

# Town Administrator's Report

July 9, 2013

Some of the areas and issues in which we have been involved since the last Regular Town Board meeting are:

- Commencement of the Griggs Approach project
- Occupancy of the affordable housing unit
- Harbor Improvement Project
- White Construction – damage to sewer laterals from directional boring

**Griggs Approach:** The Griggs Approach project is now underway. We have reviewed and been apprised of the schedule and layout of the project by Nelson Construction. Communication with neighbors and, in one case, their attorney, have ensured that the project can proceed smoothly --- should the weather cooperate --- with anticipated completion early next week (7/15-19).

**Affordable Housing:** Issues, some contentious, regarding occupancy of the newest affordable housing unit on Voyager Lane raised their ugly head – specifically the lackadaisical attitude of Excel Energy in running in permanent electrical service. The lack of permanent service prevented Ashland County from assenting to occupancy which left a young Island family with no place to live --- even though they had a valid lease for the unit with occupancy scheduled for June 1. Working with Bldg Inspector, James Price and Ashland County Housing Authority, and with assistance of a local attorney, we were able to secure a temporary occupancy permit, agreement to occupancy from the County and scheduling from Excel for permanent power. At the end of the day, we were able to get the young family moved into the unit and the mechanisms in place to ensure permanent power, full occupancy approval and full cooperation of the Ashland County Housing Authority. The family now has a place to call home.

**Harbor Improvement Project:** Communication with Smith Group JJR indicates that substantial grant funding may be available through the Boating Infrastructure Program and the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program to undertake full design, detail and construction of the public pier portion of the anticipated Project. Discussions with Jason Stangland – in which his discussions with the grant authorities in both programs – reveal that the BIP is optimistic about the potential of a 75/25 grant for as much as \$500,000 to design, permit and construct the pier. The 25% (or \$ 125,000) which would be the Town share could be covered under a WCMP grant. Stangland is bringing the head of the BIP grant program to the Island (schedule and date to be determined) in the near future to more fully discuss details and timetables. The Harbor Committee will meet with the officials and report to the TB. Thus far none of the \$ 13,000.00

Harbor Committee remaining balance has been expended and is held in reserve pending further investigation and TB approval.

**White Construction:** Today, July 9, 2013, we were apprised that directional boring for the fiber optic cable installation, currently underway on the Island has resulted in, at least two (2) instances where sewer laterals were hit causing sewer back-ups to buildings and/or residences on Main Street. We have been in contact with White regarding this matter and they have repaired one and are scheduling the repair of the other.

The primary concern, at this point, is if and how many other laterals may have been damaged – damaged that may not reveal itself for months or, even, a year. How do we ensure that the Town and residents have recourse and are made whole should damage, and subsequent failure, occur after the company has concluded its work and left the Island.

We have been in contact with White and are scheduling a meeting to develop a process and procedure by which latent damage is assessed, validated and repaired at no cost to the Town and/or residents. The Administrator is developing several options to address this matter, including, but not limited to: 1) Performance bond requirement by White; 2) Impact fee which is deposited in a dedicated fund to finance repairs. We will be researching possible responses – which will be submitted to the Board - and meeting with White/Norvado in order to ensure the Island and its residents are made whole should problems arise subsequent to project completion.

**Outreach and Communication:** We have continued our program and process of outreach to the businesses and residents of the Island. The information, ideas and thoughts have been invaluable to continuing to respond to problems and seize opportunities by which to advance the interests of the Island.