

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

December 23, 2014

The areas and initiatives on which we have worked, since the last Regular Town Board Meeting are as follows:

Rice Street Project Status: We had an exceptionally productive meeting with representatives of WisDot regarding the status and future of the Rice Street Project – with particular emphasis on the potential waiver of the \$ 95,000.00 engineering/design payment previously made to the Town (prior to the rescission of the project 'earmark). While several options were discussed, the Wis Dot representatives encouraged the Town to move forward with approval of WisDot producing a feasibility study of the Project – using their people and their resources – which would, it was felt, satisfy the federal government and provide the Town with foundation from which to proceed irrespective of what direction it ultimately chooses. We requested two (2) Board meetings at which to discuss and make a motion of its decision. If the Board decides that the feasibility study is an acceptable route to go, a motion – Resolution – would be prepared for consideration at the next RTBM. A memo and WisDot minutes of that meeting have been provided to the Board.

EMT Status: The Administrator met with the EMT Director to conclude discussions, research and recommendations as to the status of EMTs to ensure that issues related to employee vs volunteer were resolved. The EMT Director did a fine job of working with the City of Washburn (which had confronted the same issues) and reported that a change in compensation characterization would allow the volunteer status to be preserved based on WRS standards. The Administrator communicated with the Asst Administrator of Washburn to confirm and discuss the matter --- the marginal change in characterization of 'on-call' and 'response to calls' will allow the issue to be resolved. The Administrative Assistant has been kept apprised and will proceed accordingly. The Asst Administrator has made himself available to answer any subsequent questions as the change is implemented.

Alternate Insurance Review and Materials: Three insurance companies, in addition to the Horton Group, have been contacted regarding their interest in reviewing Town insurance coverage (due for renewal in June). At this point, one of those contacted has specifically expressed interest. The Administrator has assembled the documents essential to a review and made the necessary redactions. The timeframe for review will commence in February – according to the alternate insurance company communications. The Board will be kept apprised of additional companies that express interest in potentially offering a proposal.

Ashland County Budgets: The Administrator secured copies of the relevant department and line-item budgets that pertain to exemptible categories of the exemption legislation --- based on the meeting between the Board and the representatives of the County. Those budgets are being reviewed to determine the ‘value/services’ issues that the County Administrator discussed during the meeting. Copies of those budgets have been given to the Town Board and the relevant department heads.

Wage and/or Benefit Advance Policy and Document: Following consideration and approval of a Wage/Benefit Advance Policy by the Board, a preliminary document was prepared to be used immediately by interested employee(s) – initial review indicated the necessity of having a signed request/agreement prior to advancing either wages or benefits. In addition, the Personnel Policy working group has been apprised and provided documents and background information from which to formulate a policy, procedure and necessary documents for Board approval. A copy of the request/agreement has been provided to the Board.

Legislation – Hegwood Resolution: Soon to be Senator Bewley’s office submitted the Administrator’s draft legislation to the State Legislative Research Bureau for the formulation of precise legislative language to be introduced when the legislative session convenes in January. It turned out to be very concise and straight-forward. Senator Bewley’s office will be providing soon-to-be Representative Meyer’s office with copies of the legislation for introduction of a companion bill in the Assembly. Immediately upon assignment of the bill to committee, the Administrator will request a hearing, in both chambers, to allow testimony and advocacy of the bill. There is guarded optimism that this matter

may be able to be resolved in the upcoming session and not have to be carried over into the 2016 session. A copy of that document has been provided to the Board.

Park Operations: In order to provide the Board with options regarding the operation, revenues and expenditures related to Big Bay Town Park, a company in the business of park/campground operations was contacted to determine the level of interest and secure some information regarding how such an arrangement might be configured. A company by the name of Recreational Resource Management, which operates several public campgrounds in the area (one for the US Forest Service in Drummond, WI) responded with some interest. The Administrator communicated with the US Forest Service regarding RRM performance, rates, etc., and further researched the company and its activities to allow the Board as much information as possible – at this stage – as it considers the viability and desirability of such an initiative. A Memo and attachments have been provided to the Board.

Windsled Rehabilitation – Replacement: Lake Assault Boats (a subsidiary of Fraser Shipyards, Superior, WI) – a regional company that designs and manufactures windsleds was contacted, its facility toured to determined capacity – and a preliminary meeting was held to determine interest and timeframes. Representatives of the company came to the Island to examine and assess the hull on the Ice Angel with regard to potentially re-hulling that machine, as well as discuss the potential of collaboratively designing and fabricating a replacement windsled in the next couple of years. Grant possibilities will be researched and acted on based on costs and applicability.