

TOWN OF *Spider Lake*

Dear Taxpayers,

Greetings and Happy Holidays. Great things are happening in the Town of Spider Lake! Here are some of the highlights from the past year.

News from the Town Hall

Town Hall has been busy with lots of changes and transitions in 2020-2021.

CLERK. The website has been entirely redone and is a great resource to town residents, businesses, and visitors. The new site is clear and clean and becoming the hub of a vast amount of information. On the homepage you will see all current and future meetings (plus agendas and packets). We are working with *HeyGov!*, a leader in online government software, to offer more enhancements such as online forms and issue tracking in 2022. Visit us at: <https://townofspiderlake.com/>

In other news, the Town is transitioning to QuickBooks accounting software. This change is an intentional effort to provide taxpayers and residents with improved tracking of Town income and expenses and meaningful financial reports.

TREASURER. The treasurer provides financial oversight and ensures that the town funds remain secure. The treasurer also provides detailed audit statements, which serve as a check and balance in coordination with the Town Clerk and the Town Board.

We are all deeply grateful that Clerk Kathy Overman and Treasurer George Brandt agreed to step in and serve in these roles on very short notice. We extend our deep gratitude all of our volunteers, including our deputy clerks, deputy treasurers, election officers and the many individuals who have helped with painting, plantings, and maintenance; filing and organizing, technical assistance, meeting facilitation and so much more. Thank you!

News from the Committees

The committee structure was reinstated in August 2020. The committee structure makes it possible to delve deeply into community issues, to expand citizen participation, and to accomplish the work of the Town Board efficiently.

HEALTH AND SAFETY. A singular achievement of the H&S Committee was to install Emergency Communication equipment on the tower near Brandt and Trappe Roads. This

effort languished for nearly ten years, but thanks to the efforts of Supervisor Sue Dale and resident Jim Nickel and in collaboration with Norvado and Jump River Cooperative the installation of repeater equipment on the tower is now active. This achievement expands the number of radio frequencies available to the Roads Department and the Fire Department for communications across the entire town. The H&S Committee also regularly advises the Town Board on issues related to the coronavirus (COVID) by monitoring updates from the CDC, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and the Sawyer County Department of Health and Human Services.

SPIDER LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT. The Spider Lake Fire Department consists of eight active officers and firefighters, two stations, and several apparatuses. Business meetings and 2-hour training session are held monthly. Spider Lake firefighters attend additional trainings that are offered through neighboring departments (e.g., Round Lake, Bass Lake, Town of Hayward Fire Departments). The Fire Department also actively participates in the county Fire Association. All Spider Lake Fire Department apparatuses and equipment are in good working order and fit for purpose.

FACILITIES, MAINTENANCE, & SOLID WASTE. Have you been to Town Hall recently? The walls in the main room and the bathrooms are freshly painted, new hands-free appliances and accessible toilets have been installed in the bathrooms, there is a large flat screen TV mounted on the wall for virtual participation, the gutters have been repaired and improved and new, energy efficient lighting is being installed in early 2022. This is the work of this committee.

In addition, the committee has renegotiated our LP gas contract with Rusk County and our solid waste/recycling contract with Republic for reduced costs and improved service (more dumpsters).

Brush collection, at the old Town dump site, was offered as a service to residents four days this year (two days in June and two days in October). This was a win-win-win by offering a place for brush, disposal, reducing the risk of fires near residences through fuel reduction, and serving as a training for our firefighters.

FINANCE AND INSURANCE. The Town is in very good financial health. In 2021, two volunteers working together developed a five-year financial plan and modeling tool for the Town. This work will help Supervisors evaluate if, when, and how to spend Town resources and taxpayer dollars.

Throughout the month of October, the Town convened budget workshops that were well-attended. On November 18, 2021, the Town held its Special Meeting of Electors. At that meeting, the electors voted by acclamation to accept the

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proposed Town levy. Immediately following that meeting, the Town Board voted to adopt its proposed FY 2022 budget. This budget resulted in NO LEVY INCREASE (and thus, no increase in the taxes for Spider Lake taxpayers.).

