



DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

THE TOWN THANKS YOU for your input and comments whether indirectly or through the Town Meetings, Committee Meetings or other Town business. You may also call or email any Town Board member expressing your thoughts. Take the opportunity to join others at the monthly Town meeting or sit in on Committee meetings. This is your Town.....

NEW WILSON ROAD BRUSH DISPOSAL SITE....Sticker Access

The new Town Wilson Road brush site was up and running, it is now closed for the winter months till dates picked in spring. It was open several Saturday's this fall with town residents taking advantage of it. Site can be used by displaying your Wilson site Access Sticker. This sticker placed in the lower left corner of your vehicle windshield allows you as a Town of Big Bend taxpayer the ability to bring brush for disposal to the New Brush Disposal Area. Please cover your loads. The site is available for small brush and leaves. Watch for details, guidance of disposal and restrictions on the web site. Disposal will be done by attendant only, for set dates and hours of operation found on the web site under calendar. The Wilson Road property is otherwise secured by an entrance gate.

COMMENTS FROM "ZONING ORDINANCE COMMITTEE" CHAIRMAN

BOB DAVIS..... The Ordinance/Planning Committee was originally formed in 2013 at the request of then Town Chairman, John Stencil. The purpose of the committee was to review and revise the Ordinances in place at that time. That project lasted for several years, finally being completed in 2017. In 2019 a survey of the property owners in the Town revealed that citizens were generally satisfied with how the Town was being run, but strongly felt the Town should now be zoned. Currently the Town of Big Bend is not zoned which means there is no control over land use outside of Shoreland zoning, which is controlled by the State. The results of the survey also directed preference for Town zoning rather than County zoning. In order for the Town to have zoning, it was necessary to have a Comprehensive Plan, which outlines the growth direction the Town will plan for. This was completed and approved by the Town Board in November of 2021. On November 15, 2022, the Rusk County Board approved our request to draft our own zoning ordinances and once they are approved, enter into Town Zoning. The committee is now in the process of creating those zoning ordinances and welcome input from the citizens. The committee meets the 3rd Monday of each month at 9 AM at the Town Hall. Your participation in this process is encouraged.

COMMENTS FROM LEPC CHAIRMAN BOB DAVIS.....

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) So far, the Town has once again escaped the need for our local emergency response group to respond in 2022. We are basically equipped to respond to an

emergency and have volunteer staff in place to handle that response. The purpose of the group is to provide emergency services for about 24 to 48 hours, or until State and/or Federal help arrive. We continued to upgrade our radio system in 2022 which now allows us to communicate either from base to mobile or mobile to mobile from any point in the Town. We still have a goal of having a mobile response unit in place which would allow us to set up a headquarters anywhere should the Town Hall not be available. We are slowly accumulating funds towards a \$10,000 goal which would allow us to purchase and equip a 16-to-20-foot covered trailer. Please contact the Town Clerk or LEPC Chairman Bob Davis to donate cash, a trailer or equipment. We are a totally volunteer organization and are always in need of additional personnel. Our next meeting/training session will be in the spring of 2023. Consider joining us!

TOWN ASSESSOR JENNIE SANDERS....

PROPERTY REVALUATION ASSESSMENT

Dear Property Owner....The Township of Big Bend, Rusk County will have a revaluation for 2023. This means that all property in the township will see an increase in value. The Department of Revenue monitors the assessed value for each Town, City and Village in Wisconsin on an annual basis. Our level of assessment is 68.63% of 100%, the State Equalized Value.

With the high dollar amount being paid for property in the township for the last two years this is no surprise to me or most of you.

You may wonder how this will affect your taxes. This is of course a concern, but a question that neither I nor your Town Board can answer because your tax dollar goes as payment for services that are rendered. Those services are the school districts, Rusk County and the Town of Big Bend. At this time the needs for these services for 2024 will not be addressed until November of 2023 and thus it will be taxed in 2023 payable in 2024. Generally, a revaluation will show some effect on the taxes because there may be buildings that have been remodeled, buildings removed or added that were not reported to me.

I would ask you if any of these items "fit" you, and if so or if you would like to tell me more about your property please do so by April 1 2023.

You may contact me by email at sandersjen8@aol.com or mail to Badgerland Appraisal, 639 Summit Avenue, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729.

I ask that you do not call, since I want to keep an accurate record of your concerns. Email and regular mail is the best way to do this. Thank You!

Jennie Sanders Martin, Assessor, Town of Big Bend, Rusk County

ARPA (AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021) FUNDS....

The Federal Government and then State of WI included the Town in providing ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds in 2 payments of \$18,212.33 both now received. The Town Board has heard probable use of the funds, i.e. Infrastructure (Roads), Public Safety, Fire Protection, other. The final decision has not been made as to the use of the Town ARPA funds. Careful use of the funds has to be followed as it can affect the future revenues of the Town. The ARPA funds can be retained by the Town into 2024 so the funds can be used/dispersed per guidelines.

TOWN ASSETS....

The Town continues to invest in roads. Infrastructure, roads, has been a major concern, as you can hear at the Town meetings. It is a very large task to keep up our 42 miles of roads with the use of gravel, seal coating, patching, and blacktop. Each year with expenses increasing the Town seems to have to reduce the maintenance of roads. The lack of funds prevents the roads to be kept up, although the roads in Big Bend are quite good. This budget year of 2023 is no exception to that. During the budget process it was

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determined that \$179739.00 would be spent on roads. Additionally, funds were for the first-time put-on top of the levy amount by the electors to allow additional funds to be put towards roads. This will not fix the shortfall but will allow the Town to maintain!

