

**TOWN OF NAMAKAGON
MINUTES FOR ANNUAL MEETING
TUESDAY JULY 14, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairman Rasmussen called the annual meeting to order at 7:00pm. Present were Chairman Rasmussen, Supervisors Jack McGregor and Jim Krueger, Treasurer Arlene Skultety, Clerk Laura Bjork and 13 others; Carol McGregor, Mike D'Andrea, Ted Peichel, JoAnn Schultz, Kevin Johnson, Mary D'Andrea, Dave Haan, Tomi Backlund, Steve Backlund, Kristine Lendved, Larry Prybil, Judy Krueger and Hans Rasmussen. Five attendees were not residents; Ted Peichel, Kevin Johnson, Tomi Backlund, Steve Backlund and Dave Haan. Eleven attendees were residents: Jack McGregor, Robert Rasmussen, James Krueger, Arlene Skultety, Carol McGregor, Mike D'Andrea, Mary D'Andrea, JoAnn Schultz, Larry Prybil, Judy Krueger and Hans Rasmussen.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MOTION made by Larry Prybil to dispense the reading of the minutes from the 2019 Annual Town Meeting and approve the minutes as presented. MOTION seconded by JoAnn Schultz and carried.

MOTION made by Tomi Backlund to approve the minutes from the Special Elector Meeting held on November 21, 2019. MOTION seconded by Arlene Skultety and carried.

Financial Report was presented by Treasurer Skultety. Account balances as of January 1, 2019 were \$304,398.10. Total Revenues for 2019 were \$1,000,437.78 and Advance Tax Collections were \$470,430.40. Total Disbursements for 2019 were \$1,020,892.50. Account balances as of December 31, 2019 were \$754,373.78. Some changes from last year were increase in ambulance subsidies, increased road constructions, increased recycling and garbage expenses, revenue of an election sub-grant, and a decrease in PILT revenues. MOTION made by Steve Backlund to approve the financial report as presented. MOTION seconded by Mike D'Andrea and carried.

Ambulance Report was presented by Laura Bjork, Business Manager for Great Divide Ambulance Service. We started the year with an on-going lawsuit, which was resolved in the beginning of the year. The lawsuit cost Great Divide over \$250,000 to settle. This lawsuit brought many changes for Great Divide. We hired a Human Resources representative from Duluth who helped in drawing up and implementing an Employee Handbook. We also changed pay rates and added overtime wages and benefits; QSEHRA and PTO with the help of HR. All of these changes came after the budget was completed, so the impact on the budget was tremendous. We used over \$600,000 in the saved building fund to be able to balance the 2019 budget, which only \$220,000 was budgeted to be used from the building fund. We also used our HR rep to help in putting up ads for employment. We hired 1 Paramedic, Paul Baumgart and 5 EMTs, John Bush, Bryce Jolma, David Jolma, Dave Wells and Elisa Wilson. We lost one Paramedic, John Kaliska and one EMT, Dale Jolma. We have hired another EMT in 2020, John Tuttle and

