

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

**Tuesday,
September 14, 2021, 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, Treasurer, Connie Sippl, Rick Larson, Charlie Geimer, Don & Darlene Matsche, Dominique Swangstu, and Laurie Miskimins.

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

Geimer stated he was present to hear any discussion on internet access for the Town, listed later on the agenda.

4. Visitors

• Dominique Swangstu – Zoning Violation/Complaint & Shipping/Storage Container Code Revision Update

Dominique Swangstu, Marathon County Zoning Administrator, and Laurie Miskimins, Marathon County Conservation, Planning, & Zoning (CPZ) Department Director, were present.

Swangstu explained how they received and reviewed the Town's recently submitted petition for amendment to the text of the Marathon County Code of Ordinance – Chapter 17 (Zoning Code), relating to request for changes to allow storage and shipping containers in all the zoning districts within the Town of Plover. He explained how they can't really just make a change in the Zoning Code for specifically the Town, that any changes in the Zoning Code would apply to all the Towns under County Zoning. He went through some background of how the storage/shipping container regulations came about. He stated that the County is still in the process of meeting with other towns to discuss these regulations, and how once CPZ receives input from the other towns they will then forward a recommendation to ERC (Marathon County Environmental Resources Committee) for official modifications to Chapter 17. He suggested if the shipping/storage containers become allowed in all districts they may place a requirement for privacy screening from roadways. He commented that a suggestion that may come out is to make the shipping/storage containers a permitted use for all large lots (5 acres or more), and then require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for smaller lots to apply for to be allowed to have shipping/storage containers on their properties.

The Town Board acknowledged that they would be in support of the CUP requirement for small lots. Swangstu stated he will follow-up with the Board after this meeting with a recommendation.

Swangstu then brought up the status of where CPZ is at with Town of Plover complaints and violations. He handed out a sheet that gave a list of the complaints and violations received and the status on compliance. He explained how their primary focus has been on unlicensed/inoperable vehicles. He stated how this winter, their department will be working on revising and strengthening their ordinance on definition of a Junk Yard and the violations typically associated with the use, to allow them more authority on clean-up enforcement on properties with visible junk piles (such as piled up mattresses, garbage, etc.).

Kautza stated the Village Road property listed on this sheet is still in violation. He also mentioned the Hatchery Road property may not be an issue anymore, as he believes the owner there may be going out of business and moving out of state. Parker pointed out the State Highway 52 property. Swangstu stated that currently, unless the piled-up junk material is in the right-of-way (posing a hazard), until they beef up their zoning code, they are just concentrating on junk vehicles.

Swangstu stated they will keep the Board updated on the progress, and if the Board has any questions to reach out.

5. Minutes from Previous Meeting

• August 10, 2021 – Regular Meeting

The Board acknowledged previously reviewing the minutes shared with them in August.

Motion by McRae, second by Marien, to approve the August 10, 2021, Regular Meeting minutes.

6. Review and Signing of Monthly Expenditures

The Board went through the expenditures.

7. 2021 Budget Review and Update

Parker stated that we will be receiving another payment from the State for Shared Revenue (\$26,243.00) and Transportation Aid (\$21,339.00).

She stated at the next meeting, we will need to start discussing the budget for next year, and she will bring a working budget document for the Board to start filling in, as our annual budget hearing will occur in November.

Motion by McRae, second by Marien, to approve the expenditures.

8. Clerk's Report

Parker explained that she and Marien attended the August 17th, public hearing held put on by Marathon County Human Resources, Finance, & Property Committee, where they were discussing the use of ARPA funds. She stated how this meeting ended up primarily being on the allowable use of ARPA funds for the County. Marien pointed out how they were focusing on using it for broadband, sewer, and water. Both Parker and Marien figured it still would not hurt to attend to see if there was any information the Town could obtain in Town usage of funds; however, there was really no new information on that. Parker stated how it was brought up that the Towns Association has a 4% revenue loss calculator on their website that can be used to help calculate out the 4% revenue loss that municipalities can add to their next budget.

Parker stated she signed herself and Marien to attend the upcoming 2021 Fall Town & Village Workshops being held by the WI Towns Association. Marien is attending the in-person session held in Stevens Point on September 16th, and Parker is attending the virtual sessions later this month.

