



The Phelps Post

A community newsletter

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Fall/Winter

Town of Phelps

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A Note from the Town Chair

Welcome to the spring newsletter! The snow has finally stopped. The poor robins had to go through 5 snowfalls on their tails since they returned.

The Town is well underway with the new town shop and community center/library buildings. The town shop is being constructed at its new location on Strong Road with a completion date in November 2025. The bids are out for the new community center/library and groundbreaking is scheduled for July. The completion date for this project will

be around October 2026.

I am pleased to inform everyone that the demolition of the old hospital is moving right along. It was a little slow to start with all the late snowfalls, however they are on the fast track now.

We are hoping to see completion by the end of June.

That's all for now. Have a wonderful summer and thank you for your continued support.

-Steve Doyen, Town Chair



New DPW Shop Ready to Break Ground!

After two years of planning and elector approval, we are about to break ground for a new 16,000 square foot Department of Public Works building on Strong Road. Our Public Works crew will soon be able to house and maintain our \$2 million worth of road and park equipment inside a heated building. This will extend the life of heavy

equipment and further enhance our ability to perform our own maintenance which saves cost and time. Construction is estimated to take 6-7 months and you can expect to see the old DPW shop removed later this year to make room for parking adjacent to the Community Center.

The Design team thanks the Town Board and residents for their support in bringing this to fruition.



Big Moves at the Hospital Site

Phelps is Building Toward the Future!

Exciting things are happening in Phelps! The long-anticipated demolition of the old hospital is well underway, and momentum is building fast. We're proud to announce that the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation (VCEDC) has successfully secured another \$25,000 grant on behalf of the Town of Phelps to support the next phase of this transformative project.

The THRIVE committee has officially partnered with Cedar Corp, a respected architecture and planning firm based out of Green Bay, to begin developing conceptual site plans for the property. These plans will be shaped by the incredible amount of community input we gathered during our extensive study—which included feedback from residents, business owners, and

stakeholders across many demographics.

The goal is to develop a vision that is not only reflective of what our community wants but is also financially viable for long-term success. Our first on-site planning visit with Cedar Corp is scheduled for the first week of June, and our entire committee is energized and optimistic. "These next few months are going to be really exciting," said Jeremy Ryan, Town Supervisor. "We're turning vision into reality. With strong partnerships, a clear plan, and the continued support of our community, we believe we can attract the right developer to bring something

truly special to Phelps."

The conceptual designs are expected to be completed by the end of the third quarter. Once finished, the Committee will begin actively soliciting developers with a clear picture of what is possible—and exciting!

Stay tuned. The future is bright in Phelps, and we should all be incredibly proud of the progress being made. This is more than a project—it's the beginning of something great for our town!



Phelps Fire & Rescue – Charging Ahead

It's been an exciting start to the year for the Phelps Fire & Rescue Department! On January 1st, we had a change in leadership as longtime Fire Chief Norm Mesun passed the torch after an incredible 43 years of service. While he's stepped away from the Chief's role,



Norm continues to serve proudly as a Lieutenant—because apparently, retirement just isn't in his vocabulary! We thank him for his years of leadership and countless contributions that helped shape our department.

This year, like many small departments across the nation, we're seeing increased call volume and fewer hands to answer the call. We are actively seeking new members to join our team. If you've ever considered giving back to your community in a meaningful way, we encourage you to reach out. There is no greater

calling than being able to help someone on what could be the worst day of their life.

Despite the challenges, we're forging ahead. Three of our members recently completed their Advanced EMT certifications, elevating the level of care we bring to your doorstep. We're also hoping to develop a student intern program to engage the next generation of hometown heroes. After all, the future of the fire service is likely sitting in a school classroom right now.

We're incredibly grateful to the Phelps Woman's Club for their donation of two Electric Vehicle Fire Blankets, helping us prepare for the unique challenges of EV fires. Their continued support is deeply appreciated. A special thank you also goes out to Dustin Spink and the Phelps High School shop class for constructing a new storage shed for Station 2. This shed will help us better organize and store extra equipment, freeing up space for more critical gear. We're incredibly



grateful for the students who participated and for Mr. Spink's leadership in making this project happen. It's partnerships like these that truly show the strength and heart of our community.

