



Meeting Minutes: Friends of Townsend Fire

Membership Meeting

Date: Saturday June 20, 2026, 9:30AM

Attendees:: John Zeller, Wanda Laste, Terri Heyrman, Anita Szyszkiewicz, Donna Fischer, Bruce VanOss, Linda Ziegler, Joe Heyrman, Andrea Morris, Bryan Arnold

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 AM by Chairperson Wanda Laste

2. Review and Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from May 16, 2026, Membership Meeting were reviewed.

Motion: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Terri seconded by Linda. The motion was approved.

3. Treasurer Report

- The budget report up to May31, 2026, was circulated. The current total does not yet reflect recent deposits from the 4th of July raffle, as budget balances are updated strictly at the end of each month. Membership was instructed to return the physical budget sheets before leaving, as the documents are for internal room use only.
- Funds Requests Action by Board:
 - No separate formal fund requests have been received from the fire department recently, though ongoing funds are actively being spent on upcoming 4th of July event and supplies.

4. Donations

- Miscellaneous donations continue to stream in through rounded-up raffle ticket payments (e.g., writing a \$50 check for a \$30 ticket order).

5. Grant Writing Committee Report:

- **State Farm Grant:** Gary submitted a request for \$5,700 on May 1st. Results are expected in August 2026.
- **Menards:** Gary mailed a physical letter request to a contact named Jasper H. The waiting period is underway.
- **Chief Dawn and Gary Meeting:** Gary and Chief Dawn are collaborating on alternative grant opportunities.

6. Public Relations Committee

- **Welcome:** The committee officially welcomed Andrea to the team.
- **Print Media:** The paid half-page ad is scheduled to run in the June edition of the *Nicollet Express* (hitting shelves around Monday, June 22nd). A smaller "thank you" ad is being planned for the August edition. The committee is also coordinating with the publication to run a free feature article on recent scholarship winners.
- **Digital Metrics:**
 - **Website (Managed by Anita):** Up 164 visitors last month, totaling 1,899 visitors over the past 12 months. March and July remain the highest traffic months.
 - **Facebook (Managed by Andrea):** Traffic is up 161% and followers have increased by 267% over the last 28 days.
- **Local Press Evaluation:** The board discussed the *Oconto County Times Herald* and the *Oconto County Reporter* as alternative outlets for community reach in the future month.
- **Plaque Project**
 - **Discussion:** Anita has been told the plaque will be completed Monday, June 22 and delivered.

7. Can Collection Report

- **Discussion:** A collection run was completed on Tuesday. Bins were mostly emptied, though the "Tipsy" bin remains partially full. Discussed using the 20-foot box truck (donated last year) versus a heavy-duty trailer. Bryan has volunteered the use of his trailer for runs requiring more space. A social media reminder will be posted to remind the public regarding our collection of aluminum cans.

8. Fire Department Report:

- **Call Volume:** 20 emergency page-outs/calls to date, including structure fires, alarm calls, motor vehicle accidents, and vehicle/brush fires.
- **Department Grants:** Chief Dawn is working on grants for RIT Packs, DNR fire shelters, and wildfire gear. This is separate from FoTF Grant Writing.
- **Safety Reminder:** Debris burning remains the number one cause of local wildfires; residents are reminded that burn permits are required.
- **Apparatus Maintenance:** Application of reflective striping on a department truck was paused due to material integrity concerns. The striping will be monitored to see how it holds up before finalizing the truck's rear end.
- **Storage Unit Reorganization:** Plans are underway to clean out and shelve the drive-through storage unit to improve access to items.

9. Scholarship Committee Report

- **Awards:** Two scholarships were successfully awarded Wabeno High School Seniors. **Destiny Judek** and **Autumn Morgan**, both of whom are entering nursing programs, were the first two FoTF Scholarship Recipients.
- **Media:** Photos of the recipients have been received and will be uploaded to the website and Facebook.

