

Dear Taxpayers,

Greetings and thank you for being part of our community. We are excited about all the things happening in the Town of Spider Lake! Keep reading to learn more about the big themes from the past year.

Investing in the Infrastructure

This year, the Town Board has made monumental strides in addressing worker safety and protecting Town vehicles and equipment. We are most excited that, at our Annual Meeting of the Electors in November, electors approved the financing and construction of a new, combined Roads and Fire Facility. Once constructed, the new building will dramatically improve the working conditions for both the Road crew (heated floor, improved lighting, designated maintenance space) and for firefighters and Emergency Medical Responders (office space, bathrooms, showers, more space for vehicles and lockers). The bidding process will begin in early 2023 and we hope to break ground in spring 2023. A big thank you to all who have supported this effort.

The Roads Building, Fire Station #1, and Town Hall, including the Town Office, all received a complete lighting upgrade to new LED lighting. A big thank you to Town resident, Jon Kirkhoff, for his generous donation of new lighting fixtures that now fully illuminate the Roads Building. Additional safety upgrades at Town Hall (CO and smoke detectors and outdoor safety lighting) have also been installed.

The Board also approved the purchase of a chipper to eliminate debris that resulted from the ice storm last spring. This purchase will reduce forest fuels near residences and along the Town roads in an ongoing way.

Finally, we continue to upgrade and improve the website and we've installed equipment in the Town Hall that makes it much easier to participate virtually in committee meetings and Town Board meetings.

Civically-Minded and Working Together

As a Town Board, we are expanding opportunities for you to participate in Town governance. Here is a sampling of our efforts: (1) All committee and Town Board meetings are posted on the website in advance, with detailed agendas and supporting materials. Everyone is encouraged to attend and participate. (2) The website is very user-friendly. It is the single, best source for information related to Town business. (3) We convened three Listening Sessions this summer, where Town electors and property owners could speak on any topic. Over 50 people participated. Speakers discussed ordinances, environmental issues, civility, and emergency response issues to name a few. (4) Also this year, more than 50 townspeople participated in standing committees, Elections, Spider Lake Fire Department, EMR Working Group, New Facilities Ad Hoc Committee, Annual Budget workshops, and more. And that's not all. The five member **EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE WORKING GROUP**, appointed by the Board,

identified two critical Town needs: (1) to recruit and certify more townspeople as EMRs to respond to emergent needs of the Town; and, (2) to offer basic life support courses to a large number of residents. We are excited that three individuals will be training to be EMR/EMTs and 33 individuals were trained in Basic Life Support during the three sessions offered this fall. Other towns are now following our lead. More trainings are planned in 2023. We want you to be involved too!

Preserving and Protecting the Northwoods

The Board is accountable for the health, safety, and public welfare of its residents. We are also responsible for protecting and preserving our pristine natural resources and to carry out the intent of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Removing fallen debris after the ice storm, and other forest fuels from around your home, significantly reduces fire risks. Supervisors hosted brush collection six times this year (twice in May, June, and October). The work of over 40 property owners was grant matched, saving the Town \$2,240 dollars.

The Plan & Review Commission (P&RC), under the leadership of Chair Sarah Delaney, has focused on ensuring that the Land Use Ordinance is being consistently applied and enforced.

- Land use and zoning information is now more easily accessible to the public, through responsive commissioners, improved online guidance, and a new Zoning Guide that provides a summary of key zoning requirements
- The Commission has smoothly processed land use permits totaling more than \$5 million in improvements
- P&RC is using a consistent process and thorough deliberations to review all land use issues
- This fall, a Zoning Administrator Task Force was convened with the goal finding candidates to fill the position. That said, in 2022, with the position vacant, the Town saved an estimated \$15,000, because the P&RC commissioners did much of the work of a Zoning Administrator

Looking ahead, the Board intends to develop stronger collaborations to the Town's two lake associations (Quiet Lakes Improvement Association and the Spider Chain of Lakes Association). Also in 2023, the Board will consider forming a new standing Committee on the Environment and creating an ordinance to proactively address concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

Actions that Conserve Our Resources

Health & Safety Chair Lee Seibert oversaw the purchase of a heavy duty dehumidifier at Fire Station #2 to reduce water and mold damage in the building. While the Board was initially eager to install a large, in-line generator at Station #2, we are reassessing the energy requirements of the building, to make the best and most cost-effective decision for the Town.

