



Town of Washburn 2024 Newsletter

April 2024

We have had a successful year for the Town of Washburn. I would like to thank Scottie Sandstrom and Jim Park for their service to the town. Between writing grants, doing endless research and being available to see to getting the business of the town completed, they have been invaluable. Over the past few years we have written and/or managed \$1.5 million in grants. Now we are excited to be part of a grant that will bring solar panels and a charging station to the Town. This grant will provide approximately \$12 million in new technology to Bayfield County, Red Cliff, Port Wing and a number of towns in Bayfield County. We will be hearing more information on this project soon. I would also like to thank Clerk Kerry Tetzner and Treasurer Lynn Adams for their service to the town. I would like to thank Joe Amrein for all his work for the town. Joe has moved on to a new position for the City of Washburn. Good luck in your new adventures Joe. The town hired Matt Lippo to take Joe's place. It has been an interesting transition as we have made this change in the town crew. Because Matt did not hold a CDL license the town began a new policy of declaring winter weather emergencies when roads needed plowing or sanding. While not required, it provided additional protection for the town. The declaration of a winter weather emergency may be used again if we need to hire a sub (without an CDL) for a snow plowing emergency. Matt recently completed his CDL and now is fully licensed to be driving the snowplow. A big thank you to Mike Harvey for his continued great work for the town. The team of Mike and Matt has been positive and I believe they will make a great crew for the town.

Sandra J. Raspotnik, Chair

Important Dates

April 2, 2024

General Election 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

April 9, 2024

Monthly Town Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.

April 16, 2024

Annual Meeting 7:00 p.m.

September 9, 2024

Open Book 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

September 17, 2024

Board of Review 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

DUMPSTER Day!!!

Saturday, May 18 - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Technology keeps communication lines open

The Town of Washburn's technology has made information about the township easier to find. Through the use of ARPA funding, the town meetings are also virtual using Go to Meeting. To access the meeting, go to the townofwashburn.wi.gov website and click on the meeting agenda where a link can be found near the bottom.

The website was updated a few years ago and has links to meeting agendas, minutes and financial reports as well as other documents, forms, policies and voting information. Take the time to browse through the site to find out what is there.

Mailchimp is a free service that the township is using to send out mass emails to remind residents of meetings and other important news. Sign up for this email service on the bottom of the home page of the website.

Visit our website: <https://townofwashburn.wi.gov>

Town of Washburn
2024 Newsletter

Roads Update

by Supervisor Sandstrom

There will be construction activity on Wannebo Road this year. As communicated in past board meetings, the board needed to reduce the length of the construction on Wannebo from 2 miles to 1 ½ miles, as the estimate according to our design firm for the project, SEH, was coming in much higher than the original funds provided by the Federal government on the project, where the Town's portion will be 20% of the total of the project, with Federal funds providing 80% of the project. By reducing the length of the project, the overall funds are projected to be back on budget. The WisDOT will be letting out the contract bid for the project in mid Mid May of this year, with construction projected to happen in mid to late summer. If the bid comes in lower than expected, we may be able to pave some additional length of the ½ mile which now is not a part of the project. Also, we plan to budget for road crack-sealing projects this year to begin by next year, as crack-sealing is a part of our 5-year road plan, and is very much needed for longevity of the roads.

A project which will be happening in 2025, is a pavement overlay approx. 1 mile east of Bjork Road on Engoe Road. This is a collaborative project with the Town of Barksdale. Last fall both towns were awarded TRI (Town Road Improvement) funds by the state that will go toward the total construction costs, covering approximately 50% of the cost.

Chair Raspotnik secured a RAC grant from the US Forest Service, so we can pave Wannebo Road west of Pajala Road, continuing on Forest Road 251 going west, including an additional gravel application on the road. The paving grant which was received is for a total of \$197,000. The pavement will be ground up and then packed down and repaved. The cost for paving has increased since the grant was applied for so we are not sure how far up the road we can go. We also received \$100,000 to put gravel on 251 starting at 236 and work east as far as we can go with the amount of money granted. Hopefully, this work will take place this summer.

Another project the Town has been considering is North of County C on Church Corner Road at Four Mile Creek, for a culvert repositioning so the water in the creek can flow properly. A grant is being pursued, and if funding comes available, the project could possibly be completed this year.

The board will continue to discern the best projects moving forward for improvements and maintenance for our Town roads.

NOTICE

Register your dog!

All dogs in the Town of Washburn need to be registered. The form for registering dogs was sent with the property taxes and can also be found on the Town of Washburn website.

(townofwashburn.wi.gov) The form along with the required fee and proof of rabies vaccination should be sent to :

*Town of Washburn, Treasurer,
P.O. Box 216,
Washburn, WI 54891.*



What a Difference a Year Makes!

Last year with the record snowfall and this year with no snow it has been quite a change of pace. A reminder that the town is required by law not to make money or lose money on snow plowing private driveways. We have used Bayfield County's rates for equipment as our basis on how much to charge. With offering this service comes a great deal of responsibility for the town and for the homeowners. It is vital that all items be marked. The markings should not be considered a boundary, but the actual placement of a vital item (propane tanks, wells, sewer, etc). While it has not been a problem this year, it is always important to remember that the town's first priority is to get the roads cleared. Driveways come after everything else is opened up.



