

Rushford Town Board Minutes
Wednesday, August 4, 2021

The Town of Rushford August Board meeting was called to order by Chairman Thomas Egan followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken with Thomas Egan, Jerry Schoonover, Patrick Kafer, Kathryn Lewis & Peggy Hendricks present. Also present for all or part of the meeting: 11 additional persons per attendance record on file, though others were present who did not sign in.

Statement of Public Notice: Notice of this meeting and the Zoning meeting was posted on the Town hall door, the corner of K&E in Eureka, the Waukau post office and the Towns website. In addition, 2 public hearings were published in the Oshkosh Northwestern.

Special Guest speaker – Jon Doemel, Winnebago Co Executive: Tom Egan thanked Mr. Doemel for all the help during the storm this past week. He was out at 3 am assisting with the numerous people with clean up, shutting down highways because of down lines and vehicles turned over, re-routing traffic and has helped the highway department to make sure the parade route was cleaned up for Waukau Chicken BBQ. Tom Egan asked the question of what to do with all the limbs, trees down, etc. Jon said there is a ton of damage from the storm. 18 months ago, a guide was put out for emergency management. Two months ago, there was a training and would recommend the Town sending someone when they do these types of trainings. Where we are at now – The Governor did an act of a state of emergency. They are trying to document and access all the damage in the County. They are applying to the state for a disaster management plan. This will have the state pay 70% reimbursement on some of the cleanup. The County has and will be out to do as much as they can with the cleanup. It is important to document as much as you can to help with reimbursement. They will try to make the fiscal budget impact as low as possible. He mentioned that maybe in the past, the County has not been a great partner, but he wants to make sure that the County is here for us and to always come to him with any questions or concerns. The County reached out to Outagamie and Calumet County to borrow equipment to help with cleanup and have doubled the highway crews to help the cleanup go a little bit faster. Egan mentioned that the Town will have to pay for cleanup on the Town roads, but does the County pay for the County and State roads. Jon said they are going to try to go to the state for that and get everything they possibly can out of the governor's office. That is what the programs are for. Egan said Freuends, Haemmerle, the fire department, neighbors and farmers were all out helping. Sharon Wolff asked if this is just for the damage along the roads or personal properties. Jon said as far as he understood, it was just for along the roads. If there was a central location for everyone to bring their limbs to, that would not qualify. He suggested getting as much as they could to the County roads. An email from Eric Rasmussen will be going out tomorrow and Egan said it will be posted on the website so residents know. Egan asked Jon to touch on the redistricting. Jon said this will be a challenge, for the census numbers are not in yet. They are going to do their best to get this done in the time frame. There is talk about lowering the numbers of the County Board side and he is torn on this. He would like the power to be balanced for the County. He said when he looked at the presentation, the rural areas went from 16% representation on the board to 24%. By shrinking the Board, the rural areas get more representation. There are 36 members, and some are suggesting 28. He does not think there would be enough votes to shrink the board. It doesn't make a difference to him; in fact, he prefers to work with larger Boards. The deadlines have to be met and they will do everything they can to make sure the Townships have their info and help get everything in the time frame so possible litigation does not happen. In the meeting Jon had with the Town Chairmen's, broadband was discussed. There have been people asking the County to put monies towards this. He said the County is less interested in providing broadband for the whole County. Many cities in the County have broadband options. He would like to see it focused on the rural areas where there are no options. He would like to have more information on this and look at more options. They also discussed radios for the County, police & fire departments, etc. They are looking at options for maybe the County paying for these upfront and then a payment plan on the back end. He does not want to see that everyone has radios, but they do not talk to each other. Tom Egan also asked about Sawyer Creek. It does not affect the Town of Rushford at this time, but Jon Doemel did explain the situation. Pat Schoonover expressed his concerns on the speed of vehicles in the Village of Waukau on the State Road. He requested more law enforcement in that area or turning the road into a County or Town road. Jon Doemel said he will ask some questions and see what could be done.

Jon Doemel did say the number of emails and phone calls that have come across his desk in the past 3 months is alarming. He would like to have people reach out to him. Tom Egan thanked him for coming and all the work he is doing for us.

