

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

Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

1. Call to Order by Chairman, Tony Kautza

Kautza called the meeting to order at 6:03 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, and Treasurer, Connie Sippl, and Rick Larson.

Present to possibly speak under Public Comments were:

Tim Micke, 236841 Eau Claire River Road
Chris and Erin Crawford, 234095 Clay Road
Scott Fletcher, 178545 Pine View Road
Erick Jensen, 178808 Pine View Road
Matt Szews, 184001 Pine View Road
Ira Huber, 236486 Hatchery Road

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

Micke stated how he contacted Kautza and talked to him about the 37% budget increase, and how he does understand the reasoning and is in support; however, he asks that there be better communication to the taxpayers in advance of the tax bills going out. He suggested sending a newsletter or some kind of mailer giving people the heads up.

Crawford gave a statement, similar to Micke, about how there needs to be more communication. He pointed out when looking at the past meeting minutes, there was nothing in there that indicated this kind of a tax increase. He suggested that when the next budget and 2022 tax roll are being looked at that there be more engagement with the taxpayers.

Kautza explained how the costs of services have all gone up, and how this increase will help cover those costs so that we can continue to provide necessary services. He brought up the Town having to pay \$60,000 last year for their share of the new Birnamwood Fire Truck, how the Ambulance Service is now looking to leverage the owning member towns for additional funds to pay for 2 full-time EMS, and how garbage and recycling service costs have increased. He commented on how future road project costs are way up also (and the Town has a lot of roads that need maintenance).

Kautza stated how when you look at the tax bills and calculate the percent of where your taxes are going towards (County, NTC, School Districts), how we are still the lowest portion of the tax bill. Micke stated, those Plover taxpayers within the Antigo School District Area, are paying about 24% to the Town, the rest go to the other tax authorities.

Fletcher questioned the fire truck purchase and the Town's contract with Birnamwood Fire Department. He also commented on how our Town roads are not constructed right to be paved. He commented about the large farm equipment that uses the roads too. He mentioned how he has property in Norrie, and how the taxes are much less there, which he feels the taxpayer provided services are similar.

Marien explained how the costs for the fire truck was divided amongst the owning municipalities, and how the municipality charges were based on population. There was some discussion about the upcoming Provider Board Meeting, on January 26th, where they will be talking more about the EMS.

Jensen stated how communication is key, and how the Town should communicate the budget process more. He questioned the ARPA funds and if any of those can be used for general services. He also mentioned, as far as future equipment goes (such as discussions of a new tractor), that unless we absolutely need it, we should not take on any more debt until some of our other debt is paid off.

Kautza explained where we are at with our debt and where we will be at in 2023, which we will have both the Freightliner and Grader paid off this year, leaving just the Hall loan. He explained we need to keep a certain amount of debt to allow us to pay for services. Parker explained that next fall when completing the Tax Levy Worksheet, how the amount of the increase will actually be credited, reducing the levy, but then the Town can add debt payment for 2023 to bring it back up.

4. Visitors

None.

5. Minutes from Previous Meeting

- **December 7, 2021 – 6:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting**

Motion by McRae, second by Marien, to approve the December 7, 2021 minutes.

6. Review and Signing of Monthly Expenditures

The Board went through the expenditures.

7. Review and Action on 2022 Monthly Budget

Kautza brought up our looking to switch the checking from Banner Banks to CoVantage. The Board agreed the Town would probably get a better dividend by switching. It was suggested to hold off until after the tax collection season is done and until we have used up more of the newly printed checks

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

8. Clerk's Report

Parker explained that she completed filing all the end of year reports and tax payments. She stated she is holding election training/refresher for the election inspectors, which will be this Friday. She stated she is finding a little more time, in the evenings after her regular job, to spend working at the hall, and continues to have a goal of cleaning out/organizing that office.

Parker brought up about the guy plowing across Eau Claire River Road. Kautza asked her to send him a letter.

Parker mentioned Sippl is looking to get new rugs for the hall, as the current ones keep curling at the edges. She would like to get some that have the rubber ends to keep it flat, and for ones that do not have the grooves in them, as the grooves make it harder to clean. Jensen stated that he might be able to get the Town some rugs from Aspirus, who gets them on rolls. He will check and let the Town know.

Parker brought up about propane. Kautza asked her to check prices and get the tank filled.

9. Road Report

Larson stated people do seem to be better about not plowing across the road. He stated normally, he would just give the owner a verbal warning followed by calling the Sheriff's Dept.

Larson brought up about the address signs that get dropped off at the Town Hall for him to install. He says there is never any direction from the County as to where they are to be placed, or why they are being delivered. He commented how he received a couple of duplicate signs for ___ and D.

Larson stated he has been out sanding/salting roads as needed and has been changing out blades as needed. He stated we are pretty good on our salt/sand storage, however, will probably pick up 3 or 4 loads over the winter season to keep our account open with Langlade Highway.

He disused the tree on Village Road that will need to come down. Kautza pointed out a tree on Pine View.

10. Old Business

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

No new update for this.

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

It was stated that it appears the Town may be able to use these funds for general purposes. We will know by April 1st.

- **Status on Comprehensive Plan Update**

No new update for this.

- **Status on County Zoning Violation/Complaint & Shipping/Storage Container Code Revision Update**

It was stated the public hearing is in February. Kautza asked McRae if he has heard anything from the county on the Weden property. He stated with the shed he may want to see if Mike Block would get involved to be sure they are not building a residence.

- **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 this meeting is actually being held on January 26th, and they should have a closer idea of what the costs will be then.

11. New Business

- **Continued Discussion on Potential Tractor Purchase**

No new update for this.

- **Proposed Open Book and Board of Review Dates:**

- Open Book on Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Board of Review on Monday, May 2, 2022, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Marien asked Parker to sign him up for the February 12th training that will be held in Stevens Point. He stated how we only need one member from the Board to be certified and the State requires annual certifications now.

There was discussion that the Town will be under a revaluation starting in 2024.

12. Remarks from Board

None.

13. Future Items

- **Regular Board Meeting – February 8, 2022, 6:00 p.m.**

Due to scheduling conflicts, the Board requested to move the February 8th meeting out to February 15th.

- **Regular Board Meeting – March 8, 2022, 6:00 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.**

14. Adjourn

Motion by McRae, second by Marien, to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully,

Valerie Parker
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