

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, April 23, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.
Wascott Town Hall

1. The Annual Town Meeting was called to order by Chair Jenson at 10:00 a.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Verification of qualified electors present at meeting – There were 29 qualified electors in attendance.
4. Approval of Order of Business- Chair Jenson invited guests to add items to the Order of Business, to be discussed under Item 12 (b). The following items were requested by citizens present:
 - a. Les Chandler - Contractor charges at Transfer Station
 - b. Gail Archambeau - CU permits re private campgrounds
 - c. Agnes Kennard - Provide an area for public swimming
 - d. Agnes Kennard - Explore the need for housing
 - e. Thomas Archambeau - Painting of center lines on private roads
 - f. Jan Newsome - Future of campgrounds
 - g. Cathy Dahlberg - Regulations of Airbnb/VRBO in the town
 - h. John Glindinning - Testing of the Town's Gravel
 - i. Steve Trainor - Population density surrounding lakes

A Les Chandler/Steve Trainor motion to approve the Order of Business, including the above agenda items to be added under Item 12 (b); motion carried by a hand vote.

5. Approve Annual Town Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2021 - **A Les Chandler/Laurie Jenrich motion to approve minutes of April 20, 2021; motion carried by a hand vote.**
6. Review Conduct and Powers of Town Meeting- Chair Jenson reviewed the powers that may be exercised by the people at a Town Meeting.
7. Town Officer's Reports
 - a. 2021 Annual Financial Report - Clerk/Treasurer Atkinson presented the audited Financial Report for the year ending December 31, 2021 highlighting the following –
Actual Revenues - \$1,561,437. Explanation for the increase in revenues -
The town received ARPA monies-\$40,000; received additional FD grant monies-\$5,000; increase of timber sales-\$17,000; building permits-\$2,000; public charges for services-\$3,500; miscellaneous revenues-\$13,600.
Actual Expenditures - \$1,325,126. Explanation for the decrease in expenditures -
General Bldgs-Town Hall- did not do scheduled lawn repair-\$7,600; hwy ins-\$8,600; Public Safety/EMS-\$45,000 due to no increase in EMS budget; Public Works-Hwy Maintenance- under on gravel crushing, \$8,000; under on road projects, \$12,000; under on salt/sand purchase, \$13,000; Transfer Station Expense, under by \$35,000 due to change of garbage pick up vendor; Capital Outlay-Lawler Bridge Project, under by \$8,700.
The Town's excess of revenues over expenditures was \$236,311.
Cash Fund Balance beginning 01/01/21 was \$625,002; Cash Fund Balance ending 12/31/21 is \$861,313.
Long Term Debt as of 12/31/21 is \$297,150. The Town incurred no new debt. A detailed financial report was provided.

- b. Town Board Report – Complete report on file. Chair Jenson commented 2021 was a busy and sometimes challenging year. The Town experienced a 20% increase in population due to people relocating. Some of the highlights and accomplishments of the past year include -
- Adoption of Ordinance 2021-03 regulating activities at our boat landings to boat launching and parking only. No camping, campfires, littering or swimming is allowed at these landings. All DNR boating regulations will be enforced. Signs have been posted at landings with contact information to report violations.
 - Road improvement projects completed include 2” overlays on East Mail Road and Up North Road; blacktop repair on S Mail Road; scrub seal/fog seal on Cranberry Narrows Road, Boop Road and Madison Road; and a number of erosion control and ditching projects.
 - A new grader was purchased to replace an older model with many miles on it.
 - The Plan Commission and Town Board were actively involved in reviewing and providing input into a Douglas County Ordinance Amendment 8.0 which has recently passed but will be subject to additional amendments in the near future.
 - 80/20 funding was secured for increased cost of the Lawler Bridge reconstruction; bids were solicited and construction will begin this spring. Applications for several additional road grants were submitted and are pending approval at this time.
 - We worked closely with the Town of Gordon to enhance joint operations and safety at the Transfer Station and our EMS facility. This included a new ramp and equipment at the transfer station.

Recognition was given to the many organizations and individuals who make our town a special place to live, work, and enjoy our lakes and woods.