lost 2 EMTs, Ron Brendalen and John Kaliska. Scheduling continues to be a challenge for Rob Puls. We have many EMTs but few Paramedics and there is a definite struggle to fill the schedule with the available paramedics. Last year we purchased a new Van Ambulance costing Great Divide a little over \$90,000. Currently we have 2 ambulances in bad condition. There are a lot of costs going out in repairs for these ambulances this year as we have not budgeted to purchase a new ambulance for 2020. The Great Divide Ambulance Board has spent many evenings in meetings going over so many things in 2019, and I'd like to thank them for their time and effort in helping to get all of this done! Our board does not receive wages, and their time and efforts are greatly appreciated. We ended the year contemplating purchasing new property for feasible living quarters and ambulance housing for the service. We have put in an offer, which has been accepted, of \$250,000 for the Runamuk Building in Cable on Hwy 63. This offer is contingent upon all four-township elector and board approval. The building will be purchased with the leftover saved building fund money, without asking for any funding from the townships. The building will need renovations, in which we have hired C&S Design to go in and give an estimate of the renovations. They will cost approximately \$250,000, and we have asked the four townships to help with those costs. Once the building is purchased, the current Great Divide house will be sold, and that money could potentially go towards the renovation costs. We had a busy year with ambulance calls; very similar to the previous 2018 year. In 2019, Great Divide Ambulance went on 1,272 runs, which was slightly lower than last year, but much higher than in 2017 and 2016. The Ambulance Service responded to 31 Fire Standbys, 1 Fire/Hazmat call, 10 Dead on Arrivals, 15 No Charges, 1 Lift Assist, 25 calls were cancelled, 39 calls refused care, 6 calls had no patient, 1 homelink call, 9 false alarms, 1 standby, 1 swat standby, 1 transferred care, 2 calls in which patients passed away, 11 treat and release calls with no transport, and 246 transports, of which 127 were ALS 1 and 118 were ALS 2 and 1 board member and 873 Transfers, of which 216 were critical care, 229 were ALS 1, 397 were ALS 2, and 31 were non-emergent. Currently Great Divide is running non-stop. We are still in need of employees, preferably paramedics. If this rate of calls continues, we will be way ahead of 2019. The town contracts with the other six townships will be up for renewal or termination soon. Currently the ambulance service is using saved funds to balance their budget. This cannot continue, as funds will run out. The board will be meeting to consider the future plans to allow for easier scheduling and a way to balance budgets for the future.

Fire Department report was presented by Dave Haan . There are 17 members on the Department. We have lost two of our members this past year to retirement. Sarah Boles and John Sill have decided to retire from active duty, and I would like to thank them for their years of service to the community. We have gained three new members, Travis Jung, John Moore, and Kelly Nelson. We welcome them to the Department. All our members have gone through Entry Level Fire training which is the basic level of training to become a Fire Fighter. It consists of two parts, both of which require 30 hours of training, both classroom and hands on training for a total of 60 hours of training. Six of us have attained the level of Fire Fighter 1 and 2, which involved 96 hours of classroom and hands on training as well as another 16 hours of haz-mat training. To become certified as a Fire Fighter 2 there is another 42 hours of training and you must pass a state

exam. Matt Piller and I are EMT's and take shifts for Great Divide Ambulance Service. All our Fire Fighters have been trained in CPR. I am an emergency Fire Warden for the DNR and can issue burning permits; they are an annual permit and can be picked up at my place of business. Dave Haan is the Asst. Chief and a Fire Training instructor for WITC and the Fire Training Specialist for WITC and also the President of the Bayfield County Fire Association. Dave has been with the Department for 36 years.

We meet the second and fourth Thursday of the month, the first one is at the Main Station and the second one is at the Pioneer Station. The Pioneer Station was built as a cooperative effort between the Towns of Grand View and Namakagon to cut down the response time needed to service properties in the North end of Namakagon and South end of Grand View. Our meetings start at 7pm and end at 9:30pm, which is 60 hours of training for the year. We also attend other training offered throughout the year put on by WITC and other organizations. Some of our Fire Fighters take extra classes that include Landing Zone training for landing a medical helicopter, Fire Inspectors State conference in Green Bay and Fire Codes Update class. We do fire inspections once every six months in all the commercial buildings in the Township. There is a three-day Emergency Services Conference put on by WITC in Rice Lake that several members attend in the spring and there is one in Duluth in January that is attended as well. Several members are Weather Spotters who take a class that is offered in the spring before the severe weather arrives. There are other classes taken throughout the year to help keep our skills up to date. All our Fire Fighters are Wild Land Trained and attend a refresher every spring put on by the DNR and Forest Service before the Wild Land Fire Season starts.

In the year 2022 our engine #1 will have to be replaced as it will reach the end of its 20-year lifespan. With construction almost a year out we need to start looking for a replacement in 2021. With the price of equipment rising each year, I expect the cost to be over \$300,000 but we will have that piece of equipment for 20 years. The Town Board has been putting funds aside for this purchase. We have replaced some of our aging rescue equipment with funds we have received from our fundraising efforts. We have replaced our 1998 Polaris ATV that we use for off road rescue with a new Polaris ATV equipped with tracks so it can be used in summer and winter. There was no cost to the town for this equipment.