Clerks Report & Minutes: *Motion by Schoonover, 2nd by Kafer, to approve the minutes from the July 7, 2021 board meeting. Motion carried.*

Treasurers Report was given by Kathryn Lewis. The balance for the general account at the end of July was \$329,778.24. The balance in the tax account was \$1,662.82. *Motion by Schoonover, 2nd by Kafer to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.*

Payment of invoices: Hendricks approved and submitted to the board the bills for August in the amount of \$37,958.24. *Motion by Kafer, 2nd by Schoonover to pay the invoices for August. Motion carried.*

Public Input: Susan Stone, 7497 Mechanic St, Waukau wanted to put her input on the height of grass. She thinks the Town has more things to do then measure grass and many people have a prairie yard, which takes about 3 years, many times there are equipment breakdown and in repair for a while, people want to attract bees and butterflies. It may be that a person thinks their yard is fine, but the neighbor does not. She thinks communication between the neighbors would be better then having an ordinance. She wanted to encourage the board not to adopt a grass height regulation. Egan explained why this has come up. It was more or less a couple places we have to contact every year to mow, and it wasn't so much the height of the grass, but because it attracts rodents. Egan said none of the Board will be out measuring lawns.

Art Rathjen from Greater Oshkosh gave a report on the grant that was applied for. It was not approved, so phase 3 Lake to Lake will probably not happen. He does not agree with the County Executives suggestion of implementing Star ban for rural areas. It is very expensive. The IDB was not against internet for rural areas, they just didn't think it should come out of their fund. The County has no plan currently for rural broadband plan. The phase 2 (internet to Waukau) will be completed and will consider moving west towards Berlin and Green Lake. The Board of Directors is moving forward to introduce this at the Wisconsin Town meeting. Pat Schoonover said it is on the agenda to slow the speed down on 2nd St, but he asked if anyone has been down there since the County redid the road. He thinks the Town should just redo the entire road. He did not think a good job was done and it is very rough. There is a lot of traffic there for it is the back way into Omro. Egan said he thinks the piece of road that is bad is on Omro's end. That road is owned by the Town of Rushford and Omro. The Town just goes up to Wayside. Pat Schoonover also wanted to congratulate Freund Excavating and the County Highway department for the great job they did on cleanup from the storm. He thinks a thank you note should be sent in appreciation. Egan said Friends, Mike Haemmerle, the County and numerous people put in lots of hours helping during this storm. It is all very appreciated.

Town Zoning Report – Tom Jackson: Tom Jackson went over the discussion from the Zoning Meeting that was held on July 28. He did address the grass length discussion, for the idea was not to measure the grass length but it was to have an ordinance, so if the Town did get a complaint, they would have something to send to the resident to help enforce.

Old Business:

Grass length: Jerry Schoonover said that we have 1 – 2 complaints each year, but he does not know if it needs to be in our zoning ordinances. Egan said if it is not in the zoning book, do not ask for letters to be sent out, for it is a waste of time. Kafer said if something was put in the code, they should concentrate on verbage. He said that maybe not even put a length in. It should be a reasonable attempt to control grass length and that could be at the discretion of the Board. That way there would be something in the code and the Town would have something to send to the resident and could enforce. It was asked if this would be for the whole Township or just the villages of Eureka, Waukau and Delhi. Egan said it should not be just grass, for there is a home on main street Waukau that is terrible, but there is not even any grass there. *Motion by Kafer to have this go back to the Zoning Committee and get some kind of verbage. He would not like to see a set inch length and would like it to cover over-all lawns. Motion 2nd by Schoonover.* It was asked if other Townships have this issue. There are some, but very few. The Town of Algoma has an ordinance of 8" and the City of Omro has 6" and that is police enforced. *Motion carried.*

Trailer on Quarry Drive: This has been overgrown and garbage sitting out front. Egan has called him several times and the owner stated he was cleaning it up to sell. He has only been cleaning the inside. There have been letters sent in the past. He is in violations of ordinances we have. Egan was told he has a realtor, but there is not a for sale sign in front. People have contacted Egan that they would like to purchase this. Egan gave Robert Hess the information. *Kafer suggested to have the Town send a letter and communicate with Tom Egan and inform him of the fine fee structure.*

New Business:

Motion by Kafer, 2nd by Schoonover to approve the CSM for David Zouski, 2848 Morrow Road, Omro, WI, parcel #022 078603. Motion carried.

Motion by Schoonover, 2nd by Kafer to approve the zoning change for David Zouski, 2848 Morrow Road, Omro, WI, parcel #022 078603 from GA to LER for Lot 1 of CSM. Motion carried.