8. EMS Services – Absent. Complete report on file. Highlights of Director Ebert’s report -
- 209 runs from medicals to fire standby. 104 Gordon, 85 Wascott, 20 mutual aid;
 - Grants received - ECE Roundup, \$5,344 (purchased 2 portable capnography units); SAMHSA federal funding, \$1,650 (used for training).
 - 2022 ambulance is scheduled for delivery in January 2023.
 - Additional staff has helped the service being able to cover more call time, giving members days off and allowing the service to function more efficiently.
 - Thanks was given to the Joint Gordon/Wascott board, Volunteer Fire Departments of Gordon and Wascott for all the help and support throughout the year. And most of all, many thanks to the members of the service for their hard work and dedication to the service.
9. Wascott Volunteer Fire Department – Complete report on file. Chief Michalek’s report -
- Run reports for 2021 - 72 First Responder calls; 5 wildland fires; 7 structure fires; 6 false alarms; 16 car accidents and traffic control; 10 mutual aid; 7 ATV/snowmobile accidents; 6 hazardous conditions/service calls.
 - Wildland fire season is here. If you are going to burn, you must have a permit and please read it front and back. The use of burning barrels and debris burning is still the number one cause of wildland fires in Wisconsin. Please use caution when burning outside and **never** leave any fire unattended.
 - On Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the Fire Department will host its annual open house. Brats and hot dogs and all the fixings will be served. There will be fun activities for the children, including a visit from Smokey the Bear;

- Check your address signs to be sure it is not obstructed by trees or brush and that it is properly displayed at the end of your driveway. Your driveway should be 20' wide and 14' in height for our fire trucks and ambulance to access your home. Each primary structure owner is responsible for posting, replacing and maintaining in good repair, the addresses, address signs and signposts as required by Douglas County Public Safety Ordinance #4.28.
 - The Fire Department is always looking for new members. Feel free to join us at one of our meetings that are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.
10. County Board Supervisor Report – District 2 – Absent. Complete report on file. Highlights of Mary Lou Bergman's report -
- 2021 was a crazy year for everyone due to COVID.
 - Douglas County received \$8 million dollars in ARPA funding, of which \$500,000 has been designated to a Broadband Grant program to assist towns and villages with broadband infrastructure projects.
 - Retirements and resignations have created numerous vacancies in all departments, coupled with the need for seasonal employees in Parks and Highway.
 - Due to COVID, there was no Logger's Conference.
 - Forestry has made tremendous upgrades to County Parks. Park usage has increased two-fold with electric, water, bathroom, playground and pavilion updates. Advance registrations can now be made by calling the Forestry Office.
 - Cooperation has been outstanding between Forestry and the Trails Clubs regarding trail creation and maintenance.
 - Zoning - worked on updating Ord. 8.0, specifically to include a new Agricultural 2 zone district dealing with, but not limited to, deer farms, captive Cervids operations and CAFO's (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations). Campgrounds have been more clearly defined and more specific regulations have been imposed for road signs.
 - Feel free to contact me at 715-376-4450 or 715-817-3267.
11. Civic Organization Reports
- a. Wascott Community Club/Fire Department Auxiliary – Absent. Complete report on file. Highlights of President Patti McDermott's report -
- Monthly meetings resumed last April - the first Monday of each month.
 - In place of the Annual Fun Day, a Bucket Raffle mailing was done which was very successful.
 - The Wascott Historical Park opened the first weekend of June, July and August for tours.
 - Served lunch at the Wascott Fire Department's Annual Open House in June.
 - Sadly, it was decided the Annual Swedish Meatball Supper be cancelled due to not enough workers.
 - The Cans for Kids at the Stop-A-Sec continues to be a significant source of money for the Northwood Scholarship program. Bill Grammond will be handling this project in the future.
 - Our library continues to be popular. A jigsaw puzzle shelf has been added.
 - The following entities received donations on behalf of the Club - CASDA, G/W Food Shelf, Comforts Food Shelf, G/W EMS, September Fest, Minong Senior Center and Northwood School (Backpack Food Program, Winter Outer Clothing, Christmas Adopt a Family, Scholarships, Kids Christmas Shopping Day and School Supplies).

b. Four Seasons Recreational Club - Complete report on file. Highlights of President

