

**Town of Plover, Marathon County, Wisconsin
Regular Meeting of the Town Board
180771 County Road Z, Birnamwood, WI 54414**

Tuesday, February 15, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

1. Call to Order by Chairman, Tony Kautza

Kautza called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call – Town Supervisor, Pete Marien, and Town Supervisor, Scott McRae

Parker noted both Marien and McRae were present.

Also, in attendance: Clerk, Valerie Parker, Rick Larson, and Ian Pierce of Rural Mutual Insurance. Treasurer, Connie Sippl was excused.

Also present, to possibly speak under Public Comments, were:

Tim Micke, 236841 Eau Claire River Road

Chris Crawford, 234095 Clay Road

Matt Szews, 184001 Pine View Road

3. Public Comments/Concerns (Limit 5 Minutes Per Person)

Erick Jensen, 178808 Pine View Road, sent a text message to Parker with a comment to be read regarding his concerns about the Town purchasing any new equipment, that in his opinion would be wasteful spending, until other debt is settled. He also requested that the COVID Relief (ARPA) funds that the Town received should be directly used to offset the current increase in unbudgeted EMS services.

Crawford questioned if the Town were to purchase a new tractor if we have considered the year-round costs in gas, maintenance, etc., and questioned how much we would be looking at spending.

Kautza explained our current tractor is in rough shape and the boom on the other mower is in rough shape. Kautza explained how the current tractor is only two-wheeled drive, so it cannot be used during the winter months. That any new tractor we may purchase will be four-wheeled drive and can be used year-round to allow for Larson to continue brushing during the winter months. Kautza explained how there have been no decisions on a new tractor, that we are just in the beginning stages of discussions and planning for it. Kautza pointed out how our grader and plow truck will be paid off this year. Kautza stated that we are estimating the cost for a new tractor and boom system to be around \$180,000, and would trade the current one in for about \$30,000. He stated we most likely will not do anything until later this year.

Crawford brought up how the Town will be getting reassessed in a couple years and how people are going to be faced with sticker-shock. Kautza stated the assessed values are nothing that the Town can control.

4. Visitors

Representative from Rural Mutual Insurance, to Discuss Town Insurance Policy

Pierce introduced himself as the Town's new agent with Rural Mutual Insurance. He then gave a brief presentation of our current policy. Pierce stated that the Town will be seeing a 4% increase, which the Town will be noticed in May about this.

Kautza pointed out that the blanket coverage value for the buildings should be increased to about \$500,000 (in replacement value). Also, the value placed on the 2015 Ford F350 should be increased to somewhere at least around \$23,000 as used vehicles have a high value, plus ours has pretty low miles.

Pierce pointed out if the Town is ever served papers for liability litigation that the Town is covered and should first contact Rural Mutual Insurance who would assist the Town in getting proper counsel.

Pierce pointed out there is an open claim on a 2020 dog bite incident. Larson explained he was the one who got bit, but as far as he was concerned that was all taken care of. Larson stated he was told that the insurance would be going after the homeowner if they did not pay the hospital bill, and perhaps there is still something open yet on that case. Pierce stated he would look into that.

Pierce stated Derrick Larson was just now added as the Town's driver (even though Larson has been doing this for the past 17+ years). He also pointed out that Parker needs to share with Rural Mutual Insurance a copy of the annual report in May. He also pointed out Rural Mutual Insurance is offering 2% Dividends again that the Town should be receiving soon.

Parker brought up the billing from Rural Mutual Insurance. She has the annual premium payment ready to give to Pierce to take back (versus mailing). She pointed out that she received an invoice for the Workman's Comp policy, in the amount of \$201.00. Calculating what is on this summary document, it appears what the Town is paying today maybe more than what is owed. She stated she contacted the office a few weeks ago and talked to Donna, where Donna informed her this is what the Town owed. Parker asked Pierce to take this payment back with him, and that Rural Mutual can refund any overages we have paid.

5. Minutes from Previous Meeting

- **January 11, 2022 – 6:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting**

Motion by Marien, second by McRae, to approve the January 11, 2022, minutes.

6. Review and Signing of Monthly Expenditures

The Board went through the expenditures.

7. Review and Action on 2022 Monthly Budget

Motion by McRae, second by Marien, to approve the monthly budget.