In early May, we successfully passed our annual State Audit, securing state funding for another year. We are also anxiously awaiting news on a FEMA grant application that would allow us to replace our aging breathing apparatus, compressor system, and turnout gear—all of which have reached the end of their federally mandated service life. Unfortunately, due to recent pauses in federal funding, this grant—and many like it—is now in jeopardy. We remain hopeful that funding will be restored so we can continue pushing forward with these critical safety upgrades.

We're also hard at work planning for the replacement of Engine 1, which is nearing the end of its lifecycle. Our goal is to combine Engine 1 with another apparatus, creating a multi-purpose response unit. This approach will not only make us more efficient operationally but also result in significant taxpayer savings—something we're always striving for.

From all of us at Phelps Fire & Rescue—thank you for your continued unwavering support. And remember: don't wait to call us. We'd rather show up and not be needed than be needed and arrive too late. We're here for you—day or night.

Stay safe,
Jeremy Ryan
Phelps Fire & EMS Chief

Phelps Snowmobile Club Summer Ride Picnic

The Phelps Snowmobile Club will hold their 3rd annual *Summer Ride Picnic* on July 11th from 5-9 PM in downtown Phelps. Food and drink sales start at 5PM and live music

from the fantastic local band Common Ground from 6-9 PM. There will be a \$1,000 cash raffle, basket raffles, 50/50 raffles, and giveaways for kids! Cash donations can be mailed to the Phelps Snowmobile Club, PO Box 214, Phelps, WI, 54554 and basket donations can be dropped off at the Phelps Chamber, or email phelpssnowmerch@gmail.com to initiate a credit card payment. All donations made support our events and are deeply appreciated! The Club holds events and fundraises in order to maintain our trails and groomer equipment. The Phelps Snowmobile Club is a 501(c)3 organization. Watch for other fun events throughout the year promoted on our Facebook page, Club newsletters, town newsletters, posters, radio, and TV.



Clerk's Corner *Helpful info from Town Hall staff!*

The Town Website Has Changed!

The new URL for the website is www.phelpswi.gov. Visit the Town website to find various forms and permit applications, answers to common questions, a calendar of events, meeting agendas and minutes, town contacts, news, notices, ordinances, resolutions, and much more. Keep informed by receiving automatic updates. Scroll down on the website homepage for the option to 'Subscribe to Receive Town Updates'.

Property Tax Bills – Second installments are due July 31, 2025. All second installments are payable to the Vilas County Treasurer. By mail or walk-in: 330 Court St, Eagle River WI 54521, Pay online at www.vilascountywi.gov

Address Change? - To help ensure you receive your tax bill in a timely manner, be sure to update your mailing address if

it has recently changed, www.vilascountywi.gov

Lottery Credit – If you have made Phelps your primary residence within the last couple of years, check your tax bill to make sure you are receiving the lottery credit! Information and answers to commonly asked questions can be found here: www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Form/lottery-home.aspx

MyVote WI – www.myvote.wi.gov. A website for all things relating to Wisconsin Elections. Here you can register to vote, update your name and address, request an absentee ballot, find out when elections are scheduled and what's on the ballot, view election results, and more.

Your Clerk/Treasurer and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer are here to help you with any number of issues, questions, or concerns you may have regarding the Town of Phelps. If we can't help, we will point you in the right direction to find someone who can. Thank you!

Sheryl Ward & Kathleen Ray, 715-545-2270.

Thank you, Tom Hill!

At the May 14th Town Board meeting, Phelps resident Tom Hill was acknowledged by the Town of Phelps for all his time and energy he has contributed to maintaining and caring for the Phelps Deerskin Trails over the years. The Town also appreciates the enthusiasm for the natural resources of Phelps that Tom shares with locals and visitors. Many folks will recognize Tom –from either the Deerskin Trails, or the Anvil Trail warming hut where Tom keeps a fire going in winter and shares the makings for smores. He also supplies

bird seed for visitors to hand feed to the resident chick-a-dees, a must have experience for all! As expert as Tom is at cutting up fallen trees on the trail – he can always use help. For those interested in assisting with trail maintenance please contact Quita Sheehan

at quita.sheehan@gmail.com.



