentucky)

- From February 20th to February 27th, I attended and participated in the PVA MariTrends Convention in Kentucky. Over the entire convention, I was able to attend approximately 30 different seminars, workshops and roundtables learning about the industry which will help the Town of La Pointe find and compete for different grant funding. I met owners and operators across the country who operate different types of ferry operations. There were over 440 registered attendees. While not a comprehensive list of seminars attended, the below represents some that directly relate to the type of operation that we have that currently serves the Island:
 - Public Ferry Operator’s Discussion – Included good discussions on various on-going activities in Washington DC and the recent release, by the White House, of the Maritime Action Plan.
 - PVA Vessel Decarbonization Forum Update – Discussed local utility grid challenges and how some communities are determining and working through high electricity demand for short periods of time.
 - How to Get the Most Participation for Your Shipbuilding Project – Three existing ship building companies gave an overview of what they do, the current state of the industry and how to navigate a complicated process.
 - Opening General Session – Congressperson Thomas Massie presented on the state of the industry and how he is committed to helping operators. He also gave an update of the US Coast Guard shutdown and how it is tied to other funding streams and how it is not a stand-alone issue.
 - Getting Your Boat Built: Key Lessons from Hybrid and Electric Ferry Projects – A discussion took place that focused on the premise that having a boat built will be more expensive than you think and will take longer than you think. Ship building costs are up three times since the 1990’s. Tariffs are on again and off again challenging the build costs and shipyards have capacity limits which also impact the build time.
 - NTSB Board Member Todd Inman – Mr. Inman presented on the NTSB’s roll and how to work with the NTSB in the event you every have to. Of their 436 employees, 33% are new within the last 3 years. They are raising the accident reporting threshold for Marine operations from \$500k to \$2M. Investing the time in meeting the investigator is key.

PVA is hosting a fly-in in April for ferry operators to meet with elected officials. I am strongly encouraging representatives from MIFL, LLC to attend and participate in this important event. This is an opportunity to continue to make elected officials aware of the unique type of operation we have which could result in additional funding at some point in the future.

February 2026 Permit Information/Status

DATE	SANITARY PERMIT #	COUNTY PERMIT #	LAND USE PERMIT #	NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER	FIRE #	STREET NAME	Parcel number	PROJECT TYPE
2/17/2026				Haecker/Cellon	893 & 895	Nebraska Rd.	00412-0400	CSM
2/19/2026				Philip Myers	3752	Big Bay Rd.	00020-0100	CSM

During the month of February, two certified survey map requests were submitted for review and approval in March:

- 1) 893 & 895 Nebraska Rd – Haecker/Cellon
- 2) 3752 Big Bay Road – Philip Myers/Wilderness Preserve

During the month, I worked with the surveyor preparing the materials for the upcoming TPC meeting on March 4th.

While January and February have been light in actual permit applications, I have been working with property owners regarding issues and upcoming permit applications. These include working with property owners at the following locations:

- 1) 351 Fort Road – Potential Sauna and modifications to the existing primary dwelling.
- 2) 2661 Big Bay Road – Reconfiguring two existing lots.
- 3) 442 Bojo Lane – Dwelling Addition
- 4) 2912 Big Bay Road – Primary Dwelling

Grant Opportunities

In February, I continued working with the Madeline Island Ferry Line and Harbor Commission on preparing and submitting two FY26 BUILD Grant applications. On February 18th, we submitted both a capital grant and planning grant request competing to receive funding to repower and perform super structure work on the Island Queen and undertake a planning study that evaluates and identifies the long-term plan for vessels for the ferry line.

These two grant applications were a heavy lift during the month. Each application included an SF-424 and SF-LLL form, along with key information questions, a project description, project location, project budget, funding commitment documentation, merit criteria, project readiness and letter of support. In addition, the capital grant application required us to complete a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) and a narrative of the BCA. We were able to complete a BCA that resulted in a 2.22 BCA ratio, and still well above 1.0 with a couple of sensitivity analyses. Overall, the applications were between 30 and 36 pages in total length. While I still believe that our chances are minimal that we are selected, we are starting to build a library of information that will make applying for future grants easier and less time intensive. US DOT will review and make selections in June 2026.

I also sat in on the Local Small Structures Improvement Grant Program (LSSIP) 2026-2027 webinar. Unfortunately, we have no projects in La Pointe that currently qualify.

Finally, I will continue to coordinate with the Department Heads and will continue coordinating with them regularly to identify all opportunities that exist and will apply to as many as makes sense.

Supporting the Short-Term Rental Administrator

The Short-Term Rental Administrator (STRA) and I continue to coordinate. During December, we mailed (certified return receipt on December 4th) a corrective action letter to the property owner regarding the written complaint that we received in August as well as additional new complaints, all regarding events occurring at the same property address. The property owner received the letter on December 11th and called the Zoning Administrator (ZA). The property owner requested copies of the 2024 and 2025 rental permits (which were provided via email on December 18th). We have a meeting scheduled with the property owner on March 10th. The Short-Term Rental Administrator, the Town Inspector and I will attend the meeting.

On February 17th, the Short-Term Administrator mailed renewal letters to all property owners that offer their properties as vacation rentals. This letter included the deadline to apply (June 14th), some important ordinance reminders, and information about 2023 Wisconsin Act 73 regarding alcohol/permits for guests to have alcohol.