

**TOWN OF CABLE  
TOWN BOARD MEETING  
FEBRUARY 16, 2022 - 7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

Chairman Haag called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Supervisor Merrill, seconded by Supervisor Hambrecht to approve the posted agenda with the additional check numbers being approved. Motion carried 5-0.

**Clerk's Report**

Clerk/Treasurer Bobbi McCauley reported an accounting discrepancy with library insurance reimbursement to the town. The town pays the insurance invoices for the library and is then reimbursed from library accounts. However, \$18,000 in reimbursements have not been paid to the town. Library Director Kristine Lendved clarified that it is the town's responsibility to issue the reimbursement from library accounts. This issue is being rectified.

The boilers have been cleaned and serviced by Rasmussen and referred for state inspection to receive the state permit.

System Award Management (SAM) renewal has been completed and approved. Membership in SAM is required in order to receive federal grants or file for FEMA funding.

**Approval of Minutes**

Supervisor Weber corrected page 3 of the 1-24-2022 work meeting minutes in reference to the Birkie directing traffic to Telemark Road. Google Maps directs traffic to McNaught Road. Birkie officials have

attempted to change the information on Google Maps, but have been unable to reach anyone at Microsoft to make this change.

Motion by Supervisor Weber, seconded by Supervisor Merrill to approve the following sets of minutes:

- January 24, 2022 Work Meeting Minutes as corrected
- January 26, 2022 Town Board Meeting Minutes as submitted
- February 2, 2022 Closed Meeting Minutes as submitted
- February 2, 2022 Closed Meeting Minutes with Posted Motion

Motion carried 5-0.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Clerk/Treasurer McCauley reported the following account balances:

General Account:	\$797,409.26
Cemetery Annual Care:	\$2,405.95
Cemetery Perpetual Care:	\$4,165.15

### **Receipt of Reports**

**Sanitary District:** Supervisor Popelka reported that the Sanitary District is no longer considering bond refinancing. Bonding companies have indicated that the District is not collecting enough for a reserve. The Sanitary District budget is tight, and there is no extra money in the bank. An amount of 10% more than budgeted needs to be collected to build a reserve. It has been three years since rates have increased. Rate increases will be considered to take effect the second quarter of 2022.

**Planning Commission:** Chairman Tony Erba reported that the Planning Commission has accepted the assignment from the board to revisit the event checklist for the town. The plan is to dismantle it and rebuild it.

**Road Report:** Supervisor Hambrecht reported that traffic counters have been placed on Telemark Road and McNaught Road. One day reported was 491 cars on Telemark and 733 cars on McNaught. Data will continue to be gathered for a report.

Foreman Connelly reported positive feedback on road plowing.

**Library Report:** Director Lendved thanked Bobbi McCauley for her help in resolving the library reimbursement to the town for insurance. She has been trying since last September to resolve the issue, and the reimbursement is now properly reflected in the 2021 budget.

## **Public Comment**

**Ben Welnak** stated that there is a lot of information about short-term rentals. Stake holders need to come together and discuss issues with the Board before any changes are made by the town in regarding to raising taxes or fees. He would like to see consideration for the increasing number of people who will be working remotely from Cable. He asked who is considered a local resident. The definition of a primary resident is not the same as 10 years ago.

Mr. Welnak also expressed his concern about traffic at the intersection of U.S. Highway 63 and County Road M. There is not good visibility and traffic has changed significantly with the opening of the Portage. The 30mph speed limit sign needs to be moved to slow traffic approaching the intersection.

Cathy Midwood added that more money can be made with long-term rentals, although short-term rentals on lakes do make good money. Long-term rentals provide regular, dependable income. There is no guarantee plus there is a lot of expense with keeping short-term rentals.

Chairman Haag expressed his appreciation for the input. He explained that the goal is to balance short-term rentals with long-term rentals as reasonable housing for permanent residents. The board not only has to look at the needs of tourists but also the community. There is a housing shortage, and there is more funding available for short-term rentals than long-term rentals. The board is not trying to control profits but trying to address the housing shortage and need for long-term rentals and affordable housing.