ELECTIONS.... First the Town would like to Thank each voter for their consideration in continuing with Social Distancing for each election. The Town continues to practice safe standards of distancing, area environment sanitizing and hand sanitizing. *The Poll WORKERS appreciate that the new "normal" is accepted by everyone! The Town Clerk, Sandy, would also like to Thank those WORKERS, please thank them also!*

ELECTIONS - 2023....

Spring General Election - Tuesday, April 4, 2023 (Supreme Court, Local Municipal, Villages, City, School Board)

ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS.... Registered WI Voters may request an Absentee Ballot or obtain one online at <http://elections.wi.gov> - Form EL121 or request an Absentee Ballot for any election, you may make the request in writing to the Clerk. We will no longer be able to send the applications to you when you phone in a request. A copy of a photo ID must be submitted with the application. You may submit application and photo ID by mail, fax or email.

ELECTION METHOD - NEW VOTING MACHINE in 2022.... The new voting machine arrived and was put into use. It is functioning very well. The new machine is done by ballot marking and insertion. This now has shown to provide very accurate tabulation and quicker end of the day tallying and forwarding to the County Clerk for County-wide results. Election workers are on hand to assist anyone with voting machine use and how to mark ballots.

2022 TAXES - PAYMENT INFORMATION....How to pay my taxes

Payments by mail: You may pay by mail at any time. Your receipt is not valid until your check clears the bank. We do not accept credit card payments.

2023 Payment Dates in person at Town Hall: Saturday December 31, Saturday January 28 - - from 8am until 12 noon each day listed.

Address Changes: Please put the corrected address on your payment stub.

Receipts: Must include self-addressed stamped envelope if you want a return receipt for your payment. If you have multiple receipts, please send a large enough envelope with additional postage.

Name Changes: These cannot be changed by the Town Clerk. You must contact the Rusk County Register of Deeds. Have your actual deed changed for changes to take effect. The only exception is Personal Property.

Escrow Tax Payments: Please have your bank or lending institution verify your tax payment amount with you before sending a check. Over payments are costly to the Town. Smaller overpayment amounts will no longer be returned to the taxpayer due to the expense of processing to the Town.

TOWN HALL OFFICE HOURS....How to reach the Town personnel

All Town personnel are part time - Town Board, Clerk/Treasurer, Maintenance, others are volunteer's on committees. Our response to you will be as soon as possible. If we can't answer calls or return emails immediately Town Official's will get back to you as soon as possible. Office hours are during meetings, elections or by appointment. When the Town office is not staffed, leave a message on the Town Hall voice mail. Emergencies - Town Officials are listed in the web site, www.townofbigbend.com - Use "Town Contacts" tab.

TOWN WEB SITE....Your source of Town Information....

Check out the NEW Town Web Site, www.townofbigbend.com, for the up to date town news and meeting information. Important information will be on the main page, please take a minute to review the home page and scroll down to see a new format. The Calendar for the Town of Big Bend or area events is a great place to see Town Meetings scheduled. The Web site has Town Contacts, Agendas & Minutes, Ordinances, Snow Plowing, Tax Information, Forms & Permits, Links, and more. In 2023 the Town will continue to have page updates to the website. The intent is to make the website more accessible with easier access to information located within the website.

CLEARING OF RIGHT-OF-WAYS....

The Town continues to hire a contractor to mow the ditches and widen the road, trimming trees. The current budget continues to provide a budget line item each year to fund the continuous control of brush and tree limbs that impact and encroach the Town roadways.

DUMPING LEAVES OR BRUSH IN TOWN RIGHT-OF-WAYS....

The Town Board receives complaints of leaves and brush being dumped in ditches and on other owners' property. Board is asking that leaves and brush be disposed of properly. At this time of year when wing plowing it moves the leaves out of the ditch along the road and creates a road mess or hazard. Also dumping into the Town road right of way or other owner's property is illegal.

SNOW PLOWING....Gravel roads, citizen snow removal, fire numbers

The Town Board asks for your patience for plowing snow. The Town has 43 miles of blacktop and gravel roads to plow; we clear roads as quickly as possible. Main access to Hwy 40 and County F is a priority. We have a lot of residents who have to get out each day, so in the spirit of fairness, the drivers will plow from the North to South and then the next snow fall, from the South to the North. Gravel roads present a problem in the late fall and spring. Soft gravel roads, not frozen up, tend to peel off layers of gravel - easily, thus some gravel roads are not plowed entirely clear, to the surface. We have two drivers, trading off, to ensure that one driver is not on the road to many hours. Remember when you are clearing your driveways that it is illegal to put the snow onto the town road, as it then becomes a road hazard. It is also your responsibility to be sure the area around your mailbox is clear of snow. For your safety, make sure your fire sign is visible to emergency response personnel - Fire, Sheriff, and Ambulance. **THANK YOU!**

GARBAGE COLLECTION....Must be bagged....No Building Materials Accepted

All garbage collected at Town Hall must be bagged properly for acceptance. A budget increase is necessary due to the increase in disposal company dumping fees. Fees are established for each size bag. New fees effective January 1 2023 are: Up to 13 gallon size bag \$3.00 / 14-32 gallon size bag \$5.00 / 32 gallon size or larger \$7.00. Building Materials must be taken to the dump located in the Town of Stubbs.