2024 Newsletter



Our Road Department Wants You To Know...

Have you ever been busy doing something when someone comes up behind you and startles you? "You scared me!"

Our road crew wants to remind you that when you see them working on the roads to slow down. It's best to assume that they cannot see you so you don't surprise them as they do their work.

You might think that sitting up high in a truck or grader that they can easily see you. That is not the case. There are blind spots where you cannot be seen. Also the operator's attention is divided. For example, when running the mower the operator must watch for obstacles such as rocks, trees, signs and mailboxes. In the winter, when plowing snow and putting down salt sand, the operator is often in low visibility conditions with blowing snow and is looking at the side of the road to avoid running off the road into deep snow. A plow truck can easily get stuck if it leaves the road. The plow truck has front and side blades, so the operator has to watch for mailboxes, garbage containers, sign posts and other obstacles both in front of the vehicle and to the side. All of this while having to operate the plow controls and to start and stop the road sander. The plow truck is often put into reverse in order to plow snow at intersections and corners.

So help our road crew keep you safe by slowing down when you see them at work. And never attempt to pass a plow truck while it is plowing snow. Give them room to maneuver. Often they will stop to let you by once they see you.



Please NOTE...

-Keep your driveway cleared of low hanging branches or growth close to the edges. If there is an emergency at your home and the emergency vehicles are damaged, the cost of repairs will be passed on to the homeowner.



Mailboxes

Protect your mailboxes during the winter plowing season. Google examples of swinging mailbox stands and consider updating yours. A sample style of mailbox was sent out last fall with the snowplowing forms. The Town is not responsible for boxes that get hit by the plows or by the snow being moved.

Updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan

by Kim Bro, Plan Commission Chair

Our town will update our comprehensive plan this year, and the plan commission is seeking volunteers to help identify key issues and opportunities that the town should address during the next 20 years. We envision a sequence of monthly meetings each of which will review one or two elements of the plan. The elements include assessment of 1) population projections; 2) housing, 3) transportation, 4) utilities, and 5) community service needs, and 6) planning for agricultural, natural and cultural resources. In consideration of all these elements, the town will envision how land use should change over the next 20 years and the steps needed to implement our vision for the future. Please email Kim Bro (kbro1151@gmail.com) if you would like to participate in this process.

The overall purpose of our town's 2007 comprehensive plan remains valid seventeen years later: It says:

Our town's "rural character, emphasized by its rather large forested areas, its natural and water resources, and its rural residential qualities help define and influence the town." The comprehensive plan provides guidance for the work of the commission. Of 17 permits reviewed in 2023, the commission visited previously undeveloped sites for 5 houses and 1 site for recreational vehicle placement. The commission also reviewed one site for a short-term rental and one site for an expanded business. Ten permits for additions or accessory structures were reviewed only by county inspectors. Finally, the plan commission conducts an annual review of the maintenance of the closed landfill on South Maple Hill Road. Assuring continuing management of the buried municipal waste is a perpetual responsibility because hazardous chemicals are mixed with the landfill waste.

2024 Newsletter

Broadband Update



Bayfield Wireless Broadband Expansion in the Town of Washburn

by Mike Cariveau, CEO

Bayfield Wireless continues to expand its high-speed broadband network to provide Internet service in the Town of Washburn and surrounding area. During 2023 the Company completed projects enabling service at over 2,100 new locations in Bayfield County in and around the Town of Washburn with 247 locations within the Town. With most of the Town now having service available, most remaining parts of the Town will continue to be worked on during 2024. As a part of the public/private partnership established between Bayfield Wireless and the Town of Washburn, Bayfield Wireless provides complimentary Internet service and a public WiFi hotspot at the Town Hall.



Norvado Fiber Optic Broadband Expansion in the Town of Washburn

by Leo Carlson, Chief Sales & Marketing Officer

In 2023, Norvado began expanding their underground fiber optic network into the Town of Washburn and Barksdale. Norvado received grant money totaling \$1,107,945 from the American Rescue Plan Act and the State of Wisconsin. The grants covered fifty percent of the total build costs, of which Norvado made the remaining investment. A combined fifty-one miles of fiber was laid within six months to be able to connect 489 properties (25 businesses and 464 residences). In 2024, Norvado was awarded another \$1,566,662 from the Capital Projects Fund Grant, a 50/50 match, to bring more fiber optic to approximately 360 properties in the Barksdale, Bayview, and Washburn townships and City of Washburn. Project dates for this expansion are to be determined.

Please NOTE...

-Remember with the heavy spring storms to mark your well heads, septic systems, propane tanks so the equipment operators have a clear view of their locations as they plow.



Tax payments

All tax payments for 2023 made after the Jan. 31st deadline should be sent to:
Jenna Galligan, Bayfield County Treasurer, P.O. Box 397,
Washburn, WI 54891.

If a receipt is needed for tax purposes go to the NOVUS link below:
www.bayfieldcounty.wi.gov/716/Real-Property-Tax-Data.
Search with your name or tax id number. A receipt may be printed from that site.

Your Town Board:



Sandra Raspotnik, Chair; Scottie Sandstrom, Supervisor; Jim Park, Supervisor; Kerry Tetzner, Clerk; Lynn Adams, Treasurer