

MEMO

To: Town Board
From: Michael Kuchta
Re: Town Administrator's Report
DATES COVERED IN REPORT: Jan. 7-19, 2023

1. Accomplished/Completed

- **Notice of Claim.** I delivered the notice to the Ashland County clerk on Jan. 11. I did interviews with the Ashland Daily Press for an article that ran Jan. 13, and with WDIO-TV for a story that aired on the 6 o'clock news on Jan. 13.

2. Coming Up

- **Wisconsin Towns Association Unit Meeting.** Quarterly meeting is Jan. 23 in Bayfield County.
- **County Board.** Supervisors plan to meet for the first time since November on Feb. 7 at 9 a.m.
- **Snow Snake Festival.** The annual inter-tribal competition is scheduled for Saturday Feb. 11.
- **Great Lakes Islands Association.** GLIA has scheduled a webinar on the value of community surveys on Monday Feb. 13 at noon Central.

3. Town Board Agenda – Information/Comments

- **State-Municipal Agreement for Hagen Road.** This agreement is for design work in 2023 and construction in 2024. We have \$50,000 budgeted for the Town's 20% share of design work. The agreement needs the Town Board to authorize a signature (from Town Chair, Town Administrator or Public Works Director). If approved, we will pursue the state-required Quality Based Selection of a design consultant.
- **Facilities Manager job description.** The only change of substance is adding the language highlighted on Page 1. This revision also cleans up other language.
- **Erickson Land Swap and Rezoning.** You tabled this resolution on Jan. 10. The title is revised so it is more accurate and transparent. The Town Plan Commission recommends rezoning the portion of Town property that is being traded from G-1 (government and institutional) to R-3 (multi-family residential), which is the same zoning as the adjacent land. If you approve the rezoning, the matter goes back to TPC, which will make a recommendation on the certified survey map that would finalize the land swap. *Note: If you did not attend the public hearing in person, you must watch the recording and sign an affidavit affirming that.*
- **Appointments to Zoning Board of Appeals.** The board has two vacancies (plus vacancies in the two alternate positions). Members are appointed to three-year terms; the next two appointments would end on June 30, 2025.
- **Energy Committee.** muGrid Analytics, which did the microgrid feasibility study, intends to apply to the US Department of Energy's Long-Duration Energy Storage Demonstration Initiative. muGrid would like to permission to list the Town as a potential host candidate for a flow battery installation (which is alternative technology to lithium-ion batteries for larger-scale uses).
- **Madeline Island Museum/Wisconsin Historical Society.** Representatives will join the meeting remotely; they will recap 2022 and preview projects for 2023.
- **Town Hall AV System.** We received quotes from six vendors for similar systems. Four vendors quoted installation as well as equipment. Bluum is the lowest quote. The Town would incur

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additional costs for software or a software license (approximately \$300) and work to install electrical and data outlets (cost undetermined). Bluum anticipates availability in 4-6 weeks. A purchase order will be available to sign at the meeting.

- **Legal Expense Fund.** If we do not use all the contributions we receive, we should have guidance in place to return unused funds – such as in proportion to the amounts donated and spent.
- **Police Department.** The sheriff planned to deliver a squad on Jan. 20; vehicle would be available for a deputy to use during wind sled season. The squad will be parked in the ESB; our officers will shuttle vehicles up and back in the bay, so the proper squad is first in line, depending on which department has primary enforcement responsibility on a given shift.
- **Legal issues.** You will have a final draft to review of our petition to the Department of Revenue.

4. Follow Up on Previous/Ongoing Projects

- **Cell tower.** AT&T is scheduled to go online by the end of January. In the meantime, we received an offer from a company working with Harmoni Towers to do a lease conversion – a lump sum payment in lieu of future rent. Terms are not nearly as lucrative as with the Verizon tower.
- **Fire numbers.** Look for a purchase order for Lange Enterprises to provide an initial review and recommendations on updating fire numbers. The review will ensure that numbers are in an acceptable sequence, are correctly numbered odd or even, and allow room for expansion.
- **Maxfield Research.** I worked with the consultant and housing committee representatives to set up a Survey Monkey tool.
- **Rental permit application.** I worked with Ed to revise the application for the 2023 mailing.

5. Grant Report

- **BBTP accessibility study.** Under our Wisconsin Coastal Management grant, Cooper Engineering delivered preliminary concepts for three options to replace the existing stairway and bridge. Ben, Ray and I have asked them to investigate further the least-intrusive proposal – an 8-foot-wide, elevated, sloped walkway leading to a prefabricated bridge. Estimated cost is \$2.5 million.
- **Comprehensive Plan.** I submitted final reports to the Apostle Islands Area Community Fund and the Michael Madeline Island Fund for the survey and public forum work their grants supported.
- **Microgrid.** I submitted the Energy Committee's application to the state's Energy Innovation Grant Program on Jan. 17.

6. Lawsuits/Legal Issues

- **Ashland County.** Glenn and I set up a regular meeting schedule with our attorneys to keep on top of workflow and timelines. Meanwhile, the County Board's Executive Committee voted to hire the Milwaukee firm of Attolles Law to defend them on our claim.

7. Other Information

- **Gazette subscriptions.** Glenn and I are setting up regular mailings of the Gazette to our elected US and state senators and representatives.
- **Harbor Commission.** In accordance with my employment agreement, Glenn gave me permission to work on a federal grant application for the commission on a freelance, consultant basis.