Parker stated she submitted the annual Recycling grant to the State, and will not find out for a few months what amount the Town will be granted.

Parker mentioned that during that August 17th public hearing, she met the County Administrator, Lance Leonhard, and asked the Board if they would have issues with her sending an e-mail to the Leonhard regarding discussing with the County Finance some kind of agreement for shared financial assistance for when the Fire Department has to respond to emergencies at the Dells park. Marien stated during that hearing, he talked to a Supervisor for the Marathon County Big Eau Pleine Park area, and how one of the fire departments that responds to calls at that park invoices that town for calls, and how that town ends up paying those fees.

Parker stated she will be taking in our election ballot equipment to the County on the 21st for annual servicing, and then how on the 30th, she is picking up the Town's new Express Vote machine and receiving the required training on that. She mentioned about how she needs to find one of our poll workers (election inspectors) who will be able to attend this training with her, but so far none of the poll workers have responded that they can attend. She mentioned how later in the agenda she will be proposing a raise to the election inspectors.

Parker stated how Marien was asking her prior to the meeting if she has a copy of the bid ad that was advertised last summer for the Red Granite Road project, and if compaction was described at all. Parker stated she was able to locate that, and how it does not specifically state compaction of work, it does state "...6 inches of compacted screened red granite." Kautza stated the issue that came up is that Jack Kautza is now claiming that he will need to submit a separate invoice to the Town for compaction of the new granite placed down on Red Granite Road, as he is claiming that was not part of his bid, or that it was not specifically called out in the bid. Parker stated she specifically remembers at the July 13, 2021, Bid Opening, where a question came up in that meeting to Jack Kautza as to whether his bid included compaction, and how Jack Kautza stated it did. Parker then pulled up the July 13, 2021, minutes and read the statement that was made: *"Tony Kautza confirmed with Jack Kautza that his bid included compaction, which Jack Kautza answered yes."*

Kautza stated in his discussions with Jack Kautza, how he told Jack Kautza that if he is not going to include compaction, that we may just re-bid the project. Larson stated since we have proof of Jack Kautza confirming his

bid included compaction that we should hold Jack Kautza to it. Larson stated as now, if this gets rebid, Jack Kautza's bid will most likely be quite a bit more.

Kautza asked Parker to print off a copy of the minutes so that he can deliver that to Jack Kautza. Parker stated if needed, she could supply the meeting recording where this was specifically stated.

It was stated how Jack Kautza's bid was significantly less than the others (Thomas, K&D, and Meverden).

Kautza stated the issue that is also occurring now is that Jack Kautza has not started the project, and most likely will not get it done by the October 1st deadline. He said if necessary, for the time being, Larson can put some extra granite down, and next year it can just be removed when the project occurs.

9. Road Report

Larson pointed out the new address sign that was dropped off for him to install at the Gary Thomas Reclamation pit, and how the County wants these sites to have address signs. He questioned why the County does not have an address sign for a property on Eau Claire River Road, which contains two storage sheds and a camper/tent, but yet is requiring signs for these pit sites.

Larson stated that he completed more ditching, seeding, and added granite on Sportsman Road. He commented on how he is trying to balance out the two sides of the road, as one side is lower than the other. He commented on how Leo Meverden is not keeping up on screening, so he is concerned about there being enough material to pick up from them. He mentioned how Meverden has been allowing him to load the material in his truck himself, versus a Meverden employee.

Larson pointed out that he gave a list to Kautza on the roads that need crack sealing, and ratings for which are the worst.

Kautza brought up that he and Larson dug some test holes on Sportsman Road where the courdoroy area is. He stated they dug down 6 feet, where the courdoroy is gone, but the area is holding water due to the high water table, which is allowing water freezing under the roadway. He stated this will need to be dug out about 4 feet with new material put in.

Larson stated Kautza will need to talk with Jim Griesbach about the use of our LRIP grant for this project, and if this needs to be engineered. Kautza stated we may need to have someone engineer this, and how this is something we will be looking at as a project for next year.

Kautza pointed out there are a lot of dead trees along Sportsman Road, due to the high standing water, and before they become a problem for the Town, he will probably contact Don Dahms to come out and cut the trees down, where Dahms could even leave the trees laying there, as they are pretty rotted out.