Youngquist's report -

- Had the annual Business Appreciation Event and poker run. Ended the day with a Winter raffle draw at View Point.
- In May was the club's Spring Clean-up and Open House/hot dog feed at the Stop-a-Sec. New club apparel was available.
- June - had the 1st Annual Summer Kick Off Trail ride organized by Wayne Orrey.
- Meat raffles were held 2x per month at the Viewpoint on the 1st and 3rd Saturday's at 2 p.m. each month.
- Club meetings are held the 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m.
- September 4th was the Annual Food n' Fun event which was a huge success.
- Fall Colors Ride was held on September 25th. Over 40 ATV/UTV's participated.
- October 9th was Fall trail clean-up.
- Club's groomer operators took to the trails 2-3 times per week. Their dedication and commitment to keep the trails groomed is much appreciated.
- The Club was asked by Northwest Trails Association to take over 12 additional miles of summer ATV/UTV trail maintenance plus 24 miles of winter ATV/UTV/Snowmobile trails. We were honored to take this on. To support the additional trail maintenance, the club acquired a track truck groomer, a hydraulic brusher/mower and a back blade. A thank you to all the volunteers and corporate sponsors - you are very much appreciated.

Please thank a groomer who give up so much of their time volunteering to groom the trails.

c. Wascott Tourism & Development Association – Complete report on file. Highlights of President Jon Meteraud's report -

- Wascott...A Way of Life
- The association does lots of advertising in the Washburn and Douglas County brochures.
- The Association works with businesses of Wascott to aid and promote getting information out to the surrounding area;
- Visit the web page at www.visitwascott.com

d. Gordon-Wascott Historical Society - Complete report on file. President Jan Jenson provided the following highlights -

Due to lingering issues with COVID 19, we had to curtail some of our previously planned activities in 2021. This included a program at our Annual Meeting and the cancellation of several Board meetings. Still, we accomplished a great deal this year, including the following highlights -

- The 1907 Railroad Depot in Gordon was reopened to the public after extensive reorganization and creation of new displays. A Gift Shop was set up in the Depot.
- The Whalen House Museum had extensive reorganization of displays, inventorying of artifacts and the creation of a computerized database of artifacts and collections took place. New bookshelves were built for the new Genealogical Research room, and a Native American room was created. Replacement of exterior siding and installation of windows began.
- The Wascott Historical Park held Open Houses the first weekend of the summer months.

- Had the Annual Ice Cream Social held at the Gordon Town Hall.
- Brian Finstad was appointed as the Historian. Brian held a number of walking tours over the summer.
- Facebook Page was very popular with over 800 members using the site.
- Continue to promote and distribute the historical brochures for the Whalen House and Depot in Gordon, Wascott's Historical Park and the Solon Springs log home and museum.
- The Major Donor program has been very successful in raising funds.

Our Historical Society is planning a number of exciting new events this summer including a Grand Re-Opening over Memorial Day weekend. The Whalen House and Depot will be open. Planned events include a wine tasting, music, historical tours of Gordon and the Gordon Cemetery, an Open House at the historic Meffert cabin, a flea market and refreshments. On behalf of the Board of Directors, thanks and appreciation to the Town of Gordon and Wascott for their generous support, Board members, museum staff and community volunteers.

A report was provided by the Plan Commission. Current members are Lynn Koalska, Chair, Mike Bodeen, Vice Chair, Jan Newsome, Pete Stopinski, Marv Thompson, commissioners, Kim Sorensen, board liaison. The Plan Commission meets on an "as needed basis." Thanked Jane Russo for her service in early 2021. Mike Bodeen provided the following issues addressed in 2021 -

- Preliminary meetings to evaluate a referral from the Town Board to consider sale of up to 30 acres of town owned property located on Ball Park Road. The Plan Commission recommended that the Town Board consider sale of 5 acres for construction of rental housing. Sale of any town property is subject to the authorization of a majority vote of town electors to authorize the Town Board to proceed. The town electors voted down the proposal on April 20, 2021.
- Review of an application to rezone 5 acres of land zoned RR1, Residential-Recreation District to R2 Residential District for the purpose of authorizing a conditional use permit for a hobby farm for horses. The area was amidst many RR1 parcels on Persons Lake with year-round and summer homes. The Plan Commission raised issues as to whether this constituted spot-zoning and if it was legal rezoning under case law. This rezoning is in the hands of Douglas County with results of litigation pending.
- Review of proposed changes to the Douglas County 8.0 Zoning Ordinance. The Plan Commission's significant concerns related to the regulation of campgrounds. Issues were raised regarding number of campsites per acre, number of campsites on a parcel within a zoning district being more permissive than the limit of a single one-family year-round or seasonal dwelling on the same parcel, the lack of tax support from camping uses, the impact of large campgrounds on the development within the Town of Wascott and the impact of campgrounds on adjacent property owners.
- There are no future Plan Commission meetings scheduled due to term expirations and resignations.