10 . Old Business:

• Board Vacancy SOP Amendment

- **Context:** Rather than changing the structural bylaws, the board decided it is more appropriate to define off-cycle election rules within the Election Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
- **Approved Text:** Under the "Off-Cycle Elections" section, the following language was added after "Vacancies will be filled by vote of the remaining directors by appointing someone."

"Current membership status will be a factor to consider, but this will not be a requirement."

- **Process:** It was noted that the process the board uses for filling off cycle vacancies includes, a notice distributed to membership following a resignation, establishing a 2-week application window for candidates to indicate their interest and provide written documentation of their intent and personal background. In a special

meeting the board reviews the backgrounds, host discussions, and executes a secret ballot vote to fill the vacancy.

- **Spring Cash Raffle:**

- **Final Profit:** The spring raffle brought in a total profit of **\$15,305** (excluding postage expenses, which are tracked on a separate budget line item).

- **4th Celebration Planning & Logistics**

- **Parking & Traffic (Town Meeting Update):** Absolutely no parking will be permitted on Highway 32. Signage will direct attendees to the designated northeast parking lot. The lots across from the hall are strictly reserved for vendors and workers.
- **Town Dump:** The town dump will be closed on Saturday; notices will emphasize that dumping garbage at the gate is prohibited.
- **Fireworks Donation:** FOTF approved a donation of \$525 toward the town fireworks display, ensuring FOTF branding on event banners.
- **Counterfeit Mitigation:** Due to local counterfeit activity, detector pens will be deployed. It is strongly recommended that all \$50 and \$100 bills be funneled to a single, designated cash table for verification, specifically at high-traffic areas like the meat raffle.
- **Parade & Volunteers:** Local band students will assist during the day in exchange for a donation toward their upcoming trip to Hawaii. "Sparky" will participate in the parade riding in a convertible.
- **Garbage Detail:** FOTF workers will assist in crossing the street to empty garbage containers. Chuck is leading the trash detail.

- **4th Celebration Production Timeline & Work Dates:**

- **June 28–29:** Deadline for all business donations to be turned in. Proper business names must be verified for thank-you signage and media spots.
- **June 29 (9:30 AM):** Donation drop-off; Dale to begin work preparing the grills.
- **Thursday, July 2 (6:00 PM):** Fleet truck washing and fire garage cleaning.
- **Friday, July 3 (1:00 PM):** Unload the storage unit, build the stage, and set up bars and tables.
- **Saturday, July 4 (7:00 AM):** Final morning event setup begins.
- **August 16, 2026:** Volunteer Luncheon, at Waubee Lodge

- **Round Up:** A reminder that the month of July will be FoTF round up month.
- **2027 Annual Meeting Date:** The annual membership meeting for 2027 has been scheduled for May 15, 2027, at the Town Hall.

11. New Business

- **Mission Scope Expansion: Fire Victim Assistance**
 - **Context:** FOTF was approached by a local organization asking if the group provides direct assistance to displaced fire victims (following a recent local house fire resulting in a 3-to-4-month displacement).
 - **Discussion:** The current bylaws state the primary purpose is supporting the fire department and the communities they serve (primarily through offsetting department budget costs to lower property taxes). Dedicated groups like the Northern Oconto County Coalition and the Red Cross typically manage victim relief. The board had length discussion regarding this topic, which included it is a worthy cause; it loosely ties to our mission; what protocols should be placed around the fund (only Townsend, business and/or resident; permanent home versus vacation home; committee creation; needing more input from membership before determining if this is warranted)
 - **Action Item:** Due to the importance of this topic no action was taken. The items will be included in email for to membership seeking further input and ideas and will be on the agenda for the next meeting to gather more membership input regarding boundaries, scope, and whether to create a dedicated relief subcommittee, etc.

12. Announcements:

- **FoTF Online Store:** Remember the FoTF Online Store is available on the FoTF website. Order gear, dish ware, hats, etc.

13. Adjournment:

Motion: A motion to adjourn was made by Linda, second by Anita. The motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 10:39 AM.