

Town Administrator's Report

March 24, 2015

Among the areas and issues with which we have dealt, and are dealing, since the last Regular Town Board Meeting are as follows:

Employee Safety Training – we have undertaken a thoroughgoing examination and assessment of the Town's safety training and documentation to ensure that our employees are well-trained – including seasonal and part-time – and that all records are up-to-date. This puts the Town in full compliance with DILHR (Dept of Labor and Human Relations) and OSHA rules and regulations. All Department Heads, including the Library, Police and Fire, have been apprised of the critical importance of safety training – particularly Bloodborne Pathogen training which applies to virtually ALL employees – and the upcoming training session scheduled for May 5, 2015. In addition, we have communicated with Vince Matarresse – the safety training guru – who has done Town employee training and who will conduct the session on 5/5 – and asked that he bring along updated Employee Safety Handbooks, new-hire safety orientation binders (which contain acknowledgement of training releases), Hepatitis B vaccination applications and/or waivers, and any other current and necessary safety training documentation. The Police Department has a scheduling conflict, but we have worked with the Chief who has – or is – securing training DVDs, tests and certification documents which will be used for PD training and will allow integration and full compliance with the Town's training activities. This effort will ensure full compliance with all safety training requirements --- the training requires annual refreshers and documentation which will be entered into a training matrix which will show who has had what training and when it is time to schedule the annual refresher courses.

Truck Insurance Reimbursement – Pursuant to the Board's instruction, we worked closely with the Town Foreman and with Chris Chelius of Gladfelter to arrange and secure maximum reimbursement for the 2003 2-ton truck that was destroyed by fire. The Foreman indicated that he would like to retain the sand spreader which had previously included in the reimbursement and would have been lost to the Town, requiring replacement. Working from the idea and opinion of the Town Chair, we proposed a settlement by which we would retain the sand spreader but would deduct substantially from the reimbursable amount (this based on the accurate assessment that the resale value would be far less than the \$ 4200 to which the Town was being reimbursed). Gladfelter agreed that they would deduct \$ 3000. for the sand spreader and we would retain it – this means the Town saved \$ 1200 in the reimbursement transaction.

Impartial Hearing Officer – Recent events have compelled the Town to ensure that an Impartial Hearing Officer was in place and available to hear issues relating to employee grievance as stipulated in the Personnel Policy. Communication with the former, designated IHO revealed that that person, Bill Bussey, had retired and was no longer available to serve as the Town’s IHO. In the course of communicating with Mr. Bussey, the opportunity to speak with the attorney, Colleen Daly, who purchased Mr. Bussey’s practice, presented itself. Ms. Daly indicated that she would be amenable to stepping in and replacing Mr. Bussey as IHO should the Board decide that that is what it would like done. In the alternative, a survey of regional lawyers could be undertaken to determine levels of interest and compile a roster of potential officers from which the Board could make a replacement selection. The issue is on the Board agenda for 3/24 and, depending on its decision, the survey and roster compilation can/will be undertaken.

Resolutions – The Governor’s biennial budget and collateral proposals have given rise to two (2) issues that have generated substantial concern and consternation throughout the state – and here on the Island:

- 1) *County-wide Assessment*, and
- 2) *Cuts to the Harbor Assistance Program* (cuts that amount to some 91% of previously available funding)

The Wisconsin Towns Association and Wisconsin Commercial Harbor Association have taken the lead in trying to have those proposed changes and cuts eliminated from the legislative consideration and the biennial budget. The Town Board instructed that a draft Resolution be prepared for consideration at the meeting of 3/24 which has been accomplished and will be taken up at the meeting. In addition, a draft Resolution calling for the restoration of full-funding for the Harbor Assistance Program has been developed and submitted to the Board for review and comment. Should the Board decide it would like to submit the HAP Resolution, it will be finalized and ready for Board action at the next meeting.

Ice Rescue Support and Ice Road Maintenance Assistance – Previously, we have met with the Coast Guard, National Park Service and Ashland County regarding support for ice rescue services provided to the region by the Fire Dept Ice Rescue Team. A Memo had been submitted to the Board regarding the mosaic of mechanisms that can be brought to bear on the securing support – those mechanisms reflect the restrictions related to the individual organizations and entities with whom we had met to discuss the matter. On April 13, at 4:00pm, the opportunity to meet with the Sheriff’s Committee of the Bayfield County Board has been made available – it follows a preliminary meeting with the Sheriff and his

suggestion that an appropriation be sought from the County Board. The Sheriff's Committee would be step one of a two-step process by which the Town can advocate and secure that appropriation. The Board may want to consider who should represent the Town at that meeting and at the subsequent meeting before the full County Board.

Based on the significant increases in ice road traffic that have been prompted by events, festivals and the ice caves – all of which have been marketed by the Bayfield Chamber of Commerce and endorsed and supported by the Madeline Island Chamber – it has become apparent that Town is saddled with the burden of fully-funding the oversight and maintenance of the road which is increasingly used for commerce and commercial interests. This phenomenon has given rise to the thought that, perhaps, the City of Bayfield and/or the Bayfield Chamber might be approached for some assistance in underwriting the maintenance and upkeep of the road – or at least the Bayfield approach. In addition, the maintenance and upkeep may well be an issue that reasonably falls under the Room Tax and, at least, a portion may be able to be financed by the Room Tax revenues – it is an issue that the Board may wish to discuss and consider.