

Town of Otter Creek – March 12, 2024
Otter Creek Town Hall – E5905 County Road S, Wheeler WI
Regular Town Board Meeting – 7 p.m.

Attendees:

Chair LeAnn Ralph*

Supervisor 1 Cecil Hayes*

Supervisor 2 Bob Bernier*

Clerk/Treasurer Bev Bernier

Guests, Kelley Hayes, Renee Carroll, Gary Axness, Denise Axness, Roger Gunnufson, Ashley Gunnufson, Russell Packard, Elizabeth Therkildsen, Dale Solheim

*Board Members

REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

The Regular Town Board Meeting was called to order by Chair Ralph at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday March 12, 2024. Meeting minutes from the 2/13/2024 Regular Board Meeting were not read by Clerk as Ralph and Bob Bernier reviewed the minutes prior to tonight's meeting and agreed that the minutes did not need to be read. Bernier motioned to approve the 2/13/2024 Meeting minutes as presented, Hayes second, MC.

Public Comments – Kelley Hayes provided a packet about the refugee resettlement. She discussed the Resolution was presented to Chippewa County, St. Croix County, and Kelley provided to Dunn County. Kelley is asking the Otter Creek Town Board to draft a letter to Dunn County and get the resolution on the agenda for discussion in the County. In Eau Claire County, World Relief came in and they can resettle refugees within 100 miles for resettlement. Kelley said they did not contact other counties regarding the cost to counties as they should have. The Town of Otter Creek will put on April agenda for discussion.

Chair's Note -- Refugee resettlement is under the authority of the federal government, and the federal government funds refugee resettlement. World Relief is under no obligation to inform any municipality of costs because World Relief is not assessing costs and has no authority to assess costs. No municipalities (county, city, village or town) will be adding a line item to the budget to pay for refugee resettlement. The federal statute says "in consultation" -- but the federal statute does not grant counties, cities, villages and towns any authority to accept or refuse refugees.

Renee Carroll wants to know the purpose of all the trees getting cut down along the road. Chair Ralph responded that the County and Town need to keep the right-of-way clear and electrical lines need to be kept clear.

Assessor - Discussion and possible action on Assessment Proposal and Assessment Contract from Tamarack Springs Assessing, LLC. Motion by Hayes to accept 3 year contract, second by Bernier, MC. Clerk to send signed contract to Tamarack Springs.

Communication from Town Chair –

Received a call from Curt Hakes logging. There is Wiggins logging being done near the Town Chair, coming in 670th, which is Tainter's road. At 970th, what is the best way to get to Wiggins property. Will need to check the driveways. Hakes applied for a Timber Cutting notice, the Town has received it. The Otter Creek road bans are in place for 2 weeks yet, but loggers can bring in their equipment, but not haul logs.

Communication from Supervisor 1 – Nothing.

Communication from Supervisor 2 – there will be logging down from the town hall, he is working with the patrolman to review driveways.

Communication from Clerk/Treasurer - Sent billing of \$4,047.36 to Shawna Stone with interest from Dec. 30, 2024. Will continue to send monthly bills with interest added each month (2%), any unpaid balance as of Nov. 1, 2024 will be assessed to property taxes.

Sent billing to Roger Gunnufson for \$269 for Colfax Fire, due by April 23, 2024, interest of 2% added monthly, any unpaid balance as of Nov. 1, 2024 will be assessed to property taxes.

Billing - Sent billing to Dish Network for personal property taxes due of \$16.54.

Assessor - Discussion and possible action on Assessment Proposal and Assessment Contract from Tamarack Springs Assessing, LLC. Motion by Hayes to accept 3 year contract, second by Bernier, MC. Clerk to send signed contract to Tamarack Springs.

Update ATV/UTV Ordinance - Review and possible approval of ATV/UTV Ordinance 03-12-24-01 update to include opening 670th Street from County Hwy S, south to 1090th Ave, for designation as an ATV route; Review and possible approval of additional route proposed by Paul Flatland – 1180th Avenue. Supervisor Bernier provided the feedback from Paul Flatland and the survey results. 1180th had a majority of “no” votes. Some request 15 MPH speed limit. Majority of residents oppose ATV clubs, welcome the neighbors but not outside the town. Worried about noise, destruction of environment. Russell Packard read his letter. Packard would like to see a pause of any additional routes added in the Town of Otter Creek, possibly reverse the decision on 670th Street at S, south to 1090th Ave. There is no provision in state law to allow residents to use town roads that are not designated as routes. Board had previously approved opening 670th Street from County Hwy S, south to 1090th Ave. Motion by Bernier to deny proposal to open additional roads for ATV traffic, including 1180th Avenue, second by Ralph, MC. Clerk to post updated Ordinance and provide to pertinent parties including DNR and sheriff.

