

TOWN OF FLORENCE
ANNUAL MEETING
APRIL 19, 2022

Please Note: these are unapproved minutes. They will be approved at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the Town of Florence Community Center.

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 19th day of April, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Tim Bomberg presiding.

Bomberg called the meeting to order and the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting held on April 20, 2021 were approved on a motion by John Bomberg and seconded by Lisa Witynski. All in favor, motion carried.

Copies of the 2021 Financial Report were available and Bomberg asked if there were any questions regarding the report. Joanne Friberg asked about the \$173,425 revenue of Other County Grants were from, with Bomberg stating it was Florence County Land Conservation and Trout Unlimited for the LePage Creek culvert replacement and Florence County Sawmill Road project. There being no further questions the 2021 Financial Report was approved on a motion by Lisa Witynski and Diane Theis. All in favor, motion carried.

Chris Steber, Highway Foreman provided a report for work completed in 2021 which consisted of hauling 7,000 yards of gravel to existing roadways, maintenance of brush cutting, grass cutting and grading. Performed numerous projects and annual maintenance for the Town of Commonwealth. Replaced LePage Creek culvert on Old Highway Sixty-Nine which qualified for cost share with Land Conservation Department. Repaired Patten Lake Rd due to spring breakup, stumped Town Rd N, extensive work on North Lake Rd consisting of clearing ROW, widening existing roadway, construct new ditches and backslopes, installed new culverts and laid gravel. Paved 1.7 miles of Brule Dam Rd. Cleared 1/8 acre in town gravel pit for stockpiling 28,000 yards crushed gravel. Maintain gravel roads.

2022 road work planned consists of culvert replacement on Walnut West Rd on Hendricks Creek another cost share project. Clearing ROW, widening, new ditches, install culverts and gravel on Town Road N. Blacktop 2,500' of first phase of North Lake Rd project. Second phase of North Lake Rd is 2,020' section to be paved. This project was one of 73 Town Road improvement Supplemental projects awarded by WI DOT up to 80% of project. Maintain gravel roads and other maintenance of brushing, grass cutting.

Steber added that they plowed 31 times for more than 2" of snow accumulation during the 2021-2022 season and a joint purchase with Florence Utilities was made of a 160 JD Excavator.

Dorianne Brooks inquired about the condition of Cross Cut Rd and when would this road be on the schedule for repair. Steber stated he plans on grading it next week and after spring breakup he would know more of which roads will require work but stated Cross Cut is on the list of roads needing extensive work. Bomberg added that several roads need attention, Duck Lk Rd, East Shore and Vivio Rd to name a few.

Kevin Inman, Florence Utilities Manager reported that the utility is in need of help for the summer and stated that the Utility crew will be busy with lines on Hwy 70 this year due to road work being done. Inman stated that they need to obtain the proper size electric and gas service on the Apartment complex this summer adding that lead times for material and equipment is really a killer for them right now, as transformers are out a year to receive. Keyes Lake underground work in 2021 was a big job, and Inman stated the poles will be removed this year. Water/sewer project along CTH NN in Commonwealth was difficult due to high volume of traffic, but they were able to get a start on replacing these lines and plan on continuing this work in 2022. Inman noted that there were no water main breaks this past year added that new installs for gas and electric were up in 2022 – with the influx of movers to the area.

Joe Witynski, Florence Volunteer Fire Chief reported that the department is 39 members strong and responded to 29 calls in 2021. Three members are currently taking Fire Fighter State Certification Class with final test in May. The department purchased a new 18 volt Milwaukee battery-operated Jaws

of Life which is more powerful. Witynski stated that the department has not needed to raise the Town of Florence' appropriate since in the 1980's noting they are financially sound due to the many fundraisers they do which allows them to purchase the necessary gear they need. Witynski noted that it costs about \$11,000 to completely outfit one man with the proper gear. The department will be looking for additional grants to replace some if not all of their SCBA. Witynski also stated the lead time to receive items is a concern. Witynski said in house training will continue and will help with the development of the Spread Eagle Fire Station.

Many residents from the Spread Eagle area were in attendance with interest on the agenda item to construct a Spread Eagle Fire Hall. Witynski stated that with the construction, response time would be reduced and that homeowners could save 17-22% on fire insurance. Witynski thanked the town board, highway department and Utility for their support.