Since the last meeting, we have had 22 emergency calls; 9 motor vehicle accidents: 3 snowmobile, 2 ATV, 2 auto, and 2 motorcycle, 7 alarm calls, 1 landing zone set up, 4 wild land fires and 1 car fire.

Our equipment consists of three engines, one of which is a combination Pumper Tender, one Tanker, Chevrolet Suburban Vehicle, Chevrolet Equipment Truck and Chevrolet Brush Truck. We have a John Deere Gator with tracks at the Pioneer Station for off-road rescues in the winter and summer. It is equipped with a water tank and a pump for Wild Land Fire Fighting and a med bed for extracting injured patients out of the woods. At the Main Station, we have a Polaris ATV with tracks and a rescue sled for off-road rescues. Along with off-road rescues, we also do ice rescue and open water rescue.

Some of the things we volunteer for during the year are the Bikie, Fourth of July Parade, Fun on the Water, Fire House 50 Bike Race, Fat Tire Bike Race, Weenie Roast Weekend, Fire Prevention at the Drummond School and the Northwoods Pre-school. We also have an Open House. Jay Wilson will be there to do the annual Fire Extinguisher inspection and services. We also have a live Fire Extinguisher Trainer used to teach the proper use

of a fire extinguisher. We have used this several times for service organizations such as the Lion's Club, Boy Scouts, Namakagon Community Club, and students at the Drummond School. It is available for any organization or business along with personnel for training. If interested call the Chief. There are three fundraisers during the year; the Weenie Roast weekend at Lakewood's Resort, the Annual Pancake Breakfast Memorial Weekend and the Annual Hunter's Dinner put on by the Namakagon Community Club the first Sunday of Deer Season. The Community Club has supported the Fire Department since its beginning in 1971. They have helped us purchase a lot of equipment we still use today that would not have been able to be purchased without their help. Every spring we give out scholarships to graduating Drummond High School Students going into the emergency services. We have donated money to students going into EMS, Law Enforcement and Fire Services. Over the past years we have donated over \$5,000 in scholarships in the name of Paul Feckner whose family started the fund after Paul's passing in 2003.

One of my concerns is the addressing numbers located at the end of your driveways. These are not Fire Numbers; they are addressing numbers used by Fire, EMS, and Law Enforcement to locate your home or business in case of an emergency. If we cannot see the number, time is wasted trying to locate your residence. Sometimes in the summer and winter they get blocked by snow or by branches or tall grass. Look at your number and see how easy it is to see from a distance. If it is blocked, please make sure it is visible from both sides. Make sure a Fire Truck or an Ambulance can get down your driveway. Our trucks are large and need extra room to maneuver so brush back the trees from the sides of your road. This will make our job easier getting to your location in case of an emergency.

Tomi Backlund asked about how to get a hold of them with lack of cell service. Dave Haan responded that it is very difficult not having good cell service, so people have to get to someone who has a land line. Supervisor Krueger stated that between ambulance service and fire department, we are very fortunate! Other services envy what we have. There are many qualified people who represent the town! Thank you.

Airport Commission Report was presented by Chairman Rasmussen. The commission is in the process of doing an environmental assessment, which analyzes tree heights. The trees need to be removed and will be a two to three-year process. Anyone that has any property around the airport might be contacted by Cooper Engineering, who is working on this project. We have only one hanger left on the airport to rent, then we would need to expand. We are using a reduced threshold right now so the airport can continue to function. A little crack-seal work is being done as well.

Comprehensive planning report was presented by James Krueger. The commission met and worked on updating the Comprehensive Plan, which was completed in the fall. They just started, since the completion of the Comp Plan, working on an Emergency Plan. There were a couple of meetings cancelled due to COVID.