Yearly ATV/UTV review - Review and possible approval of updating ATV/UTV Ordinance to initiate a policy to only review routes once per calendar year. Motion by Bernier to add to ATV UTV Ordinance that the ordinance and routes will be reviewed once per year at the April regular town meeting, second by Hayes, MC.

ADUs - Review and discussion on Dunn County zoning ordinance amendment for ADUs - owner-occupancy requirement for either the ADU or the primary dwelling; Intent was to have ADU for family members. The county initially included a deed restriction for owner-occupancy of the ADU or the primary dwelling but concluded it was not legally enforceable, so the deed restriction was removed from the draft ordinance. The intent of the ordinance amendment is still to benefit family members. Density is 1:8, can do 4 splits of a property in 5 years. The Board will see what the final draft looks like, we can be more restrictive than the County. We are not sure if there is anything else we can do with the land split. Public meeting at Dunn County March 20, 2024.

Driveway Ordinance - Review and possible action on modification of driveway ordinance for driveway permits issued for existing driveways “If the driveway does not require any alteration for the new purpose(s), the landowner must still obtain a driveway permit, but the driveway permit fee is waived”. Motion by Hayes to accept, second by Bernier, Clerk to make amendment to ordinance.

Special Assessment requests:

- E5918 County Rd N, Wheeler, WI 54772: Jacob Bauer & Brittany M. Stelter/Mark Steven Kinney
- E7418 County Rd N, Colfax WI 54730: Casey A & Kari M Peterson

Weber Inspections December report – none.

May meeting - Review and possible approval to move May regular board meeting to Tuesday, May 21 (rather than May 14) to coincide with BOR. Motion by Hayes to move the date, second by Ralph, MC.

Upcoming dates:

- 3/14/2024 – training of chief inspectors at Dunn County government center
- 3/18 & 3/19/24 – WTA BOR virtual training, culverts/bridges, shared rev – Chair to participate
- 3/20/2024 – public hearing of DC zoning ordinance amendment for ADUs
- 3/21/2024 – 11:00 a.m. – WEC Zoom meeting for Badger Books
- 3/23/2024 – public test of voting equipment
- 4/1/2024 – deadline to request dog licenses/tags, review start of road bans
- 4/2/2024 Spring Election
- 4/16/2024 Annual Town Mtg, Monthly Board Mtg, review road bids, schedule Spring road insp.
- 5/7/2024 Open Book – 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm
- 5/21/2024 Board of Review & Reg Brd Mtg

LP Gas fill possibly in April, currently at 32%;

CSM of Brandon King for 18 acre parcel of BuffTex Holdings, LLC, Houston TX. Along State Road 170, County Road S, and 990th Avenue, formerly owned by James Olson/Aryls Wigdahl. 2 lots surveyed.

Rural Mutual WC audit due 4/24/24;

Patrolman report of road work/equipment. Worked on the mower, new hoses cost more than expected.

Auditing of bills for payment – bills circulated and approved by the Town Board.

Review Treasurer’s Report – Motion by Hayes to accept the treasurer’s report, Bernier second, MC.

Any other business – none.

Clerk reviewed the finances.	Equipment Account -	\$61,503.91
	Tax Account -	\$161,644.05
	Checking Account -	<u>\$43,443.92</u>
	Total of all accounts	\$266,591.88

ADJOURN - Bernier moved to adjourn the monthly meeting, Ralph second, MC. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted – Beverly Bernier, Clerk/Treasurer

CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS IN ORDER OF CALLING:

Gary Anderson – 715-658-1483;

Bob Bernier – 715-577-6310;

Bev Bernier – 715-658-0131;

LeAnn Ralph – 715-308-6336;

Cecil Hayes – 715-577-6334

Town Shop - 715-658-1319;