

# TOWN OF UTICA

## Town Board Meeting ~ Minutes

Monday, February 9, 2026

5:30pm – Review Invoices

6:00pm – Town Board Meeting

Notice is hereby given that a Town Board meeting in the Town of Utica, Winnebago County, and State of Wisconsin for the transaction of business as is by law required or permitted to be transacted at such a meeting will be held at the Utica Town Hall, 1730 County Road FF in said Town. Discussion and Action may occur on the following items, except for Public Forum.

The Town Board meets regularly the SECOND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 6:00PM (unless otherwise noted). All meetings are open to the public, this is a public meeting. Any person wishing to attend who, because of a disability, requires special accommodation, should contact Chairman Len Schmick at 920-850-0758 at least twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled meeting time so appropriate arrangements can be made. As such, all members, or a majority of the members, of the Town Board may be in attendance. While a majority of the Town Board members or the majority of any given Town Board Committee may be present, only the Town Board will take official action based on the agenda. Posted at: [townofuticawi.gov](http://townofuticawi.gov), Town Hall, and Pickett County Market.

### 1. Call the Meeting to Order

Chairman Schmick called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

**DRAFT**

PRESENT: Chairman Leonard Schmick, Supervisor #1 Ben Sawall, Supervisor #2 Chuck Kuhrt

Treasurer Trisha Hunter, and Clerk Jenny Sonnleitner; 11 present; 1 non-resident from Liberty Cemetery; Michelle Strauss from Horton Group Insurance

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

"These meeting minutes are only a draft of the minutes of the meeting. They have not been approved yet. They are subject to change and you may not rely on their accuracy. For more information, please contact the clerk or a town board member."

### 3. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A) Approve January 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting & February 5, 2026 Special Town Board Meeting Minutes
- B) Affidavit of Posting/Publication
- C) Approve Payment of Bills

Chairman Schmick motions that we adopt the Consent Agenda which consists of approving January 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting Minutes and February 5, 2026 Special Town Board Meeting Minutes, B is the Affidavit of Posting/Publication, and C to approve the payment of bills; seconded by Supervisor Sawall; Carried 3-0

### 4. Treasurer's Report; BMO Harris Bank / Horicon Bank: January 2026

There is over \$1million in our account, but a lot of that will go back to the school systems. After we pay out the schools, then we will be back around \$500,000. That will be what we live on for the rest of the year. Fire Protection is at 88/89% of their budget, so they have \$44,000 left. Everything else is way under 70% at this point.

BMO account will close this week, all money from that account will be with Horicon.

### 5. Public Forum: *Opportunity to comment on an Agenda item or new business; say your name & address. (No action taken by the Board)*

Chris Schafer at 1307 Elo Road. There may be some ditching needed around the corner of Banville and Elo Roads to the north, to get a better slope. Willing to cover the cost. Presented a map for the Board of where ditching may be needed. Chairman Schmick stated we will have a road inspection coming up this spring and will take a look with the County.

Darwin Newell asked if the ditching request is on the west side of Elo. Will also need to do the east side, where the culvert goes across, since that can hold water and is also high. Chairman Schmick said we can talk to the County about this also.

Darwin Briggs asked about #10 and asked if the Town plans to issue a kennel permit at this time? Chairman Schmick said what he heard, is the owner contacted the County and the County mistakenly issued a kennel license. Our Zoning Administrator, Tom Thiel, contacted the property owners and provided them with paperwork for the Town.

Kevin Fritz asked when the new ambulance bill is due and how much? Still have to pay the City? Clerk Sonnleitner said we are paying Lifestar this month for January and February, about \$9000. Going forward, should receive monthly invoices. We already paid the City in January for the 2025 calls per capita. Chairman Schmick talked with the new Oshkosh Fire Chief to explain what happened.

Joshua Heine is the Safety Officer for the Fire Department and mentioned there was skepticism and worry about this new ambulance service, but feels they are doing a phenomenal job. They respond quickly to the calls and take care of the patients. Thank you for all the work done to accomplish this.

Darwin Newell asked what are we going to do with the mop boards that are coming apart? Chairman Schmick said general maintenance is done either by the Board, the Fire Dept, or we contact a professional. Will look closer after the meeting. Then Darwin asked if there is anything we can do to update the cleaning service? Chairman Schmick said we had them forever. Joan Newell said she is going to try to work with them, to see if they will improve. Chairman Schmick said to let us know how that goes.

