

TOWN OF UTICA

Annual Town Meeting ~ Minutes

Tuesday, April 21, 2026
6:00pm

Notice is hereby given that an Annual Town 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. Town Board members will be present.

DRAFT

"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."

1. Call the Meeting to Order

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

PRESENT: Chairman Leonard Schmick, Supervisor #1 Ben Sawall, Supervisor #2 Chuck Kuhrt
Treasurer Trisha Hunter, and Clerk Jenny Sonnleitner; 12 present

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Affidavit of Posting/Publication – Clerk & Chairman to sign

Chairman Schmick motions that we approve the Affidavit of Posting/Publication that the Clerk and Chairman have already signed; seconded by Supervisor Sawall. Carried

4. Open Book: Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 9:00am-11:00am at 1730 County Road FF Oshkosh, WI 54904

5. Board of Review: Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 5:00pm-7:00pm at 1730 County Road FF Oshkosh, WI 54904

6. Approve November 10, 2025 Public Budget Hearing & Special Town Meeting Minutes

Chairman Schmick stated that he is looking for a motion to approve the November 10, 2025 Public Budget Hearing & Special Town Meeting Minutes. Supervisor Kuhrt made the motion to approve; seconded by Chairman Schmick. Carried

7. Approve 2025 Annual Finance Report

Chairman Schmick stated that he is looking for a motion to approve the 2025 Annual Finance Report. Supervisor Sawall made a motion that we approve the 2025 Public Budget Hearing, no, the Annual Finance Report; seconded by Chairman Leonard Schmick. Carried

8. Public Forum to discuss and act upon

Walter Whiting stated we should mention to the people that if they are going to Board of Review, they need to register first. Many people don't know to call before. The Town Clerk should be notified prior to the meeting to make an appointment.

Walter Whiting stated under the Town of Utica 2025 Expenses, Public Safety, Fire Department Supplies of \$177,427.57. There is no explanation what Supplies mean. Clerk Sonnleitner read off all the expenses in that category. The biggest expense was the radios. The revenue came from Winnebago County from Spirit Funds in 2024. We didn't pay for the radios until we received them, they were paid for in 2025. The air packs were paid for by a grant. Treasurer Hunter stated we did not pay any money for the air packs. Tim Oliver suggested to make the expenses more detailed, to eliminate the guess work. Also, there was nothing mentioned in the report about purchasing new radios. Nobody knows those were purchased. Clerk Sonnleitner stated she can print the detailed list from Quickbooks to include with the Annual Report.

Sue Shea asked what is part of the Expenses? Clerk Sonnleitner read off all the expenses as part of that category. Sue Shea suggested to have the big purchases listed out separately on a separate line.

Walter Whiting stated there is no item that talks about Truck Repairs. What did the Tahoe cost the Town? Chairman Schmick stated the truck was donated. The truck was painted, put stickers on it, and equipment. Patsy Beck mentioned there were repairs done. Tim Oliver mentioned there was a grant for \$22,000. Clerk Sonnleitner stated the grant funds couldn't be used on the Tahoe. Chairman Schmick stated the Fire Department does their due diligence with their budget.

Tim Oliver – 1) He has been on the Fire Department for 43 years. Many of the guys don't like that the Town appoints the Chief for a 3-year term. He should be elected by the guys that work with the Chief. During fire calls, he gets asked what to do. The term should be for 1 year, it's not a social club, it should be by experience. Would like the Board to look at this again. Chairman Schmick stated the discrimination caused this. Tim stated Grant Stettler went to other departments in the area, but none were in Winnebago County, to get the Town to appoint the Chief. Pam Sawall asked if there is a job description and what the requirements are of the Chief? Tim Oliver said yes, it used to be a part of their bylaws that the Town threw out. Take this into consideration to let us vote for our own guys. Chairman Schmick stated he believes we need to put this on an Agenda and noticed to the Town. Walt Whiting said this is our meeting. Clerk Sonnleitner stated she felt the Fire Department was still going to have their elections and to appoint the Chief and Officers, then whomever is Chief, the Town would then approve and appoint that Chief. The Town is appointment based on their recommendation. The bylaws can always be changed. Chairman Schmick said we have tried many times to get a copy of the previous bylaws, we never received a copy yet. Patsy Beck stated there is only one person on the Fire Department Bylaws Committee. Would we need to bring the recommendations to the Town Board? Clerk Sonnleitner said the Town Board approved it, so the Town Board would need to approve any changes. It's on the Agenda every month, there are always no updates. Nick Keator was here at a previous Board meeting giving the Town Board a 'heads up' that they would need to appoint somebody. Chief Jay Roberts' term ends December 2026, he was affirmed January 2024. Eric Whiting asked if the Fire Department has bylaws right now? Tim Oliver said no, they have standard operating guidelines, 3 pages long on how to respond. Eric stated the Fire Department is out of compliance if there are no bylaws. Tim Oliver said there are no penalties to those that don't show up, don't get rid of anybody. Clerk Sonnleitner stated she did process one background check, for a new firefighter, will do that if given a name. Tim Oliver said if the people are treated right, they work together, no secrets. We are all one group, gotta save each other same days. Tim will find the old bylaws. Clerk Sonnleitner asked if the one-person committee can bring any changes to the Board, we will put that on the Agenda, for the Town Board to review and vote on. Grace Oliver stated Randy Oliver started to work on the bylaws, some ready to present, Grant came along and said these are the new laws to follow, and stepped out. He put in a lot of work. Clerk Sonnleitner said the current bylaws were approved May 13, 2024. These were approved by the Town Board, not sure there needs to be Fire committee, but maybe these comments and suggestions can taken to our next Town Board meeting. Tim Oliver said they don't vote on anything anymore. They are told what is being purchased, we don't have a say.