8. Clerk's Report

Parker noted there will be a Spring Election on April 5th, and absentee ballots will be going out beginning in March. She stated she will be starting the annual Municipal CT Report, which is the report she received help with last year from Kerber Rose, but this year she should be able to handle on her own.

9. Road Report

Larson stated he picked up some more salt/sand from Langlade County, and when he was there, he was told that the County may be ending helping other townships with plowing, etc. He stated if this occurs, where we can't get salt/sand from them, we can always go to Marathon County. It was discussed that this may be a good time to purchase some extra blades from Langlade County.

Larson brought up that it has been noticed that someone is vandalizing our road signs by sticking Trump stickers onto our road signage. He gave an example of some are placed right in the center of Stop signs. He stated how he has tried to remove the stickers, but they are adhered pretty good. He may have to try to use gasoline or some other chemical to remove them. He was not sure if we need to alert the Sheriff's Department about this. Kautza stated that if the attempt to remove the stickers ends up damaging our signs then we will have to file a claim with Rural Mutual Insurance for replacement. If those who are doing this are caught, they will then be responsible for the replacement costs.

Larson brought up that on Pine View Road, across from Jensen's property, Wellhoefer's have strung an overhead wire across the roadway to electrify their cattle fence. He said that he nearly hit the wire with his truck. Kautza stated that he will contact Terry Wellhoefer to let him know he cannot have that there, that only the Town and public utilities can place overhead lines in the right-of-way.

Larson stated Doug Hitt is working on the ground roller parts. He also pointed out that the blacktop by the door on the north side of the hall has heaved up. We are hoping this settles back down. Larson is concerned about potential trip-hazard during election.

10. Old Business

- **Status of LRIP Program: Sportsman Road Project and Other Possible 2022 Projects**

Kautza is going to start working on this and will look for an engineer that we can work with, as the project has to be "engineered" to qualify for the grant.

- **Status of American Rescue Plan Act – Possible use of Funds**

Kautza stated we can go ahead and move this money into the General Fund, that it does not have to wait until April 1st. Parker noted April 1st was just the Town's deadline to submit the report.

- **Status on Comprehensive Plan Update**
Parker stated she made updates to this, but is figuring out how to handle the outdated maps, as there is no way she can do this on her own. She figured in this report, she would just refer the dated maps. Kautz stated no one is asking us about this, and it should not be an issue, since we are under County zoning.
- **Status on County Zoning Violation/Complaint & Shipping/Storage Container Code Revision Update**
McRae commented that it sounds like the County is not going to change the regulations on the storage containers, as most of the other municipalities want to leave those regulations in place. The public hearing is coming up.
- **Status of January 5, 2022, Provider Board for the Birnamwood Area Emergency Services Meeting, Regarding Planning the Funding Needs from Owning Members and Contracted Municipalities for Paying 2 On-Duty People to Staff the Ambulance 24/7.**
Marien stated the next meeting is going to be held on February 23rd, and they have a lot to figure out as far as costs, hours, etc. He said that Birnamwood did find someone who has indicated they are interested in taking on one of these roles. Kautza stated he will plan to attend this meeting.
- **Continued Discussion on Potential Tractor Purchase.**
Kautza stated nothing more will happen with this until later this year, but to keep on the agenda for continued discussion.

11. New Business

None.

12. Remarks from Board

McRae asked Parker to sign him up for the virtual Board of Review training that WTA is holding in March.

Marien stated that he looked back and it does not appear that we did any crack sealing since 2017. Marien suggested we start discussing getting bids at our next meeting. Kautza stated he has a list of roads from Larson that need work done. Parker stated she has a copy of that list, in case anyone else needs it.

Kautza stated that Art Hoppe, who is the retired street-employee from Easton, has indicated that he would be interested in serving as back-up for Larson if we need him. Kautza stated that he would be paid a rate of \$25.00.

13. Future Items

- **Regular Board Meeting – March 8, 2022, 6:00 p.m.**
- **Open Book – April 19, 2022, 3:00p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**
- **Regular Board Meeting – April 19, 2022, 6:00 p.m.**
- **Annual Meeting of the Electors – April 19, 2022, Immediately following the regular Board Meeting.**
- **Board of Review – May 2, 2022, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

14. Adjourn

Motion by McRae, second by Marien, to adjourn at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully,

Valerie Parker
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