Facilities, Maintenance, & Solid Waste Chair Mark Johns works closely with Republic representatives to kept the rising

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costs of waste removal low. Mark has, for the past two years, written recycling grants that were awarded to the Town. He has also successfully identified and facilitated our contracts with the least expensive LP gas provider.

The spring ice storm caused long power outages and also significant damage to roofs in the area. Through the efforts of Supervisor Deb Amery (Vice chair of the Finance & Insurance Committee) our insurance provider compensated the Town for \$116,000 in roof damage and will reimburse the Town for damages to one of the Fire trucks (about \$5,000).

GRANTS. In addition to funds generated through tax dollars and intergovernmental revenue, the Town actively pursues other revenue streams. In 2022, Spider Lake received \$50,906 dollars in grant funds from state and federal entities including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Wisconsin Department of Administration (American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)). Town officers and supervisors apply for these grants to leverage government resources and to reduce Town expenditures. Through the DNR WRR grant, we anticipate that, over the next eight years the Town will receive \$40,000, to cover a portion of the expenses for the chipper. Already for 2023, the Town has received \$75,094 dollars in designated grants from county, state, and federal agencies.

CLERK. It's been busy in the Clerk's office this year, trying to learn all that needs to be done in a government municipality. It's a work in progress! The website has been entirely redone and becoming the hub of a vast amount of information. Visit us at: <https://townofspiderlake.com/>. If your questions aren't answered there, email clerk@townofspiderlake.com or call our office at (715) 462-3977.

In other news, the Town has fully transitioned to QuickBooks accounting software. This change has improved the tracking of Town income and expenses and will produce more meaningful financial reports.

TREASURER. The treasurer provides financial oversight and ensures that the town funds remain secure. The treasurer also provides detailed audit statements, which serve as a check and balance in coordination with the Town Clerk and the Town Board.

Clerk's office hours: Mondays 10AM-3PM
or call Ann (715) 462-3977 to make an appointment

For anyone interested in paying their taxes in person, the
Treasurer's office hours in January will be:

Mondays and Saturdays 9AM-1PM
or call Kathy
office (715) 462-3977 or cell (715) 558-0591

We are all grateful for the competence and service of our officers: Clerk Ann Schultz and Treasurer Kathy Overman. They have served the Town well.

SPIDER LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT (SLFD). This summer, Mike Schmidt was sworn in as our new Fire Chief.

Mike is a seasoned officer who also serves as Round Lake's Fire Chief. We are excited about the increased integration of the two Departments. The SLFD consists of nine active officers and firefighters, two stations, and several apparatuses. Business meetings and trainings are held every month. The Fire Department also actively participates in the Sawyer County Fire Association. In 2022, SLFD, working with Facilities Chair Mark Johns, is addressing long-standing maintenance issues with equipment, apparatuses, and buildings. Special thanks to Maintenance Officer Pete Huot, EMT Rex Clevenger, Health & Safety Chair Lee Seibert, and Facilities Chair Mark Johns for their efforts this year.

Thanks to so many of you!

A big thank you to all who slowed down for our road crew and thank you for stopping and saying, "hi." It was a busy season. Extensive patching on Tows Road was completed, and Paddock and Elephant Rock Roads were chip-sealed. Lots of happy residents! More road repairs and reconstruction efforts are in store for 2023.

Thanks to the work of Road Supervisor Don Fogal, the Roads Department continues to keep the roads safe and in good repair, within budget and on time. Road Liaison, Mike Wheeler, generously offers his time and expertise. to help accomplish these goals. With his help, the purchase of new dump/plow truck is in the works.

Thanks also to Bob Schroeder who does an excellent job keeping the recycling center running smoothly. And let's also thank Judy DeTray who has worked for the Town, and keeping our Town Hall clean for the past 30 years!

Again, we extend our deep gratitude all of our volunteers, including donors, deputy clerks, deputy treasurers, election officers and the many individuals who have helped with plantings, and maintenance; filing and organizing, technical assistance, meeting facilitation and so much more. Thank you!



HAPPY TRAILS. Bob Hamblin, road crew member extraordinaire, is retiring. We all wish him Happy Retirement. We are busy looking for his replacement. Not an easy job, he will be hard to replace.

*The Board of Supervisors and Town Officers wish you
A Joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!*

Town Chair Tim Sheldon
Supervisors: Deb Amery, Sarah Delaney,
Mark Johns, and Lee Seibert
Clerk Ann Schultz
Treasurer Kathy Overman