

TOWN OF FLORENCE  
ANNUAL MEETING  
APRIL 18, 2023

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Annual Meeting for the Town of Florence, Florence County, WI was held at the Community Center on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Tim Bomberg presiding.

Bomberg called the meeting to order and asked all in attendance to sign in and that copies of the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes and 2022 Year End Financial Report were available for review. Other reports available were Fire Department expense breakdown for 2022 and an update of the county wide EMS system from Amanda Mulvey, Emergency Management Director and a report from Eric Printz Director of Economic Development for Florence County explaining what the department has been working on.

On a motion by Lisa Witynski and seconded by JoAnne Friberg the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting were approved. All in favor, motion carried.

Tim Bomberg asked for a motion to approve the 2022 Financial Report with Jeanette Bomberg affirming and Joe Witynski seconding. All in favor, motion carried.

Town Highway Foreman, Chris Steber provided a report for work completed in 2022 which consisted of: Hauling approximately 12,000 yards of gravel to existing roadways, normal annual maintenance—brush cutting, grass cutting, grading, etc., performed numerous projects and annual maintenance for the Town of Commonwealth, upkeep of gravel roads, North Lake Rd Project - Removed stumps and clear right of way, widened existed roadway, constructed new ditches and backslopes and installed culverts where needed, blacktop entire roadway (4600’).

Steber provided the 2023 road work planned and consists of Culvert replacement on Walnut West Road, cost share project with Land Conservation, Town Road N – Blacktop entire roadway, East Shore Road-Blacktop entire roadway (Vivio Rd to TR BB), assess and prioritize existing town roads for necessary repairs and maintenance, upkeep of all gravel roads, continued road maintenance—brush cutting, grass cutting, grading, etc.

Steber reported that the town crew plowed 38 times for more than 2” of snow accumulation and reported purchases of 2022 Ford F250 & 2019 Ford F550 and intends to purchase a plow truck in 2023.

There were many property owners in attendance to express concerns of several deteriorating town roads. Residents from Romitti Road, Harding Road, East Shore Road, Cross Cut Rd., First Crossing and Second Crossing were in attendance. Chris Steber along with the Town Board noted that they are all aware of those road which are in poor condition and will be taking a spring road tour to evaluate and determine which roads will be addressed this coming year. Rich Vaccaro mentioned that Tom Brandt, asked him to request ditching on Duck Lake Road, to prevent flooding in the spring. Steber did tell Romitti Road residence that the road will have to be returned to gravel until funds are available for paving. Lisa Witynski commended Steber and the Highway Department for a great job in snow plowing.

Shelly VanPembrook questioned County Highway Commissioner, Joe Witynski of the progress in obtaining calcium chloride for dust control, with Witynski stating that the closest place is Stevens Point and that we need a tanker to go get it. Roger Secrist, Florence Utility Commissioner, stated he will look into resources for tankers.

Secrist went on, to provide the 2022 reports for the Gas, Electric, Sewer and Water departments for the Florence Utility Commission:

**GAS:** Twenty new gas service line installations and numerous gas meter upgrading projects were installed. Responded to 55 gas leak investigations. Personnel had two weeks of mandatory Public Service Commission pipeline safety and audit inspections. Over 100 gas meters were changed out for mandatory accuracy testing. 55 business district leakage surveys were completed per PSC requirements. 39 public building leakage surveys were completed per PSC requirements. The Utility Commission completed 86

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miles of gas main leakage surveys and 767 gas service line leakage surveys were completed per PSC requirements. Started a complete rewrite of the O&M gas manual per PSC requirements. 50 gas system valve inspections were completed per PSC requirements. Gate station maintenance and inspections were performed, and gate station bypass procedures were developed and implemented in 2022 along with staff training on those procedures. Completed about 15 days of employee written and hands on mandatory training was also performed per PSC requirements.

**ELECTRIC:** Numerous jobs to convert failing overhead lines to underground lines were started throughout the year on Packer Dr., Trudell Ln., Brule Landing and Brule Bridge Rd., Harding Rd., Novak Ln., and County Rd N. Installed 13 new electric services along with 4 over-head to underground conversions and repaired 3 underground faults. Installed 23,000 feet of primary underground wire and 30,000 feet of 2" conduit. The Utility responded to 44 electrical outages throughout the year with causes from animal contacts, weather related problems including trees. The old utility building was demolished, torn down by utility personnel and hauled to the landfill and the lot was landscaped and restored. Secrist thanked the town for the use of its dump trucks.

**SEWER:** Installed new float system for telemetry readings of the wet well area in the main lift station to replace failing ones. They had two remote lift station rehab projects completed in order to replace failing equipment which had become obsolete over time and parts were no longer available. Now we have all new pumps and hardware including floats for the backup systems. A sanitary survey inspection for the entire sewer system by the WI DNR was completed with no significant deficiencies found and was issued an **A** rating. Extensive Lagoon bottom sludge sampling had taken place in order for us to have the sludge removed as well as a very involved permitting process with the DNR. The bottom sludge in the amount of 1,902,000 gallons or 258.76 metric tons of sludge were disposed of in 2022. The Central Avenue sewer mains were televised and determined to be all clay tile that are cracking and starting to break apart and will need to be replaced before a DOT Hwy resurfacing project planned for 2025 takes place.