Law enforcement report was presented by Kevin Johnson. Law Officer for Cable, Grand View and Namakagon. He reported that he currently works reserve stuff with Bayfield County. He is very active with each township. A lot of his contacts are with

ATV users. His job consists of enforcing town ordinances with all townships. He works well with the public, and if the public cannot work with him, he sends a report to the county. He also works with the DNR Warden if there is a situation that arises needing this service. He has been a first responder with GDAS since 1984 until 2013. He continues to help GDAS when needed. ATV issues have not been that bad. Most of the contacts are directing people where the trails are and how to connect to a place. He has recently started handing out Kwik Trip coupons to kids to encourage them to do what is lawful and also to keep good connections with that generation. Monthly reports are submitted to town boards that itemize his hours and duties for each day he is patrolling. It is a privilege to work for Namakagon, and he enjoys what he does. The following contacts were made this year: 26 Motorist Assists, 8 Township Ambulance calls, over 100 ATV/UTV contacts, 2 Snowmobile Accidents, 6 Snowmobile contacts, 13 Deputy contacts/assists, 1 Special event, 3 incidents were turned over to BCSD, 4 problems/concerns turned over to road crew, over 100 boat landing contacts, over 100 public contacts, 2 Golf Cart contacts, 6 Fireworks permit follow-ups, 6 weather warnings, 1 ATV/UTV complaint, and 4 Kravick's Bridge contacts.

Road Report was presented by Chairman Rasmussen. This year the major project is Old Grade Road, which is receiving 4" of gravel and will be pulverized. Old Grade Road will become a gravel road. This is being done in conjunction with the Forest Service. Our Road Crew hauls the gravel and grades and the Forest Service provides gravel. Last year Dam Road and Namakagon Sunset Road received a new layer of blacktop. Those roads will be striped this year.

Lake Association Report was presented by Larry Prybil. Namakagon Lake Association exists to help take care of the lakes. It operates with seven board members and meets six times a year. NLA sends out two newsletters a year. We are on our third year of a four-year rapid response grant. This grant is for fighting, monitoring, and spraying of our milfoil. Late June of this year we chemically treated 12 additional areas throughout the lake. The milfoil will never be gone but with constant monitoring and hand pulling, we should be able to keep it under control. In addition to limiting the milfoil, we try to prevent it from coming into the lakes through AIS monitoring on the lakes. We also have three cameras, they are at Funnies Bay Landing, County Road D Landing, and Lakewood Resort Landing. These cameras are also monitored by AIS paid trained personnel. We try to monitor 600 hours between the three landings.

This winter we were able to add eight fish sticks to the lake. This is where a pack of three trees are cabled and tied to the shoreline and laid down in the lake for fish habitat. Mike D'Andrea was able to acquire a \$25,000 grant to help pay for a total of 25 fish sticks projects from last winter and over the next winter. The town helped with \$3,500. This year we have been awarded a grant of \$25,000!

The walleye project continues this spring, but because of Covid 19 the DNR stopped all projects. with help from Chase Merierotto, Manager of the Red Cliff fish hatchery and Greg Fischer of the northern Aquaculture facility and Mike D'Andrea. They all spent two cold nights shocking walleyes to extract eggs and milt. We are still hoping to plant 40,000 6 to 9-inch walleyes into the lake late fall. Fundraising will have to continue to help cover the cost. This project would never have come to fruition if it were not for the

help of the WDNR, GLIFWC, UWSP-NADF and the Red Cliff band of Lake Superior and the Bad River Band.

Our next meeting will be held at the Namakagon Town Hall on July 18th at 9 AM where we will also be looking for two new board members. Thanks went out to the two members leaving the commission for all their work.

Steve Backlund asked about the purpose of shoreland buffers. Mike D'Andrea stated that landowners like to mow right to the edge of the lakes, but unfortunately it puts a lot of stuff in the lakes. Creating a buffer helps to keep the pollution out of the lakes. We need to inform landowners so they can help to keep the lakes clean.