10. Old Business

• LRIP Program Updates – Sportsman Road Project

Kautza stated how we are now researching the road to find out what needs to be done.

• Discussion of American Rescue Plan Act – Possible use of Funds

Parker stated there is no new information at this point, and that we can just let this ride for the time being.

• Status of Red Granite Road Work

Discussed in the Road Report.

• Status on Comprehensive Plan Update

Parker stated she is just picking away at updating this.

• Status of Potential Internet Access for Town

Parker explained her recent phone discussions with Mark Dodge, of Bertram Communications, and how he will be attending the October meeting to give a presentation on options for the Town. She mentioned how Bertram's preference is to find a location to install their own tower, which they would purchase a permanent easement for that location. The property owner receives about \$200 value in monthly service for life, and how Dodge feels a tower in our area would be able to serve the full community. The Board feels there would still be issues with the lower areas of our town, but we'll see what Dodge has to say.

11. New Business

- **Discussion on Possibly Requesting Bids for Crack Sealing on Town Roads**

Discussed in the Road Report. This will be a project for next year.

- **Acknowledge 2021 Equalized Value from WI Department of Revenue \$55,686,700.00**
- **Acknowledge 2021 Personal Property Aid \$255.52**

Parker explained these are just being shared for their information.

- **Acknowledge Recycling Grant & Bonus Monies Report**

Parker stated she submitted this annual grant report.

- **Discussion and Possible Action on Increase in Chief Election Inspector and General Election Inspectors Pay**

Parker explained how Diann Vlietstra recently informed her that she is stepping down from the Chief Election Inspector position, but still wants to be a general election inspector, and how none of the other current election inspectors want to take on that position. She mentioned how the Chief Election Inspector and general election inspectors all get paid \$9.00 per hour, which from what she has seen is pretty low. Kautza stated how he does not see why anyone would want to take on the extra responsibility for the same pay. Parker stated there is a lot more training and time needed these days on elections.

She suggested the Town raise their pay to: Chief Election Inspector \$15.00 per hour; (general) Election Inspectors \$12.00 per hour.

Motion by McRae, second by Marien to increase the pay for Chief Election Inspector to \$15.00 per hour and the general Election Inspectors' pay to \$12.00 per hour.

Parker commented that while there are no more elections this year, there is that training on September 30th, and whoever goes with her will get paid at the \$12.00 per hour rate.

12. Remarks from Board

Kautza stated how he and Larson have had discussions about the mowing tractor, and how we need to look at replacing that. He stated the current tractor still has some value to it (with about 2,500 hours), but the issue is that it is only 2-wheel drive, and 100 horse.

Kautza stated we need something with 4-wheel drive, heavier, and more horsepower. Larson stated how with the current tractor, you can't really use it in the winter, as you can't get chains on those wheels.

Marien pointed out how next year the grader will be paid off.

Larson stated that soon we will need to stick money into the two ground rollers or replacing the bearings. He said that he feels he could get one more year out of that.

Kautza suggested Larson contact Jim Schairer to see if he would have an interest in buying our tractor out right, since we would have a hard time getting money for our old tractor at a dealer for trade, with it being 2-wheel drive.

Larson commented on how the 4-wheel drive tractors have different tires and rims that you can put chains on, so that you can use it in the winter months.

There was some discussion on the age and condition of the Berti mower and chipper. There was some discussion on how Case tractors seem to be typical in a lot of municipalities/counties. Larson stated that Marathon County has a good purchasing agent who will share the specs of the equipment they have.

It was requested of Larson to start getting preliminary cost numbers for a new tractor that we can add to next years budget. How we just need to get a ballpark figure to start with.

13. Future Items

- **Regular Board Meeting – October 12, 2021, 6:00 p.m.**
- **Regular Board Meeting & Annual Town Budget Meeting – November 9, 2021, 6:00 p.m.**
- **Annual Meeting of Electors – November 9, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**
- **Regular Board Meeting – December 14, 2021, 6:00 p.m.**

14. Adjourn

Motion by Marien, second by McRae, to adjourn at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully,

Valerie Parker
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