Motion by Schoonover, 2nd by Egan to approve the conditional use permit for Pat Kafer for parcel 022 075501 located at 2891 Morrow Road, Lot #1 of CSM #4627 to house no more than 75 young, weaned calves. Motion carried – 2 ayes, 1 sustained. Motion carried.

Motion by Kafer, 2nd by Schoonover to approve the CSM for Rich & Camille Schuster, part of parcel 022 0498 and 022 0488, located on Delhi Road, Omro, WI. Motion carried.

Jackson explained the property located at 9681 Liberty School Road, Omro, WI is in a number of Town violations. Numerous letters from the clerk and the attorney have been sent and each has been ignored and not answered. The last letter sent from Attorney Blazel on July 6, 2021, stated if he did not hear from him, the Town would file an action in Circuit Court to impose forfeitures for each day of violation that he is continuing to violate the ordinances. Attorney Blazel would like permission to proceed. ***Motion by Kafer, 2nd by Schoonover to grant permission to the attorney to proceed with court action for parcel #022 10605, Liberty School Road, Omro, WI. Kafer rescinded his motion to include in the motion a fine of \$100 for the first 30 days and all court cost. 2nd by Schoonover. Discussion:*** It was thought a \$100/month for each violation. Kafer said we will start with this and if nothing improves, the Board can change their decision from \$100/month for all violations to be \$100/month for each violation. ***Motion carried.***

Jackson stated he received an email from Dan Musa, the Town attorney that has been corresponding with Roger Kasuboski. Jackson said the same thing is happening here, for the resident has not answered to any of the correspondence sent to him. Egan said this should be tabled until next month, for it should be an agenda item and to send a letter to Roger Kasuboski to inform him his parcel will be discussed at the September Board meeting.

Discussion on Hall Maintenance: Kathryn Lewis said there is a branch down on the hickory nut tree.

Discussion on Town Maintenance: Egan was wondering what the Town should do with the larger limbs and the expense that will be there to help residents clean up. Mike Haemmerle lives in the Town of Poygan and was a Town of Rushford resident. The night of the storm they were out clearing roads until early morning. After that, he did a tour with Tom Egan to check the town roads. A lot of residents were out cutting already and helping make roads passable. A lot of the debris was dropped in the ditches, but that could restrict water flow. Some trees are too large for people to get rid of. They are not a tree trimming service. They have heavy equipment, and they are excavating and land moving company. They will come and clean up big trees, tree stumps, cleaning the ditches. They will be glad to help out the Town with picking larger trees and branches. They also can help with the cemeteries with root balls, etc. They discounted all the numbers on the equipment for the Township. It has to be remembered, they are not landscapers or tree trimmers. They will come and cut up larger trees and root balls and remove them. They just cut, remove, and go. Mike also wanted to give kudos to the County for all the work they did. They were out early around 1 am to start opening roads so others could get to their equipment. If anyone wants, they can call Mike to get bids.

Egan said that we will have to wait to here tomorrow from Eric Rasmussen and the County Executive. It will be posted on the website and on the Towns facebook page. Egan asked if the Town should consider opening the old land fill. His only concern is that people would not bring just their wood and branches, but couches, tires, etc It would have to be supervised if it was agreed to open the old dump on Senn Road.

Kafer said the Town should take care of the brush in the Town right aways, but there should be something for the residents to bring their brush. Maybe have a chipper there, someone to push back and supervise.

Kafer said in the morning, they should get together, go look at it, make a decision and post it. Mike Haemmerle said he will help with push back and mowing. It was suggested to man the site on Saturdays for the Town residents until maybe Oct 1 and maybe have contractors who are working in the area have access during the week. Freunds said they could help man the dump on Saturdays.

Pat Schoonover asked about people taking the wood. If the wood is in the Town road right away, they can take it.

County Report: Art Rathjen stated himself and Hendricks were at the Wisconsin Town unit meeting, and it was said that the redistricting had not even gone to committee yet. It was asked for the Townships to take a vote, but it was thought that was like putting the cart in front of the horse. He understands that the percentage for rural would go up, for it is a mathematical change. Rural will have a larger proportion of a larger group. But each member would have to govern a larger area of their County. This taxes them to do more with less people. It is not understood why it is coming up.

Motion by Kafer, 2nd by Schoonover to go on record that they are in favor of keeping the Winnebago County Board size at 36 membership. Motion carried.

Motion by Kafer, 2nd by Schoonover to adjourn the meeting at 8:35. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Peggy Hendricks, Clerk