The Board also provided in greater detail both the capital reserves, as well as its proposed capital outlays in 2022. An overarching principle of the Board is to provide more clarity and transparency about the financial standing of the Town.

The Finance and Insurance committee contracted with Horton Insurance for the Town. The Town of Spider Lake Employee Handbook is being extensively revised and updated. The new version of the Town's Handbook will be in place in the first week of January 2022.

ROADS. All roads activities were accomplished on time and all purchases were achieved within budget. The state of our roads is good and a maintenance plan is in place to keep them that way.

The purchase of capital equipment, including a new John Deere tractor, a flail mower, and a new air compressor, make it possible for the Road team to work efficiently and safely. Roads is, by far, the largest portion of the budget, but the thoughtful and responsible decision making of the Roads committee has resulted in an approximately \$50,000 savings in the budget annually. The Road Crew performance is HIGH based on feedback from residents.

PLAN AND REVIEW COMMISSION. Has focused on ensuring the Land Use Ordinance is being consistently applied and enforced. Commission members are taking the lead to ensure that residents, prospective residents, builders, landscapers, and realtors are cognizant of the specific zoning requirements in the Town of Spider Lake. We're working to encourage understanding of the Town's Land Use Ordinance through deep discussion at the PRC and by providing clear and accurate information of the Town's website.

Ordinance Enforcement Committee (ad hoc). Was commissioned and charged to ensure that Town ordinances were clear and enforceable. The committee, which involved a large group of stakeholders, is creating materials to communicate the Town's ordinances, especially Ordinance #01-01 (ATVs) and Ordinance #12 (Boating). At the December 8, 2021 meeting the ordinances were, by Resolution 2021-03, revised and updated for clarity and enforcement.

Feasibility and New Building Committee (ad hoc). After an exhaustive process that involved interviews, site visits to other municipalities' Roads and Fire facilities, meetings, in-depth financial analyses, and on-site meetings with contractors and state inspectors the committee has recommended to the Board that we begin by investing in

and upgrading our current facilities. In 2022, we will make investments in new lighting, insulation, electrical, and cement work to improve the conditions of our current facilities. We will continue to look at expanding our facilities (we need the space), but to a much lesser degree, and an enormous cost savings to the Town.

GRANTS. In addition to funds generated through taxes dollars and intergovernmental revenue, The Town seeks and actively pursues other revenue streams. In 2021, the Town received an additional \$9,169 dollars in grant funds from both state and federal entities including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Election Commission, The Wisconsin Department of Administration (Road to Recovery Funds), etc. Town Officers and Supervisors apply for these grants in order to help to reduce Town expenditures.

The Board is accountable for the health, safety and public welfare of the Town. We are also accountable to carry out the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, protecting the Northwoods character of the Town (ie, protecting and preserving our pristine natural resources).

Announcements

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SERVING YOUR TOWN?

The Town of Spider Lake is seeking applications from qualified town residents to serve as the Town Clerk. The successful candidate will serve in the position until April 2023 (about 18 months). Salary for this position is \$27,070 per year.

Individuals interested in the position may serve as a deputy clerk and work side-by-side with the current clerk while learning this rewarding role.

Contact Kathy Overman, Clerk at 715-462-3977 or at clerk@townofspiderlake.com

WEB INPUT AND ASSISTANCE

The Town would like your input in continuing to improve and expand the Town's website. We welcome your ideas and would appreciate your help to complete some of the pages still under construction. Contact Supervisor Deb Amery at Deb.amery@townofspiderlake.com or call her at 715-462-9602.

The Board of Supervisors and Officers wish you a Joyous Holiday Season and a very Happy New Year!

Tim Sheldon, Town Chair
Deb Amery, Sarah Delaney, Mark Johns; Supervisors
Kathy Overman, Clerk
George Brandt, Treasurer