JoAnne Friberg inquired if the Town of Florence & Florence Utility Commission have a personnel policy. Chairman Bomberg stated yes and Inman stated yes and that the Utility is in the process of updating theirs. Friberg asked if she could get a copy of both the Towns and Utilities policy, referring to the policy that was in effect when her husband, Bob Friberg retired, as well as, the current updated policy. Both Inman and Bomberg stated yes. Friberg went on to say that there have been numerous requests for information from the Utility and it appears that the majority of office staff, Kevin Inman himself, and the majority of the Commission members, are ignoring these requests, whether they've been verbal or in writing. Friberg stated if she can't get satisfaction from the Utility, can she approach the Town Board with her concerns. Inman stated that currently there isn't much that can be talked about due to legal issues, but that he hopes shortly information will be available. Friberg stated that at least 3 employees have left employment with the Utility last year, 2 due to retirement and 1 dismissed and all three of them have not received their benefits which she assumes are stated within the personnel policy. Inman stated the only request that he is aware of is the one from JoAnne Friberg. Friberg asked Chairman Bomberg how benefits are paid out when an employee leaves the town with Bomberg stating we discuss with the employee about the benefits due them as well as any insurance withholding and it is taken care of on their last pay check. Charles Kellstrom stated that when he was on the school board all benefits were understood at the exit interview and paid out within 30 days. Friberg stated that she just wants to understand why a year later after retirement, her husband and others are waiting for benefits due them. Kellstrom recommended to Friberg to send her request by certified mail so someone has to sign for it, and she'll get answers. Friberg requested a copy of the 2020 YE Financial Report for the Florence Utility from Inman as well.

John Bomberg mentioned that the intersection of Montgomery Lake Rd and In-Comm Drive needs to get brushed back as the trees are limiting visibility and he stated he seen a few close calls.

Charles Kellstrom inquired about the installation of a hidden driveway sign on N Montgomery Lake Road as there are 4 driveways that are hidden when traveling south, with Chairman Bomberg stating yes.

A resident on Tall Pines Rd inquired about the speed limit on this road with Chairman Bomberg stating that Sheriff Dan Miller and he will be reviewing the road this spring .

Desi Windell asked if it was cost effective to sell garbage stickers rather than putting it on the tax roll as a special charge. It was explained that eventually the town will be forced to go to an automated service. At that time, the town would need to decide how to collect the revenue lost thru sticker sales either by adding it to the levy or as a special charge. There will be several decisions to be made when this happens and we have been assured that Green For Life will work with us. Some residents may not support the special charge idea, as they may only have one bag of refuse every 2 weeks, while others will like it because they don't have to keep stickers on hand.

Chairman Bomberg, Supervisors John Holbrook and Shane McLain all expressed appreciation for the town highway crew, fire department members, Utility crew, rescue squad, and clerks' office for the work they do as well as working together when any issue comes up. McLain stated our community is unique with many great people who pull together to accomplish a task. We are blessed to have as many volunteers that we have with the level of commitment and dedication.

On a motion by Charles Kellstrom and seconded by John Bomberg it was approved to authorize the town board to purchase land if necessary to improve or lay out a town road, not to exceed \$10,000. A call for the vote was made with all present stating Aye. Zero opposed. Motion carried.

Discussion began about the construction of the Spread Eagle Fire Hall with Chairman Bomberg stating preliminary figures for a building 40'x60' (3 bay) metal building are \$315,000, a high capacity well \$31,000. The building would need to be furnished with equipment. There are currently 6-7 fire department members in the Spread Eagle area which will reduce the response time and again saving residents fire insurance premiums by 17-22% for anyone within 7 air miles of the hall. Bomberg informed everyone that the town has hired a Lake State Land Surveying to provide a survey of Town of Florence property in the location by the cell tower at 4456 Lake Ellwood. Bomberg stated because of the old dump and monitoring wells in this area, we need to identify the best location for the well and fire hall. Bomberg proposed a worse-case scenario of if the Town borrowed \$500,000 for 10 years at 4% interest would increase taxes on a \$100,000 home by \$20 or by \$50 on a \$250,000 value.

John Bomberg made a motion to authorize \$500,000 to begin construction. Discussion was had as to if \$500,000 is enough with the cost of construction material and fuel etc. John Bomberg amended his original motion to authorize up to \$750,000 to begin construction with Tom Brandt seconding the motion. Bomberg submitted two letters of support for the construction of the fire hall. One from Joe & Leslie Buchanon of 1483 North Lake Rd and Jay and Amy Weber of 5238 Dunns Point Rd. Bomberg called for the vote with all present stating Aye. Zero (0) opposed. Motion carried.

On a motion by Gary Benjamin and seconded by Charles Kellstrom it was moved to set the date of the 2023 Annual Meeting on April 18, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the community center. All in favor, motion carried.

On a motion by Paul Lundy and seconded by Vanessa McLain it was moved to adjourn the 2022 Annual Meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Submitted by:

Shelly VanPembrook
Clerk/Treasurer

These minutes are subject to approval at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

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

Ronald Yadro	Cathy Lundy	Eric Windell	Bradley Berndt
Amanda Yadro	Maureen Howard	Desi Windell	Shannon Leiner
Charles Kellstrom	Scott Howard	Vicki Faust	Tim Bomberg
Gretchen Paoupore	Shelby Merckx	Steve Faust	John Holbrook
Lisa Witynski	Mary Brien	Diane Theis	Shane McLain
Joe Witynski	Jerry Brien	Kurt Person	Jessica Klumpp
John Bomberg	Bruce Peterson	Rebecca Peterson	Chris Steber
JoAnne Friberg	Marla Peterson	Kurt Taff	Brandon Jerue
Vanessa McLain	Gary Benjamin	Tom Brandt	Lewis H Krueger
Paul Lundy	Dee Benjamin	Kevin Inman	Roger Valine
Shelly VanPembrook			