As for the intersection at Highway 63 and County Road M, the town has no jurisdiction over those roads. Highway 63 is under state jurisdiction, and County Road M is under county jurisdiction.

Trish Kruse stated that a discussion on short-term rentals needs to include the impact to businesses in the community. There are rumors about fees and no one knows if it is rumor or real. She would like to see a discussion with all stakeholders involved.

Supervisor Weber stated that he welcomes emails and public input at meetings. There was a room tax discussion at the Four Towns Meeting, from which rumors spread. If the board discusses possibilities or options, that does not mean action is being taken. When the majority of rentals are short-term, the problem is where do businesses find employees who can live locally? The board is trying to find a way to allow housing for young families with children who can afford to live here.

Cable Area Chamber of Commerce Director Heather Ludzack proposed the Chamber to host an open discussion of short-term rentals for all stakeholders. Chairman Haag thanked her for her willingness to collaborate.

Jan Parman stated that she used to get email notices when agendas and minutes were posted on the website, but she no longer receives those notices. Deputy Clerk Allen will contact the website administrator, Shelly Wilson, about this problem.

Supervisor Popelka announced that on March 2, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. at the Cable Community Centre, Kellie Pederson from Bayfield County will be in Cable. The Chequamegon Bay Housing Group of Bayfield County has been looking at housing issues in Bayfield and Ashland Counties over the last three years. Kellie will present results of a housing study that was done in Bayfield County about housing availability. Cable participated in this study. He encouraged everyone to attend.

## **Discussion/Possible Action to Finalize Fireworks Reservation**

Clerk/Treasurer McCauley reported that Spielbauer Fireworks Co., which has performed fireworks displays for Cable the last several years, is holding July 4 for Cable. The price increased \$400 to a total of \$5400. A \$1,000 deposit is due immediately to secure the contract. The increase is a result of the difficulty in getting supplies.

Motion by Supervisor Popelka, seconded by Supervisor Weber to approve the contract with Spielbauer Fireworks Co., Inc., in the amount of \$5400.00 for the July 4, 2022 fireworks display in Cable, with a \$1,000 to be paid immediately.

Motion carried 5-0.

### **Discussion/Possible Action on Class A Special Use Permit for Short-Term Rental at 45815 E. Cable Lake Road**

Supervisor Merrill noted the Planning Commission approval is pending submission of a town short-term rental application and inspection conducted by the town. The applicant has not yet applied for short-term rental with the town or had a town inspection. He suggested tabling approval.

Mrs. Ludzack stated that the owners are trying to cover expenses in preparing the property for sale. All paperwork and an inspection has been completed with the county. Once approved by the board, the town application will be submitted.

Motion by Supervisor Popelka, seconded by Supervisor Hambrecht to approve the Class A special Use Permit for Short-Term Rental at 45815 E. Cable Lake Road based on the Planning Commission condition to submit a town short-term rental application and have a town inspection. The application meets the Town of Cable Land Use Plan...

Motion carried 5-0.

### **Discussion/Possible Action to Purchase New Tablets**

Chairman Haag stated that the board has had issues with the tablets purchased. There are problems with keyboards and some tablets do not hold a battery charge. There is \$9,000 in the computer budget. No

significant computer expenses are expected this year so the cost to replace the tablets would easily be covered.

Supervisor Merrill requested the board obtain a recommendation from our tech support person at Norvado, Jeremiah, as to the best one for the board.

Motion by Supervisor Hambrecht, seconded by Supervisor Weber to pursue upgrading the tablets for town board use based on Jeremiah's recommendation.

Motion carried 5-0.

### **Discussion/Possible Action to Redistribute Tablets**

Motion by Supervisor Popelka, seconded by Supervisor Hambrecht to authorize the Clerk/Treasurer to offer use of tablets no longer being used to town committees and commissions.

Motion carried 5-0.

### **Discussion/Possible Action to Add COLA Policy to Employee Handbook**

Chair Haag stated that a COLA increase is not performance based but a recognized cost of living adjustment based on federal calculations done each year. It should not be tied to employee review.