Library Report Good evening. I am Kristine Lendved, Director of YOUR Forest Lodge Library. A bit more than half-way through this pandemic year of 2020...it is a bit startling to reflect that a mere 6 months ago I had just wrapped up our Annual Report for the relatively normal year of 2019. Each year libraries are required to prepare and submit to the Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction an annual report providing information on how many patrons, visits, check-outs, computer uses we have as well as the size of our collection, the number of programs we've offered and all of our expenses. Not only does this provide useful information to the state, but funding that we receive from our own and adjacent counties is based on a "cost per circulation" calculation derived from this information. We already know that our 2020 statistics are going to look a whole lot different!

In 2019 our physical circulation, meaning books, DVDs, and magazines, went down slightly, by 5%, while checkouts of e-books and e-audio books increased significantly, by 13.5% and 20.5% respectively. While actual visits to the library decreased a bit, as well as the number of people using our public access computers, monitored usage of our wireless access increased by 2.5%. A zealous new administrator in the Northern Waters Library Service system facilitated a clean up of patron registrations, deleting those that hadn't been used in a number of years, which resulted in a 28% reduction in resident registered patrons from 1096 in 2018 to 789 in 2019. In the same time period, however, non-resident patrons increased by 260%, from 108 to 284. (this list, also, had been purged of inactive patrons.) Our program offerings were somewhat decreased in 2019, nor were we able to take a program into the Drummond School in 2019, something that always bumps attendance numbers up significantly. We did offer five different Makerspace events, including jewelry-making, wild-harvesting plants for winter tea and a card-making workshop. We participated in several different author events, including one with Redbery Books which brought best-selling writer Nicholas Butler back to Cable. We participated in community Trick or Treat and Christmas celebrations and offered "Christmas stories by the fire" on several consecutive Saturdays.

We were excited, in 2019, to share with our communities and our patron's initial plans for our proposed Facility Expansion Project. We held community input events in both Cable and Namakagon in early June 2019 to share these initial drafts, to answer questions about them and to receive input about them. Devin Flanigan, our liaison with Keller Builds with whom we have been working on this project, was in attendance to answer questions, as well. We are grateful to all who attended and

offered us some input. Special thanks to the Town of Namakagon for feeding us, as well!

Another opportunity to share information and receive input on the project happened on July 21 at our Novel Affair on the Lawn. This day offered a showcase of library services, games and crafts for kids, a miniatures display from local Scott Hughes and live music from Cable's own Moii Bois. Thanks, again, to all who attended and asked questions and offered suggestions regarding our proposed plans.

The Forest Lodge Library Board of Trustees embarked upon an effort to locate a fund-raising professional to assist us in our efforts to launch a capital campaign. We spoke with one gentleman who suggested that we should speak to at least one other fundraising professional and we ended up feeling he, Jim Radford of Baker Street Consulting, was a better fit for our project and for our communities. Baker Street has worked with many small libraries and many rural communities. We agreed to a short-term campaign planning contract with Baker Street not too long before the pandemic hit us. Jim conducted a small sample feasibility study, all by phone, under the circumstances. The good news was that the study was positive about our being able to raise funds for this project. The less good news was that the time was probably not right now. He has encouraged us to continue with our phased planning and to be ready to launch our campaign in early 2021. We hope to continue to work with Baker Street. We will keep you all apprised!

We would like to offer our great thanks to departing Board Trustees Maureen Palmer and Terry Miller and Judy Krueger, who both completed two consecutive three-year terms. We very much hope for their continued participation when we get to actual fundraising. We offer a warm welcome to JoAnn Schultz (Namakagon) and Kathy Bergin and Carl Lippert (Cable) who have undertaken Board service. We thank Zach Larson who worked with us in summer 2019 and are very pleased to welcome Sidney Reynolds to our staff.

As stated at the beginning, 2020 has been a VERY different year. While we are pleased to be able to offer open hours again, we are still doing so with great caution and taking many precautions. We have open hours Monday – Saturday but also continue to offer the curbside pick-up alternative and are very willing to take appointments for senior or at-risk individuals who would prefer to visit outside of regular open hours. We did offer a number of fun, digitally based activities during the time that we were fully closed. Hope you had a chance to participate in the Confined by Corona Quiz contest or the April Poetry Month challenge. Information about both of those things can still be found on our website, forestlodgelibrary.org, along with an ongoing list of “Things to do during a Pandemic” as well as other news items of interest to our patrons and friends. We also recorded and posted a number of videos to Facebook including jokes, kids' stories and poetry.

We thank our patrons and our communities for your strong ongoing support and we look forward to working together with you in what will surely be a couple of challenging years as we work through the emotional and economic difficulties this pandemic has caused. This we feel sure of: better days are coming. THANKS!

Town update Arlene Skultety stated that the road side clean up went well this year. Volunteers cleaned up about half of the roads. Unfortunately, the annual fish fry will be on hold due to COVID.

A moment of recognition was taken for those in the area who passed away during the year; Dick Sidle and Bill Dawson.

Garden Lake Road and Harmon Road were opened to ATV roads. The Town Board stuck with their policy to only approve opening an ATV route with two-thirds of the property owners in favor.

Old Business – None.

New Business –

a. **Update on Fishery Initiative** – Mike D’Andrea reported that the town donated \$3,500 towards the Fish Sticks project. Although there was uncertainty of completing the project due to weather, it was completed in February. This was funded by the Town of Namakagon and a Fish America Grant. He presented maps and information. He explained the process of stocking. The lake was shocked, and fish were collected for spawning. They were successful with producing 750,000 eggs. Their goal was to plant 40,000 fish. Out of that 750,000, there will probably be 16,000 healthy fish to be placed in the lake. There were eight fish sticks placed in the lake. We currently received a \$25,00 grant, which will allow for 25 more Fish Sticks to be placed in the lake and one Shoreland Buffer. He is requested that the Town Board consider supporting these efforts by donating \$200 toward the Shoreland Buffer this year and then next year consider supporting the Fish Sticks project with \$1,100. It was noted that Fish Sticks are not added with Shoreland trees; they are added to the Shoreline. There is a need for volunteers to clip fish fins. The fish are pellet fed. They will be assessed after stocking in the lake. This will happen in September. Tomi Backlund offered to donate some trees on their property to be used for the initiative.

b. **Great Divide Ambulance purchase of land located at 43555 US Hwy 63, Assessor’s Plat No. 2, Lots 2 & 3, Block 6, S18 T43N R6W in the Town of Cable** – MOTION made by JoAnn Schultz to approve Resolution 2020-04 to allow Great Divide Ambulance Service to purchase land located at 43555 US Hwy 63, Town of Cable.

The town meeting of the Town of Namakagon, Bayfield County, Wisconsin by a majority vote of the eligible electors voting at the Annual Town Meeting assembled and voting, resolves and orders as follows:

The Great Divide Ambulance Board, owned by four (4) townships, Town of Cable, Namakagon, Drummond and Grand View, is authorized to exercise the right to purchase for \$250,000, for ambulance service purposes the following real property in the Town of Cable, specifically described as:

43555 US Hwy 63

Assessor’s Plat No. 2

Lots 2 & 3 Block 6
S18 T43N R6W
Town of Cable

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this resolution as required under s.60.80, Wis. Stats., within 30 days of the below-noted adoption date.

MOTION seconded by Carol McGregor. Eleven in favor; no against.
MOTION carried. Laura Bjork thanked the electors for their support for GDAS.

Public Comment – JoAnn Schultz suggested the Town Board consider sponsoring the library so they could have a conference room named the “Namakagon Room”. The cost of such a sponsorship would cost \$30,000. This could be done over a three-year period. The board will consider during budget time.

Mary D’Andrea asked if the Town Board was planning on purchasing a generator for emergency purposes. Supervisor James Krueger stated that is will be budgeted for next year.

Date set for next Annual Meeting: Tuesday April 20, 2021.

MOTION made by Mike D’Andrea to adjourn the Annual Town Board meeting at 8:16pm. MOTION seconded by Mary D’Andrea and carried.

Respectfully Submitted by

Laura Bjork, Town of Namakagon Clerk