## **6. BUDGET: Any 2026 Amendments**

Chairman Schmick motions that the sum of \$2.65 from Rush Lake account to Board of Appeals account; seconded by Ben Sawall. Carried 3-0

## **7. Insurance Renewal**

Michelle Straus was present to help clarify and answer questions regarding our insurance renewal. How much to value the 2009 Tahoe? Fire Chief Jay Roberts stated the Tahoe is a command vehicle and goes to fire and EMS calls. Michelle stated they can list command vehicles on an agreed value basis and you won't get more than what the new one costs; we don't value vehicles. If the radios come out, they are not covered as part of the vehicle, that would be portable equipment. Chairman Schmick feels to cover it to cover the cost, not like to replace it with a new truck. Michelle stated you don't have to insure for a replacement, that's why it's called Agreed Value. Chairman Schmick feels \$40,000 would be a good value. Chairman Schmick motions we make the limit at \$40,000 for the value of it, stated value; seconded by Supervisor Sawall. Supervisor Kuhrt stated he is interested in the difference in cost to insure at \$100,000; we don't want to be throwing money away. Michelle stated about \$200/year. Carried 3-0.

The Death Benefit is currently \$200,000; that is substantial.

LTD – first 28 days of disablement is \$500/week, after that, it's raised to \$1000/week. If eligible for workers comp, that will pay up to \$1000/week; this is over and above. After the first 30 days, it coordinates and they won't get more than they would from the day job, the person won't profit. This benefit is available for 5 years, 260 weeks. Before getting to the 5 years, it is determined if you are permanently disabled. If determined to be permanently disabled, the percentage of being disabled is applied against the \$200,000. If 100% disable, there is a \$200,000 payout. Need a beneficiary form with the department. Any volunteer, auxiliary, or anyone that helps with the fundraiser is covered by Accident & Sickness. All volunteers on Fire and EMS are covered under workers comp. The Board is not covered.

Company sold 2 years ago, now known at Marsh McLennan Agency, who is the largest insurance agency in the world with 87,000 employees. Michelle is the Regional Director for VFIS in WI.

## **8. Burning Ordinance & Letter to residents in Imperial Hills**

Chairman Schmick stated our attorney met with the Axtmans and their attorney. There was an idea to send out another letter to residents in Imperial Hills. Main goal is to be more courteous. They are allowed to burn leaves, whatever is on their property – no garbage, cardboard, refuse should be burnt. To have courtesy, to be aware which way the wind is blowing, and try to do things with common sense. Our attorney suggested that the Board should draft a letter, send it to our attorney for review and issue it to the residents; try to calm things down. Chairman Schmick motions that we do that and we end up hopefully with a mutual respect for everybody involved in this. Chairman Schmick will draft the letter to have at the next meeting. Supervisor Sawall asked the Axtmans if there has been any burning this winter? They replied no. Carried by Chuck Kuhrt. Carried 3-0

## **9. County Shoreland Zoning Discontinuance, approve Resolution 2026-01**

Will table since this was discussed and voted on during the Special Town Board Meeting on 2/5/26.

## **10. Commercial/Boarding Kennel License issued by Winnebago County Public Health for River Velvet Retrievers 487 Cty Rd FF**

Chairman Schmick stated someone purchased property at 487 Cty Rd FF that was being used as a place to train dogs, with no one living in the house. There was no conditional use permit and was done without permission. The property was purchased and now continuing to use it as it was to train dogs, and living in the house. They applied for a kennel license to Winnebago County. Winnebago County doesn't do the zoning in our Town. Now we are talking with these people that their kennel license isn't valid. If they want to have a kennel license, they need to come to us. Our Zoning Administrator sent them an application for a variance or conditional use permit. If they apply, residents will be notified at that time. Supervisor Kuhrt said it doesn't make sense that Public Health would issue the license.

## **11. ROADS: Maintenance**

Two pot holes have been filled on Bradley Ave. A couple mailboxes were hit and replaced. The County isn't required to replace mailboxes, but they have been.

## **12. TOWN BOARD & COMMITTEES WORKSHOP – recap / discussion**

Chairman Schmick stated that we talked about a variety of subjects and we will be needing to replace our Attorney. He is cutting back on municipal work. He did provide two referrals; one from Ripon, one from Berlin. Chairman Schmick motions that we interview at least one of them. One is from Ludwig Wurtz, currently the City of Ripon attorney; would like to interview him. Seconded by Ben Sawall. Chairman Schmick will set up an interview and will have that posted. The other attorney has less experience with Towns. Carried 3-0

## **13. March Town Board Meeting Date Change**

Supervisor Sawall motions that the Town Board meeting for the month of March, be moved to third Monday, which is the 16<sup>th</sup> of March; seconded by Chairman Schmick. Carried 3-0

## **14. AMBULANCE SERVICE / S.W.E.M.S.**

### **A) Updates from December 11, 2025 meeting**

Chairman Schmick said we had many good reviews. The ambulances are gorgeous. They have a flag wrap on them. These two ambulances are much less per capita than what the City of Oshkosh had. The Oshkosh Fire Chief stated it is not true that they would charge for mutual aid, this will be reviewed in six months. Feels this is an added service and will help the whole county.

