



Town of Washington

Vilas County, Wisconsin

April Annual Meeting

Tuesday, April 16, 2024, 5:00 pm, at the Washington Town Hall

Located at 2301 Town Hall Rd

Visit the town website for more information

town-of-washington.org

Board Members Present: Jim Egan–Chairman, Art Granat–Supervisor, Carole Linn –Supervisor, Nancy Sobralski –Town Clerk, Tiffany Bolte –Town Treasurer. There were more than 40 people in attendance.

1. **Call to order:** Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited by all.
3. **Certify Qualified Electors:** Egan reviewed protocol for who can vote at the annual meeting. Egan requested electors to raise their hand to be called on and state their name for proper recording of the meeting minutes. Motion Pat Weber, seconded by Doug Johnson to vote aye by hand vote; all voting aye, no objections, approved.
4. **Approval of the Agenda:** Motion Sue Saxhaug, seconded by Pat Weber to approve the agenda; all voting aye, no objections, approved.
5. **Approval of the previous meeting minutes from April 18, 2023 – Annual Town Meeting:** Motion Sue Saxhaug, seconded by Melissa McDonald to approve the minutes, all voting aye, no objections, approved.
6. **Treasurer's Annual Report:** The Treasurer's report was read aloud by Treasurer Bolte. Motion Pat Weber, seconded by Holly Tomlanovich to approve the treasurer's report, all voting aye, no objections, approved.
7. **Cranberry Island:** Holly Tomlanovich advised the creation of an outdoor pit toilet has been a challenge. Working on securing resources to hand dig for installation of the outdoor pit toilet has been difficult due to finding contractors. However, upon completion, the outdoor facility will not require much maintenance and will not include any running water. The location selected is away from the picnic area.
8. **Committee Updates:**
 - a. **Eagle River Union Airport:** Rob Hom not present; no update available.
 - b. **Joint Municipal Fire Department:** Michael Anderson reported activities at the new fire station include installation of air circulation equipment, completion of the restrooms, and landscaping. There were no questions from the town electors.
 - c. **Eagle River Room Tax:** Sue Saxhaug reported on the Eagle River Room Tax Commission. The goal of the commission is to promote area tourism with funds collected via room tax. In

2023, \$721,000 was collected in room tax and approximately 53% of this amount was from Town of Washington rentals. With the funds, the commission was able to provide grants to local groups such as the SnoEagles, Trees for Tomorrow, Praise in the Pines, and the Eagle River Historical Society. The Town of Lincoln and Town of Washington also received grant money. At the end of February 2024, cash on hand was \$473,000.

d. Animal Control: Melissa McDonald reported there were 7 calls in 2023. In 2024 to date, there was 1 warning letter issued and 1 citation in process.

e. Adopt-A-Road: Jill Faulkner advised the Town of Washington is the only township in Vilas County with the Adopt-A-Road program. Activity for the program is slow due to the time of the year, but she is soliciting town residents to adopt a road for bi-annual clean-up. This year's goal is to build the program to a more robust state where more roads can be added that are not currently maintained. We also need updates on roads that have been claimed but no longer maintained.

F. Unified Lower Eagle River Chain of Lakes: Carole Linn explained the purpose of this commission, which started in 2007, is to manage the milfoil on the chain. The commission is comprised of the Towns of Washington, Lincoln, Cloverland and the City of Eagle River. Programs are grant funded. The Town of Washington has approximately 40% of the shoreline miles of the Chain. At the beginning of management, there were 300 acres of milfoil, and in the fall of 2023, there are approximately 62 acres of milfoil, which is a slight increase over the last couple of years. The Commission will continue to hand harvest as the primary mitigation exercise.

g. Community Wildfire Protection Plan: Carole Linn reported on CWPP activity. The CWPP is sponsored by the DNR and is a partnership between the DNR, the Town of Washington, the US Forest Services, and the Eagle River Fire Department. Over the last 8 years, we have received \$88,969 in grant funding. There has been no cost to the town. Activities include brush site funding, the Spring mailing, roadside chipping and home ignition zone assessments. In 2024, 118 residences around Carpenter Lake will be offered Home Ignition Zone assessments. This is the largest number of assessments to date. It is voluntary at no cost to the homeowner. Because we have a CWPP, we were eligible to apply for a federal Community Wildfire Defense Grant. We were awarded nearly \$250,00 for fuel reduction programs consisting of right of way mowing with a new tractor and brush site chipping for 5 years.

h. Walter Olson Memorial Library: Joanne Gehling reported on library activities. At the current time, 50% of town residents have a library card and 6,500 items were checked out last year.

9. **Any matter which can legally be acted on at the Annual Meeting:** Citizen discussion included:
- Salary increases for board members – Pat Weber advises the last increase for the town chairperson and supervisors was done in 2021. Motion Weber for a 5% increase in salary for board members, seconded Holly Tomlanovich, majority voting aye, approved.
 - Discussion of the condition of the American flag – Steve Linn discussed the deteriorating condition of the American flag at the Town Hall. Motion Molly Ahlborn for the purchase of a new flag, seconded by Woody Ahlborn, all voting aye, approved.
 - Deerskin River – Larry Springer explained the current state of heavy silt build up along Deerskin River which has occurred since 2001 when the dam was removed. The heavy silt is affecting recreational activities along with a decline in the fish population. In some areas, the

silt is 3 feet deep. Before any work can be done, a study must be completed to identify possible solutions to the siltation. Study findings will be presented to the DNR to determine remediation efforts. The current cost of the study is \$5,600. Mr. Springer has pledged of approximately \$1,000 and will be contacting ERCLA members for additional monetary support. Motion Springer for the Town of Washington to contribute \$2,000 for the study, seconded Nancy Schaefer, majority voting aye, approved. There was a recommendation from a resident to fund this via room tax commission revenue.

10. Date and Time of 2025 Annual Meeting: Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 5:00 pm

11. Clerk Annual Report: The Clerk's report was read aloud, by general topic, by Clerk Sobraliski. Sobraliski advised the beginning and ending balances correlated to the Treasurer's Report which verifies the Town of Washington expenses and revenues have been balanced for calendar year 2023. Motion Pat Weber, seconded by Sue Saxhaug to approve the Clerk's report, all voting aye, no objections, approved.

12. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Pat Weber, seconded by Steve Linn, all voting aye, no objections, approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.

Nancy Sobraliski –Town Clerk
Approved: