

TOWN OF RIB MOUNTAIN
Special Town Board Meeting
April 9, 2019

Chairman Allen Opall called the April 9, 2019 special meeting (Strategic Session) of the Rib Mountain Town Board to order at 6:05 p.m. at the Rib Mountain Municipal Center, 3700 North Mountain Road, Wausau, WI. Supervisors present included Fred Schaefer, Brad Conklin, Gerry Klein and Jim Legner.

Also present were Administrator Gaylene Rhoden, Community Development Director Steve Kunst, Clerk Joanne Ruechel, and Street/Park Superintendent Scott Turner.

On April 5, 2019, copies of the meeting notice were made available to the media, Town Board, Town Attorney, and posted at the Rib Mountain Municipal Center and Town website.

Offender Ordinance

Administrator Rhoden provided a briefing on this issue. Chairman Opall, Supervisor Klein and Administrator Rhoden had a meeting last month with State Corrections regarding what the Town can do to limit offenders in Town parks. They reported that there is no State or Federal law prohibiting sexual offenders from being in a park. If the Town passes an ordinance, high risk offenders or other sexual offenders who enter our parks would be in violation of the ordinance. The Town Board also discussed if sexual offenders would be allowed to use our trails. The Board recommended that staff create an ordinance prohibiting sexual offenders from being in the Town parks and to bring it back to the Town Board.

Land Purchase for Yard Waste Site

Street and Park Superintendent Turner stated that for the last 10 years the Town has leased a 2-acre parcel of land from Mathy construction for the Town yard waste site. The Town has considered purchasing the site and securing it. The Town Board discussed any environmental concerns that might affect the property. The Town Board recommended that staff draft up an offer to purchase and have the Town Attorney review the document. It then can be brought back to the Town Board. It was also asked of staff that they do a grantor/grantee index search on the property to make sure the property is clean.

General Fund Balance

Administrator Rhoden stated that we have a healthy unassigned fund balance. We do not have any callable debt that we can pay off at this time. The Town Board doesn't need to decided right now where we are going to spend it, but the Town Board does need to assign it to projects by the next budget season. If it is left unassigned, there is a chance that Standards and Poor's will take into consideration the balance amount and would count it against the Town's rating if we were to use large amounts later. The Town Board discussed assigning some of the money for road improvements on Thornapple Road and possibly for Lilac Avenue. The Town Board would like Finance Director Nicole Dunbar to prepare a report that would show if we paid down a certain amount of debt, what value that would provide to the Town. Another question the Town Board had is what would we save on the mill rate by bringing the debt down. Administrator Rhoden mentioned bringing in Financial Advisor Dawn Gunderson from Ehlers to make a presentation to the Board about what the best use is for our unassigned funds.

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TDS Communications

Community Development Director Kunst mentioned that there was a pre-application meeting held recently with TDS Communications. TDS would not be able to provide internet services to all of the Town as they have a limited area that they service. They would like to put up a storage facility on Town property to house their fiber optic equipment. Currently, they are considering putting it at the SAFER location and leasing this land from the Town. The Town Board discussed having TDS pay franchise fees to the Town or providing free internet services to the Town of Rib Mountain fire department, the Municipal Center, the Sanitary District building and the Public Works building in exchange for leasing the land. The Town Board recommended that staff start discussions with TDS about what they plan to do and what TDS could offer the Town in exchange for the land.

Mission Statement

Administrator Rhoden began by saying that we have a vision statement in the comprehensive plan, but we do not have a mission statement. A mission statement states what we are and the vision statement states where we want to go. The Town Board discussed the idea of a mission statement and decided not to create one at this time.

General Comments

Supervisor Schaefer brought up allowing food trucks to sell their products within the Town limits. He mentioned that other communities that he has been to have set up concrete “pads” for the food trucks to park on. They would have electric and sewer services if they park on the pads. The Town Board discussed have a permanent area in the Town where the food trucks could park and there would be seating areas nearby. The only thing that would change would be the food trucks that would come and go. The Town Board would like to see a private enterprise step up and develop an area in the Town for this purpose. We also need to review our ordinance for this type of use and possibly amend it to allow the use.

Supervisor Schaefer spoke about police protection within the Town. He stated that we cannot pay the Sheriff’s Department anymore money for law enforcement services. Supervisor Schaefer would like the Code Enforcement Officer to provide a report on if the Sheriff’s Department is responsive to citizen complains and issues. Administrator Rhoden stated that in 2021, the Town would have enough money to hire one full-time police officer along with having a vehicle.

The Town Board discussed what we should do with the newly donated land next to the dog park. Administrator Rhoden stated that the wetland delineation will be completed this summer. She also recommended that the Town hire a consulting firm like MSA to come up with a park plan for the site.

The recent flooding in the Town was also discussed. Two of the areas affected were Heron Avenue and the other area was the South Mountain Road area near Flax Lane and Hollibush Lane. The Town Board discussed ways in which we could prevent the flooding in the future. The Town Board asked staff to look into prior contracts that the City of Wausau have used to see what can be done.

Adjourn - Motion by Legner /Schaefer to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. Questioned and carried 5:0.

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Submitted by
Joanne Ruechel
Town of Rib Mountain Clerk

Note: These minutes are not to be considered official until acted upon at an upcoming regular meeting, therefore, they are subject to revision.