

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, April 22, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.
Wascott Town Hall

1. The Annual Town Meeting was called to order by Acting Chair Youngquist at 10:00 a.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Verification of qualified electors present at meeting – There were 26 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. Jan Newsome – update on Pickle Ball Court
 - b. Steve Trainor – open up all town roads as ATV/UTV routes
 - c. John Glindinning – would like gravel tested

A Steve Trainor/Sheryl Beglinger 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 23, 2022- **A Chuck McDermott/Kim Sorensen motion to approve minutes of April 23, 2022; motion carried by a hand vote.**
6. Review Conduct and Powers of Town Meeting- Acting Chair Youngquist reviewed the powers that may be exercised by the people at a Town Meeting.
7. Town Officer's Reports
 - a. 2022 Annual Financial Report - Clerk/Treasurer Atkinson presented the audited Annual Financial Report for the year ending December 31, 2022 highlighting the following –
Actual Revenues - \$1,17,772. Explanation for the increase in revenues -
The town received the second ARPA fund payment of \$40,402; took a loan out in the amount of \$119,300 for a new EMS ambulance. Cash flow was reduced by \$415,634 for the purchase of major equipment and additional road repair.
Actual Expenditures - \$2,133,406. The Town purchased a new grader (paid cash \$274,000) and a down payment on a new FD Tanker was made (\$110,000). An additional road was paved with partial funding coming from a TRIS/LRIP grant.
Cash Fund Balance beginning 01/01/22 was \$861,313; Cash Fund Balance ending 12/31/22 is \$445,679.
Long Term Debt as of 12/31/22 is \$339,817. The Town incurred new debt of \$119,300 for a new EMS ambulance. A detailed financial report was provided.
 - b. Town Board Report – Complete report on file. Chair Jenson - Some of the highlights of the past year include -
 - Completion of Lawler Bridge reconstruction
 - Securing a \$684,000 grant to reconstruct the Lidberg Bridge and a TRIS grant for the S Mail Road project
 - Purchase of a new FD Tender and a new ambulance
 - Working with the Commissioner of RR Office to enhance safety at Red Lake and Newsome Road RR crossings.
 - Working with Gordon to enhance safety and operations at the Transfer Station and EMS.
 - Adoption of a resolution supporting the elimination of partisan primaries in Wisconsin.
 - Sandblasting and painting of the schoolhouse/church in our Historical Park.

- Working with our local campgrounds, lake associations reviewing and providing input into DC Zoning Ord. 8.0
 - Advocated with legislators and local officials to “save” the Gordon post office.
 - A number of road maintenance projects were completed.
8. Gordon/Wascott EMS- Complete report on file. Director Betty Ebert’s report –
- Run volume for 2022 was as follows: 230 total runs. 100/Gordon; 90/Wascott; 18/fire standby; 22/mutual aid.
 - Grants were secured in an amount of \$200,000. Thanks to Irene Bott for her hard work in securing these grants.
 - The new ambulance arrived in November.
9. Wascott Volunteer Fire Department – Complete report on file. Chief Michalek’s report -
- Run reports for 2021 - 74 First Responder calls; 7 wildland fires; 11 structure fires; 7 false alarms; 5 car accidents and traffic control; 7 mutual aid; 3 ATV/snowmobile accidents; 16 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 17, 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 – Complete report on file. Highlights of Mary Lou Bergman’s report -
- The Land Services and Zoning Departments have been reviewing Douglas County Ord. 8.0. Have updated and added to the definitions and continue to work on the section specific to campgrounds.
 - The County had many personnel changes due to retirement.
 - Covid forced the discontinuance of youth representatives seated on the County Board. We were able to reinstate those 2 positions on March 2023.
 - Since inception of advanced County Park registrations began, usage and revenues are up well over 60%.
 - Due to a recession in the forest products markets, this was the first time in approximately 5 years the Forestry Department was unable to subsidize our general fund.
 - Partnering with area associations and citizens groups, Land Conservation continues to fight the Aquatic Invasive Species battle.
 - Feel free to contact me at 715-376-4450 or 715-817-3267.

11. Civic Organization Reports

- a. Wascott Community Club/Fire Department Auxiliary – Complete report on file. Highlights of President Patti McDermott’s report -
 - Friday Fun Day is back. It will be held on Friday, June 9, 2023 at 11:30 in our beautiful town hall. A lunch and bucket raffles help us to support area food shelves. In 2022, we were able to donate \$2,500.
 - Cans for Kids raised over \$4,000 to help the Northwood School student scholarships and other programs.
 - We continue to support our local fire department and supply treats to serve for their Open House in June.
 - The WCC/FDA works hard to maintain our library and town hall. Each Spring we clean the school and church in our Wascott Historical Park.
 - We assist with the stuffing of tax envelopes in December, supply treats for election days, and bake and serve cookies at the Annual Children’s Christmas Party. We also donate and help out at SeptemberFest each Fall. In addition, we have donated to CASDA and the G/W EMS.
 - Join us on the first Monday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at the Wascott Town Hall.
- b. Four Seasons Recreational Club - Complete report on file. Highlights of President Youngquist’s report -
 - Due to the record snowfall this past year, trails became impassable. The many volunteers donated over 200 hours of their time to clear the trails.
 - Four of the club’s members are now Certified Safety Instructors for snowmobile and ATV/UTV instruction. In December, the first 8 hour training class was held. All 24 participants passed the certification.
 - In addition to our annual spring and fall ATV/UTV ride that was held, the first all-female Snowmobile Ride was held in February. This was so well received, a similar Women’s ATV/UTV ride is scheduled for May 19. It is being done in conjunction with our neighboring club, the Minong Trails.
 - Our 32nd Annual Food and Fun was held Labor Day weekend. Continues to draw over 1500 people. This is the club’s annual fund raising event.
- 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 or like us on Facebook.
 - Membership includes – Circle Pines, Crystal Lake Campground, Seaman’s, Up North Resort, Pogo’s, Crystal Lake Bar, Bootlegger’s, Look Out, Stop A Sec, Ole’s Outpost, Viewpoint. New Members – Cranberry Resort, L&L Storage, Wheeler’s RV Park, Backwoods Bar & Grill, Northwood Shears. Associate Members – Gruzy’s, Sportsman’s Headquarters, 4 Season’s Rec Club, Blackbear Golf.

- d. Gordon-Wascott Historical Society - Complete report on file. President Jan Jenson provided the following highlights -
- The Whalen House Museum and the Railroad Depot showcased many new displays and re-organized space. A total of 632 guests visited these facilities.
 - A Grand Re-opening at the Depot was held during Memorial Day weekend.
 - Hosted the annual Ice Cream social during the 4th of July weened.
 - Exterior repairs and painting of the Whalen House Museum took place. Also, the church and schoolhouse at the Wascott Historical Park were re-painted.
 - Wascott's Historical Park held Open Houses fir first weekend of each month.
 - Brochures highlighting the Whalen House Museum and Depot in Gordon, Wascott's Historical Park and the Solon Springs log home and museum.
 - A new G/W Historical Society website was launched – www.gordonwascotthistoricalsociety.org.
 - As we grow and expand our programming, we have worked hard to generate the revenue needed to preserve our history. Many individuals are now becoming members or contributing to our Major Donor program.
 - A grant has been secured to help with the development of a Gordon Trading Post Park site adjacent to the Post Office in Gordon.
 - Applying for a Wisconsin Historical Marker to commemorate the site where Antoine Gordon established his Trading Post in 1858 at the site of an Ojibwe Village.

12. Specific Matters for Discussion by Qualified Electors Present

- a. Set meeting date for 2023 Annual Town Meeting – **A Chuck McDermott/Jan Newsome motion to set the Annual Meeting date for Saturday, April 20, 2024 at 10 a.m., at the Wascott Town Hall. Motion carried by hand vote.**
- b. Items Added by Town Meeting
- 1) Jan Newsome – Update on the Pickle Ball Court- Acting Chair Youngquist commented there would be more details forthcoming at the next Regular Town Board meeting.
 - 2) Steve Trainor – Open up all town roads as ATV/UTV routes.
Steve commented since Douglas County has opened all their roads, and there are adjacent towns who have done the same, it's a good idea to have the Town of Wascott's road all open. At times, people have to illegally use unmarked roads to access another. Chuck McDermott agreed stating it seems many towns are going that route. Jan Newsome does not oppose, however, would like to see safety issues addressed.
A Chuck McDermott/Bucky Podgorak motion recommending the Town Board approve the opening of all roads in the Town as ATV/UTV routes; motion carried by hand vote.
 - 3) John Glindinning – would like gravel tested.
John Glindinning would like samples taken of the Town's gravel. It could be done when the contractor is doing the crushing. Would like to know the quality of the gravel for binding. John commented it did not meet the standard when tested a while ago. Chuck McDermott questioned if not up to standard, where can we get it tested. Pete Stopinski commented binding is very important for the gravel to be effective.
A John Glindinning/Bucky Podgorak motion to recommend the Town Board have the gravel tested for the binding quality. It was suggested it be done during the crushing process which won't be done until 2024. Motion carried by hand vote.

Bob Beglinger commented he thought the snow plowing was the worst since he's lived here. Bob further commented he thought the snowplowing could have been done quicker and more often. Thomas Archambault-not easy; was a difficult year with so much snow. Dick Boop-when they plowed, they did a good job. Gail Archambault-could always get out.

13. **A Chuck McDermott/Bucky Podgorak motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.; motion carried by a voice vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannette Atkinson
Clerk/Treasurer

(Posted this 2nd day of May at the Town Hall, Stop-A-Sec, FD,
Backwoods Bar & Grill and the town's website - townofwascott.org)