

## Town of Otter Creek - Regular Town Board Meeting – February 11, 2020

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Warner at 7:01 pm. In attendance were:

Chairman Mark Warner

Supervisor 1 Cecil Hayes

Supervisor 2 LeAnn Ralph

Clerk/Treasurer Bev Bernier

Patrolman Gary Anderson

Guests: Bob Bernier, Randy Simpson, Chuck Boyer, Katy Smith (DATCP), Wednesday Jordan (DATCP), Heather Kirchner (Dunn County ATV Assoc), Lucas Brackin (Dunn County ATV Assoc), Travis Drier (Dunn Co LWCD)

**Meeting minutes** were not read by the Clerk as the board had reviewed the minutes prior to tonight's meeting. It was agreed that the minutes did not need to be read. Ralph motioned to approve the 1/14/2020 minutes as presented. Hayes seconded; motion carried to approve minutes.

- **AEA** - Wednesday Jordan and Katy Smith along with Travis Drier, discuss the 2020 Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) Petition Cycle and Farmland Preservation Program. Travis works with Farmland Preservation and is the main point of contact if we are interested in AEA which provides farmers the ability to preserve farmland and long-term land use planning. Four main sections – 1 - Certified County Farmland Preservation Plan. 2 – Farmland Preservation Zoning. 3 – Agricultural Enterprise Area (Grant Township is in this). 4 – Farmland Preservation Agreement – 15 years that farmer keeps the land in the program and receives tax credit. County plan certified in 2016, expires in 2026. Includes - class 1 through 4 soils – prime ag soils, woodland, drained wetlands. Start with a petition sent to DTCAP. AEA is a large section of land, not isolated pieces and includes crops, livestock, MFL, nursery. AEA is not a land use control, this is a farmland preservation agreement. AEA – claim tax credit and farmer does the best to preserve farm and land. The tax credit money goes to tax burden, if the tax credit is more than tax burden, the landowner receives a check. Town of Grant AEA was designated in 2014. We can petition to modify this AEA for Otter Creek or start a new one. All proposed parcels need to be in the Farmland Preservation Plan. All petitions require: parcels must be in Farmland Preservation Planning area; have to be contiguous; AEA is primarily ag use; minimum of 5 landowners.
  - Join Town of Grant AEA
  - Requires AEA Modification Petition
  - Petitions can include those already in the AEA
  - Consistent with original goals and plans

- Requires a signature page from each political subdivision, Town of Grant and Town of Wilson, and this shows that Town Chair and/or Board supports this.
- Because an area is in an AEA, you don't need to sign up, people have options for the 15 year agreement.
- AEA's can be modified more than once, one AEA was modified four times.
- Webinar mid to late February on AEA.
- Timeline – we had the workshop today, have contacted landowners, **now need to complete the petition.**
- Tax credits - \$5/acre in AEA w/Farmland Preservation Agreement.
- Average claim in Dunn County for 2018 was \$2111.29, with 179 claims from Dunn County.
- Next step for the board – political subdivision signature page. **Towns need to sign page they support the modification.**
- Chariman Warner delegated Bob Bernier as the liason for the project.
- **Dunn County ATV Association** - Lucas Brackin (assistant trail coordinator) and Heather Kirchner (Secretary) of the Dunn County ATV Assoc. discuss proposed county-wide ATV Ordinance. Next meeting is Tuesday, 3/3/2020, Room 054 (lower level) at the Community Services Building at 7:00 p.m. County proposing a new ordinance. If you ride through counties now, the ordinances may change from county to county. Law enforcement can more easily enforce rules with one ordinance. Hours of operation, the group would like 24/7 hours. They want one representative from each Municipality to attend the March 3 meeting to hear opinions. They can go to the County up to 3 times per year for modifications to the approved County roads. LeAnn is going to the March 3 meeting to cover for the newspaper. Eric Schultz, President, is the contact for any questions.
- **Town of Otter Creek Municipal Emergency Operations Plan** – review/approve and provide to Marie Marty from Dunn County Emergency Management. Bev to add correct numbers for Wirth Excavating and bring to March meeting for approval and signing of Resolution.
- **Website for Town** – review: townofottercreek.com. Randy will work with Bev so she can make updates. Policy for notices and agendas on the website: ***Meeting notices and other legally required notices will be published in the Colfax Messenger.*** The monthly meeting notices in the newspaper will indicate to check the website for the complete agenda.
- **Road Aid** - Mark received notice of approvals of the emergency road aid disaster aids payment 730<sup>th</sup> street of \$17,039.64, 1090<sup>th</sup> avenue - \$28,885.08 disaster damage aids. **Agenda for March: bids for road work.**
- **Upcoming dates:**
  - Testing of voting equipment 2/12/2020 at 2:30 p.m.
  - WEC webinar on “A” and “B” ballots, 2/13/2020 at 10 a.m.
  - Election 2/18/2020

- WTA District meeting – election security training 2/29/2020
- WITC – Rice Lake; Redistricting session 3/25/2020
- Town Audit – 3/27/2020
- **Report from Patrolman on Road Work/Equipment** – Gary is brushing, 670<sup>th</sup>. 690<sup>th</sup> taking out big oaks. Plowed snow on Sunday. Brusher is working OK. Car parked on top of Vold hill, west side of Higby’s field. Minnesota license plate. Suggestion to put a note on the vehicle that it needs to be parked off the road. Next step would be to call the sheriff. Dumpster on the turkey barn area needs to be moved. We have plenty of sand. Cecil worked with Gary to train on operation of truck and Mark will schedule a time.
- **Permits** - Terry Giertz new inground sanitary permit
- **Public comments** – Dunn Energy Coop – board of elections in March. \$250,000 budget shortfall, the rates have risen. Facility charge went up and kilowatt hour went up slightly. They raised their pay from \$275 to \$300 per meeting. If a citizen wants to see the minutes they need to fill out a form to request minutes, board has to approve it, need to meet with general manager to see the minutes in his office. Member owner of the coop cannot go to the meeting. No transparency, no agenda.
- **Auditing of bills for payment** – all bills approved.

- **Financial Report**

Equipment Account -       \$18,688.66  
 Tax Account -               \$417,537.33  
 Checking Account -       \$30,610.36

Note: Clerk moved \$366,000 from tax account to checking account to cover February tax settlement.

Motion to accept the treasurers report made by Hayes, seconded by Ralph. Motion carried. Ralph moved to adjourn the monthly meeting, seconded by Hayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted – Bev Bernier, Clerk/Treasurer

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS IN ORDER OF CALLING:

Gary Anderson – 715-658-1483	Bob Bernier – 715-577-6310
Mark Warner – 715-658-1602, 715-556-6083 (cell)	Cecil Hayes – 715-577-6634 (cell)
LeAnn Ralph – 715-308-6336	Town Shop - 715-658-1319
Bev Bernier - 715-658-0131	Chuck Boyer – 715-600-4149