12. Specific Matters for Discussion by Qualified Electors Present

- Set meeting date for 2023 Annual Town Meeting – A Jan Newsome/Les Chandler motion to set the Annual Meeting date for Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 10 a.m., at the Wascott Town Hall. Motion carried by hand vote.**

b. Items Added by Town Meeting

- 1) Les Chandler - Contractor charges at Transfer Station - Would like to have the G/W Jt. Board look into why all private garbage contractors are not required to have permits to dump their garbage at the G/W Transfer Station. Asked if one of the Brush Collection Sites could be open year-round.
- 2) Gail Archambeau - CU permits re private campgrounds - The issues/concerns residents had in regards to private campgrounds was the noise from generators and how was the gray water being disposed from the campers. She felt there should be regulations put in place to control these two issues. **A Gail Archambeau/Lauri Jennrich motion that the Town Board include the following two conditions on all applications for conditional use permits for private campgrounds in the Town of Wascott - 1) Annual physical proof of County approved sanitation facilities must be provided; 2) When, within earshot of neighbors, generators may not be used as a source of electrical power for the campground. Secondly, to include these conditions to the three applications sent to the Douglas County Zoning for consideration at their meeting on May 11; motion carried by a majority hand vote.**
- 3) Agnes Kennard - Provide an area for public swimming - Agnes commented the use of DNR public lake accesses is increasing in number and one of the problems that persists at the public accesses in the form of the public swimming is also increasing. This problem will increase as the population grows. Not everybody who wants to swim in Wascott can live on a lake. Resorts and campsites do not offer their beaches to the public. The Town does not offer no public swimming beach as an alternative. **A Agnes Kennard/Jon Meteraud motion that the Town of Wascott study the problem with a goal of purchasing an area that can be offered as a choice for public swimming; motion denied by a majority hand vote.**
- 4) Agnes Kennard - Explore the need for housing - Agnes commented the fundamental problem in the town is a lack of varied housing available in Wascott. Campgrounds are being discouraged. The need to maintain balance between full time residents and potential increased revenue is encouraged. The Town does not offer feasible housing for their elderly, widowed or widowers who want to remain but have to move to find reasonable or suitable housing. The population is increasing and the Town should be more competitive in their offering of housing choices. Starter homes are necessary for balanced population. Neighboring townships with foresight, do offer a variety of housing choices. The Town owns acreage for 110 years that has provided no tax base. **A Agnes Kennard/Jon Meteraud motion to direct the Board to explore the need for housing.** Discussion - Cathy Dahlberg commented this issue was addressed last year and was voted down. Tom Doig commented if such a good idea, why doesn't a private developer come in and purchase land and construct this type housing. **A Jan Newsome/Steve Trainor motion to table; motion carried by a majority hand vote.**
- 5) Thomas Archambeau - Painting of center lines on private roads - Thomas questioned why are there center lines painted on roads that dead end. Tom Michalek stated that there are some roads too narrow to have center lines. The Board will look into this.
- 6) Jan Newsome - Future of campgrounds - Discussed under 12.b.2.

- 7) Cathy Dahlberg - Regulations of Airbnb/VRBO in the town - Cathy commented she sees an increase in Airbnb/VRBO in the town and associated with that is a problem with garbage. Would like to know what regulations for garbage disposal there is. Also, how are these rentals being regulated. Is it through Douglas County? Jeannette Atkinson commented there are Transfer Station cards available for all homeowners enabling them to drop their garbage off at the G/W Transfer Station. Stop by the Clerk's Office to obtain a card. The Board will gather more information on this issue.
- 8) John Glindinning - Testing of the Town's Gravel - John does not think the Town's gravel meets the standard. Just does not think it has enough binder in it. Would like to see another test performed. **A John Glindinning/Mike Bodeen motion recommending the Town Board perform a WI DOT Standard Specification Test; motion carried by a majority hand vote.**
- 9) Steve Trainor - Population density surrounding lakes - **A Steve Trainor/Les Chandler motion advising the Town Board to perform a population density study related to our lakes and the impact it has on the quality of our lakes; motion carried by a majority hand vote.**

13. **A Jan Newsome/Les Chandler motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.; motion carried by a hand vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannette Atkinson
Clerk/Treasurer

(Posted this 28th day of April, 2022 at the Town Hall, Stop-A-Sec, FD,
Backwoods Bar & Grill and the town's website - townofwascott.org)