120 years of history at the Phelps Historical Museum

After a long winter, watching the outside world wake up always feels special. It's also time to refresh and begin a brand new season at the Phelps Historical Museum!

This year we celebrate the Big Sand Lake Club's 100 years of history. We'll explore its humble beginnings, grand

architecture, and the people who made it possible. We are moving forward with some grand architecture of our own! Plans are being developed for a museum expansion. This will be an exciting and very challenging time for our little museum. We are always grateful for the support we receive and will share additional information about this exciting new project. As always, we welcome people to volunteer with us this summer for as many hours as they have to share. It's a great way to spend an afternoon!

Phelps celebrates its own milestone this year. We are 120 years old! On May 1, 1905, the Town of Hackley was chartered. It was originally named after one of the founders, Charles H. Hackley. The name changed to another of its founders, William A. Phelps in 1912. Sharing in this milestone, we're featuring a family that's also celebrating its 120 history in Phelps. Stop in and

check out their story. We are also interested in YOUR family history in Phelps! Please take some moments this summer and document your family history to share with us and future generations. So often stories of people, places, and experiences fade away because no one captures those details. Take advantage of the opportunity to speak to your family's history keepers while the stories are there to be shared.

Our annual season opens with our Open House on Memorial Day. Museum hours are Tues, Fri, Sat, 10am - 2pm, Thurs 4-8pm. Open until Labor Day. Available by appointment for larger groups. Admission is free, donations appreciated.

We have several new books available for your summer reading! Stop in to see what's new. We hope to see you soon.

Have a beautiful Summer and go out and make some history of your own!



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Phelps Community Center Becoming a Reality!

After a long winter of planning, our new 14,000 square foot Community Center/Library is on track for a groundbreaking this summer. The Town board will be selecting a general contractor and a groundbreaking ceremony will be planned. The new facility will double the size of the library and provide ample meeting space with state-of-the-art equipment to host meetings and large events. A large "main street" corridor will be decorated in a theme that pays homage to our Phelps history of logging, nature and tourism. Visitors and residents will be encouraged to stop in to check out Phelps news, photos, and upcoming events on a continuously scrolling large screen monitor and/or maybe help themselves to a coffee at the self-serve coffee bar. The building and the surrounding expanded parking lot will



have 500Mbps-1 Gbps WiFi coverage for folks looking for a high-speed connection.

Once in operation, the new Community Center will host a variety of events that will benefit residents and visitors alike. As things get rolling, expect to see fitness classes, workforce training, emergency responder training, and Nicolet College outreach classes to just name a few. In partnership with a local health provider, the building will also host telehealth services to provide a much-needed nearby medical services connection. The large gathering hall, with a fully equipped warming kitchen, will host weekly senior meals and will be available to rent for a nominal fee for weddings and special events. This new facility is a strong signal that Phelps is on the move to further enhance quality of life for residents and visitors in our beautiful northwoods community.

One of the components of the new Phelps Community Center is a new and easily seen and accessible Veterans Memorial. The Planning Commission is starting up a Veterans Memorial working group. Now that a new location has been found, a new design must be developed. A group of Phelps Veterans are working on this – but they are looking for more assistance from someone interested in organizing the group. Any interested person, Veteran, or Designer, or just interested in working on this project, please contact Gene Hojan at gfhogan@gmail.com.

Music on the Lake in Phelps!

Lakefront Pines Park in downtown Phelps
Food trucks and beer tent. Bring chairs!

June 20, 6 to 9pm - Common Ground

July 16, 6 to 9pm - Bogfoot

July 25, 5 to 10pm - Summer Party!

Chain Skimmers Ski Show and Shirts & Skins

Aug 6, 5 to 8pm - The Prince and the Peach



4th on the Lake Celebration

July 4, 3 to 10pm - Street Parade - Boat Parade
Live Music - Food & Beer - Fireworks

Picnic in the Park for Phelps EMS - June 25

Phelps Snowmobile Club Summer Ride Picnic

July 11, 5 to 9pm - Live Music - Food & Beer

Fireman's Picnic & Pig Roast - July 19

Scarecrow Fest - September 13

Midwest Musky Classic - October 3 to 5

Phelps Chamber of Commerce www.phelpswi.us 715-545-3800