Supervisor Hambrecht agreed and stated that COLA has nothing to do with employee reviews and resulting raises.

Supervisor Merrill stated that the town gives good wages. COLA can be considered each year. He does not believe a COLA policy should be included in the Employee Handbook. If it is in the Employee handbook, the COLA increases continues and is effective at the beginning of the year.

However, the policy only states that the town board will consider a COLA increase each year. It does not stipulate adoption of the COLA rate established by the federal government.

Motion by Supervisor Hambrecht, seconded by Supervisor Weber to include the COLA policy as written in the Employee Handbook.

Motion carried: Ayes - 4                      Nays - 1 (Merrill)  
Supervisor restated that this increase can be discussed each year without including it in the Employee Handbook.

**Discussion/Possible Action Regarding Chamber of Commerce Lease**

Cable Area Chamber of Commerce Director Heather Ludzack stated that she has read the lease and believes it is reasonable. She will have the Chamber’s attorney review it. She noted that the Chamber is funded by the towns of Cable, Drummond, Grand View and Namakagon and represents all four communities, even though physically it is in Cable.

She expressed here frustration at not having been contacted about the lease to have time to discuss it before board action. She is the 12th Chamber Director in 30 years, and she did not know the lease had expired. She did not receive a letter, email or visit about the lease. That was disappointing. However, she does plan to sign it and return it by the end of the week.

Chair Haag apologized. He thought Heather was contacted but did not check that she had been contacted.

Supervisor Weber thanked Heather for all her hard work and everything she has done at the Chamber—the siding, new deck, new computer, new sign. It is a focal point and a very nice looking building at the entrance of the town.

**Discussion/Possible Action Questionnaire on Playground Equipment**

The board discussed a community survey to find what features the public would be most interested in adding to the park. The survey will be posted on the website and on Facebook. Hard copies will be

available in the office for those who prefer not to fill it out on the computer.

The survey will include such items as playground equipment; ages of youth to target with playground activities; resurfacing tennis and pickle ball courts; basketball court; enhancing the camp sites; improvements to the depot for community use; a pavilion; new roofs on the dugouts; resurfacing the parking lot; lighting. The board will send lists of items to the office for a survey to be developed and then posted.

### **Replacement playground**

This item is premature until after information is received from the community survey.

Motion by Supervisor Weber, seconded by Supervisor Popelka for board members to submit questions for the survey by the next board meeting for review.

Supervisor Hambrecht suggested the board members be given two weeks to submit their questions to the office to be reviewed and approved by Chair Haag.

Supervisor Weber withdrew his motion and moved that a list be compiled before March 1, for review by Chair Haag and then posted to the website and Facebook. Supervisor Merrill seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Supervisor Merrill, seconded by Supervisor Hambrecht to table purchase of playground equipment until the survey information has been received. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Supervisor Popelka, seconded by Supervisor Weber to authorize up to the amount budgeted for improvements to the Cable Town Park, including replacement of playground equipment. Motion carried 5-0.



## **Discussion on Playground Fundraising Options from Public/ Private Parties**

Chair Haag has talked to parties who would be interested in contributing to park improvements. Funding parties would be acknowledged with a plaque.

The thermometer will be posted in the town and all public donations will be accepted.

Chamber Director Ludzack stated that once the scope of the project is determined and a budget in place, the Chamber will gladly contribute.

Supervisor Weber stated he has also talked to an interested donor. This donor would like to see a rendering of what is planned.

Supervisor Weber offered a volunteer donation from his company to build a rock wall with varied difficulty levels.

Supervisor Popelka requested staff check into how improvements would impact the town's insurance.

## **Approval of Checks**

Motion by Supervisor Popelka, seconded by Supervisor Hambrecht to approve payment of the following checks:

Town of Cable Check Nos. 10274 through 10311

Forest Lodge Library Check Nos. 3815 through 3827

Motion carried 5-0.

## **Adjournment**

Motion by Supervisor Hambrecht, seconded by Supervisor Merrill to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. Chair Haag declared the meeting adjourned.