**WATER:** Installed a 2" water service to the county road commission for a salt brine building, completed a chemical tank and equipment rehab project to a double lined tank system for chemical containment and a transducer reading device in place of aging scale system, hydrant and water main flushing of the entire system was completed and all 120 hydrants were flushed in one year which was the first time in at least 20 years, and a sanitary survey inspection for the entire water system by the Wisconsin DNR was completed and no significant deficiencies were found. We were awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention a Water Fluoridation Quality Award for consistent and professional adjustment of the fluoride content to the recommended level for oral health for 12 consecutive months in the years 2018,2019,2020,2021 with our water department should be very proud of as it is not easily achieved.

Kristina Williams, Florence Utility Finance Director provided the following Finance Review:

**Income Review for 2022** - Total Revenue & Other Income \$5,552,153  
Total Operating Expense & Other Income Deductions \$5,136,185  
**Total Net Income for 2022 \$415,968\***  
Utility Revenues from All 4 Companies \$5,175, 507  
*(\*Preliminary Numbers—2022 Audit not completed when presented)*

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**Utility Audit for 2022**

Baker Tilly- Audit Team from Energy & Utilities Division was onsite last week (April 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>) Preliminary Financial Statements and PSC Annual filing will be complete by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Department Items-**

**FEMA Keyes Lake Drive Underground Project—**

Project completed November 2021

Grant expenses filed and completed in 2022 for a total reimbursement of \$371, 725

**Simplified Water Rate Case—**

Implemented December 2022 for 4.5% Increase.

Last rate increase was done in 2017

**Lagoon Sludge Removal Project—**

Total Invoice- Full-Service Organics \$201,629.30

Total Gallons 1,902,000

(Accrual of \$104,516 had been set aside to help with expense)

Fire Chief, Joe Witynski provided the 2022 report of the Florence Fire Department. The department is sound with 37 members. In 2022 the department responded to 46 calls which consisted of: 2 Structure; 12 grass/brush; 16 car accidents; 2 vehicle calls; 2 CO2 calls; 2 false alarm; 2 mutual aid, 1 chimney and 6 life assist.

No major purchases were made and applied for a FEMA grant for more SCBA's – with no response. Three members passed their FF1 Certification in May. Witynski and 5 other members participated in a live burn training with the Aurora Fire Department in December. The department will continue in house training in 2023. Purchases of two sets of gear and 10 new helmets are planned for 2023 and the department intends to move forward with helping the Town with the SE Fire Station adding that the site needs to be cleared and a site evaluation done. Witynski thanked the town board, and town crew as well as the Florence Utilities for their continued support.

Desi Windell inquired about an update to transitioning to automated refuse collection and eliminating the sale of garbage stickers. Bomberg informed that currently the town board is reviewing a proposal from Green For Life (GFL) and that the board is reviewing the options for assessing a fee per parcel or per improvement value as special charge on tax bills. Bomberg stated that the town has been collecting approximately 74% of refuse collection fees with the sale of garbage stickers. Bomberg stated that the GFL proposal is not in stone, as we have several questions regarding it. Bomberg did say, the special charge on the tax roll, will be less than what a resident pays for 1 bag of refuse per week per year. The estimated charge could be \$14 to \$29.00/ year. VanPembrook noted that collecting 74% of the refuse expense thru the special charge, is in the best interest of the town and stated she hopes it will be implemented for 2024.

Chairman Tim Bomberg commended the Highway Department, Fire Department and Utility for the work this past year and commended again the volunteers which mean so much to our community. He stated it cannot be taken for granted. Supervisors John Holbrook and Shane McLain both commended the town crew, office staff, fire department and Utility crew, with McLain adding we have a very special and unique community, one to be proud and we need to continue to work together and support each other.

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On a motion by Lisa Witynski and seconded by Andrew Maglio it was moved to adjourn until April 16, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Submitted by:

Shelly VanPembrook  
Clerk/Treasurer

These minutes are subject to approval at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

Following is a list of those individuals who attended this Annual Meeting:

Michelle Floriano	Dorianne Brooks
JoAnne Friberg	Clark Spaniol
Vanessa McLain	Bob Spaniol
Joe Witynski	Gail Spaniol
Lisa Witynski	Kelly Bruns
Rich Vaccaro	Shawn Bruns
Desi Windell	Lyle Vandenheuvel
Jeanette Bomberg	Mike Peters
Bryan Bomberg	Diane Peters
Tim Bomberg	John Holbrook
Shane McLain	Chris Steber
Shelly VanPembrook	