### **B) Next meeting: April 23, 2026 at 6:00pm at Town of Omro Town Hall**

## **15. FIRE / EMS DEPARTMENTS:**

### **A) Fire Chief's Report**

#### **1) New Applicant(s)**

Ben Schafer – will interview him the last Wednesday of the month and he comes from Princeton Fire. He already came to attend some trainings.

#### **2) Retirement(s)**

One person was on probation. Due to violations, he was terminated and we got the gear back.

#### **3) Truck Updates**

Fire Chief Jay Roberts has the receipt from RTR. An anonymous donor in the town paid \$17,500 and Kevin Lieske with RTR donated the other half (\$22,500). It is paid in full, no balance due, no warranty. RTR would like a tax exempt certificate. Fire Chief will provide Clerk Sonnleitner with an email to send that to.

##### **a) Tahoe Recall Notice: The recall is for the Front passenger airbag Takata Inflator.**

Jay will take care of that this week.

Needed a valve to suction water for the Rescue on the driver's side, found a used one and saved about \$2600. Will paint it and get it installed.

#### **4) Buildings and Grounds**

Fire Chief Roberts stated many times, the heat is down to 50 degrees. It takes too long to get warm. Jon Ashcraft said to leave it at 70, or 65; it probably costs more to get the temp up to where it needs to be, just leave it. Chairman Schmick said if this is being used 2-3 times a week, can see leaving it warmer, but not if only using the building 2-3 times a month. Could buy the cages to put over the thermostat to keep the temperature set.

The street signs on James Road and Ripple are gone, posts are there. The Stop Ahead sign might be gone too. Chairman Schmick will contact the County.

#### **5) AFG Grant Update – no updates – can remove from future agendas**

#### **6) Training**

EMS training here tomorrow. Have been training a couple times a month. With the new ambulance service, they are eager to train with our department. Paramedics are also instructors. They want to be involved in our training. Working with them has been going really well. They work well with Oshkosh too. The First Responders voted to use the money from State (FAP grant). The Omro/Winneconne ambulance has a Lucas on it, that Winneconne and Omro paid for. It's the device that goes on the chest and does compressions. The Fire Responders voted to purchase one. We would own it, it would be a contract to have it on the ambulance. A new one is about \$20000, but we are looking at a refurb unit for about \$14,000 with a 3-year warranty. It was a demo unit from Stryker. Then both ambulances will have one. Utica will purchase the unit and

contract it that if it is broken down, they will fix it. The consumables, such as the suction cups, will be taken care of by the ambulance to replace.

**7) SOP/SOG - none**

- B) Fire Department & Town Ordinance / Bylaws
- C) January 2026: (5 Fire Calls / 10 EMS Calls)

**16. WI Town Association County Meeting: Thursday, April 2, 2026 – Town of Vinland**

**17. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE PICKETT COMMUNITY CENTER'S NEWSLETTER:**

- A) TOWN BOARD MEETING: Monday, March 16, 2026 – 6:00pm at the Utica Town Hall, 1730 County Rd FF in Fisk
- B) 2026 ELECTION DATES: April 7, August 11, November 3 – Utica Town Hall, 1730 County Rd FF in Fisk; Update your name/address, Register, Request an absentee ballot at: myvote.wi.gov. Photo ID is required.

**18. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

- A) WI Towns Assoc Monthly Newsletter; Land Transfers; Building Permit: Johnson 490 Cty Rd FF; BMO Business Checking Relationship Package Summary sheet

**19. Adjournment**

6:51pm

*Jenny Sonnleitner, Clerk*

<b>Chairman</b> Leonard Schmick		<b>Treasurer</b> Trisha Hunter	
<b>Supervisor #1</b> Ben Sawall		<b>Clerk</b> Jenny Sonnleitner	
<b>Supervisor #2</b> Chuck Kuhrt			

*Minutes to be Reviewed / Approved at the March 16, 2026 Town Board Meeting.*