

**Town of Plover, Marathon County, Wisconsin
Special Budget Hearing Meeting by the Town Board
180771 County Road Z, Birnamwood, WI 54414**

Tuesday, November 10, 2020, at 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:

Valerie Parker
Connie Sippl
Rick Larson
Roy Kuschel
Doreen Erbrecht
Carlton Boettcher
Patsy Boettcher
Diane Doolittle

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

Erbrecht questioned what the Board has decided on the Clerk's position, as far as who they are going to hire now that it is an appointed position. Kautza stated the Board has not decided yet if this position will remain an elected position or an appointed position. The referendum gave the Board the ability to decide that, and that the Board is not obligated to make that change. **[Clerk's Note – was recently clarified by WTA that the appointment is official through the referendum, we can revert back to elected after 3 years]**

Kuschel commented if this position becomes an appointed position, then the Town would need to provide benefits, like health insurance for this person. He stated with an elected position, if the Town is not happy with that person, the Town then votes that person out.

It was explained how the duties of the Clerk are becoming more difficult, and the amount of training that is needed to perform those duties. Kuschel commented on how the clerk has access to training from the County and other local resources.

Kautza stated with an appointed position, we are not obligated to hire someone from within the Town, we can advertise it outside our area.

Erbrecht questioned the audit. She stated how it was listed on past agendas, but not anymore. Kautza stated we are still discussing having an audit, and he is working with Parker to arrange this.

Erbrecht questioned when the Town Hall would be paid off. She stated that when Dale Seymour was Chairman, the Town voted to pay off the hall in 3 years. Kautza stated he was not involved in those discussions. Kautza stated paying off the hall affects the levy limit. He stated there were other priorities that were needed, and the loan for the hall is at a very low interest rate. He believes we only have one more year to make payments.

[Clerk's note: The Town Hall is actually scheduled to be paid off in about 3 years]

Parker stated the construction of the hall was not done through referendum, so the Board is not obligated to pay off based on Seymour's plan.

4. Public Hearing – Proposed 2021 Town of Plover Budget

• **Open Public Hearing**

Kautza opened the public hearing at 6:13 p.m.

- **Presentation by Board**

Kautza went through the proposed budget. He pointed out the primary reason that we went over on the 2020 budget was that we had to unexpectedly pay our portion on a new fire truck for the Birnamwood Fire Department which was \$56,000 - \$60,000.

He went over some of the projects that were done in 2020, such as Red Granite Road. He stated there is one more payment on the Town Hall. He explained where we are at with the construction of the salt/sand shed. We are hoping to complete that this year so that we can get it filled and used this winter. He explained how by having our own supply of salt/sand, it reduces the amount of miles and excess of salt build-up on our truck by having to travel into town to get loaded. Larson stated he will be able to cover all the Town roads more quickly, as he won't have to go as far to reload the truck. It was explained how in the past we have gotten loads of salt/sand from Fraaza's and from Langlade County.

Kuschel questioned why we don't get salt/sand from Marathon County. Larson stated you have to order and pay for the year's worth of salt/sand ahead of time, and you don't get reimbursed for what you don't take, and it is more expensive. He stated that Langlade County will let you pay by the load.

Kuschel questioned if the Town is looking to spray any of that liquid stuff. Larson stated the Town is not doing this. He then explained what all is involved to use this application.

Kautza stated right now we are waiting to get someone to put the roof on this building. Kuschel questioned if the costs for the lumber is impacting this project. Kautza stated dimensional lumber is not that bad. Just a matter of finding someone available to do the work.

Kautza stated our equipment is in good shape, so we should not have too many expenses there.

Kuschel asked if the Town is planning any blacktopping this year? Kautza stated not at this time. There was some discussion on the blacktopping that occurred the last year Dale Seymour was the Chairman. A lot of those projects were done with only 1/2" thick blacktop and how we are having a lot of issues with those roads. He stated how Larson has to be very careful plowing those roads, as the blacktop will peel up. When it peels up, it is very difficult to patch over that.

Boettcher questioned the work on Eau Claire River Road. Kautza explained that that road took to the chip seal very well. He thinks it is because that project was done right away in the spring, and had the entire summer to harden up, where the other roads were done later, and did not hold up as well.

Kautza stated we may look at some blacktopping in the future. Currently, it is estimated at about \$70,000 per mile for 2".

Kuschel asked how many miles of gravel roads do we have. It was stated we have about 15 miles of blacktop, and there are a total of 33 miles of road in the Town.

Kautza stated on Red Granite road, we dug out 30" of gravel. On Sportsman Road, there are spots of courduroy by the Plover River. We have to find out how deep we need to dig to get under that. He stated the Town purchased a backhoe this year, which has allowed us to replace several culverts.

Kautza explained the \$27,888 LRIP grant that the Town will be requesting reimbursement for. He explained originally this grant was meant for Eau Claire River & Village Road projects, which ended up being \$120,000. He stated the issue is that any projects, receiving grant funds, costing over \$60,000 are required to be engineered. This project was not engineered, and Farhner Asphalt will not stand behind the work. So now we are using the Red Granite Road project for these funds.

Erbrecht questioned the Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District Referendum Levy. Parker explained in 2018 there must have been a school referendum on the ballot that passed. This dollar amount is separate from the regular school levy. Kautza commented how this amount will finally be showing up on the tax bills. He explained this is basically a pass-through tax that the Town has no control over. Parker stated this topic is later on this agenda.

Kuschel asked if the Town has received any of the grants that have been out there from the Federal and State governments. Kautza stated the Town will be receiving grants. He asked about internet options in the area. Kautza stated we are looking into that. He stated for the hall, we may have to look at satellite.

- **Close Public Hearing**

Kautza closed the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

- **Review and Discussion of Proposed Budget**

No further discussion.

- **Action by Town Board**

Motion by McRae, second by Marien to approve the proposed 2021 Town Budget and send to Electors for approval.

5. Acknowledgement of Tax Levy Certifications

- **Northcentral Technical College \$66,460.23**
- **Antigo School District \$179,523.85**
- **Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District \$251,608.00**
- **Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District (due to 2018 Referendum) \$38,714.00**

No further discussion was taken on this.

6. Remarks from Board

No comments were made.

7. Future Items

- **Next Meeting Date:**

- **November 10, 2020 – Meeting of the Electors immediately after Budget Hearing Mtg**
- **November 10, 2020 – 7:00 p.m., Regular Town Board Meeting**
- **December 8, 2020 – Regular Town Board Meeting**

8. Adjourn

Motion by Marien, second by McRae to adjourn at 6:41 p.m.

Respectfully,

Valerie Parker
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