Tim Oliver – 2) Can anyone in this Township use the Tahoe? Chairman Schmick said it would have to be the fire department. Can this be used in place of a personal vehicle? Clerk Sonnleitner said it was to be used to pick up parts, attend training, go on a call. Tim Oliver said the Board should look into that. Chairman Schmick stated from the beginning, he was wondering what this is for, we didn't have a vehicle like this before.

Eric Whiting – What is the last revision date on the bylaws? Clerk Sonnleitner stated May 13, 2024. Eric said they do need to be revisited. Pam Sawall suggested a Town Board member attend the next Fire Department meeting to talk about the bylaws. Morale is not good at this point. Chairman Schmick thanked everyone for letting us know what is going on. Walter Whiting asked if we can act upon some of the suggestions that were just made if we put them into motion tonight? Public forum is to discuss and act on. We can take action, this is the Annual meeting. Chairman Schmick said we should get a hold of the attorney to make sure this is legal procedure. Walt Whiting said the citizens of the Town have the right to act upon those items they feel they want to act upon. Chairman Schmick said only if it's on the Agenda. People can't just walk into a meeting a make a motion to do something in the Town if it's not on an Agenda. No body else in the Town got a chance to know that you are going to vote on it. Clerk Sonnleitner questioned, because the Town Board approved the bylaws, not sure if the public could motion to change it, because the Town Board already approved it. Could possibly motion to make amendments to it, then would come to a Town Board meeting to approve it. Just because it's already an existing document they already approved.

Walter Whiting motions to the people here that this committee, this group of citizens, ask the Town of Utica, to revisit the 3-year appointment of Chief and the appointment of any officers, and put everything back in the jurisdiction of the Utica Fire Department, on an annual basis (Darwin Newell: according to the original bylaws). Chairman Schmick said we need a Second before we can discuss it. Sue Shea asked if you want to revisit it or actually amend it? Walt Whiting continued his motion: to amend it. Sue stated not sure you can refer to prior bylaws when you don't have a copy of them. Eric Whiting requested a read-back of the motion. Clerk Sonnleitner reread what Walter Whiting stated. Tim Oliver seconded, but took the second back. All motions voided, no second. There was group discussion on how to say the motion.

Eric Whiting moves to amend the Utica Volunteer Fire Department bylaws to return authority to elect officers on an annual basis, beginning at the January 2027 meeting, returning the authority to the fire dept members; Seconded by Walt Whiting. Eric Whiting suggests the Town Board mandate the fire department to have

amended, or revisit bylaws by a certain date. Chairman Schmick asked Clerk Sonnleitner to add this to the next Town Board meeting. Pam Sawall mentioned a person who would be appointed to a 3-year term, provided they met qualifications on an annual basis, then there would be the option to replace that person. Chairman Schmick said the bylaws is a living document. Carried.

Patsy Beck stated, as a first responder, there are a few things to work out with S.W.E.M.S. We were used to working with Oshkosh Fire. When they would come on scene, they would take over. Now, this is a little different. We have talked about this as a group and have a plan.

Darwin Briggs asked for clarification on the dog training business next to him. Has he been made aware that he needs a conditional use permit? His business has a website and County Road FF is listed as the business address. Darwin is tired of all the guns, people, and dogs barking. Clerk Sonnleitner read notes from the February 5 workshop, Tom Thiel stated the County issued a dog kennel license in the Town and will talk with the County about it. Pam Sawall found the business online and confirmed the address listed is: River Velvet Retrievers 487 County Road FF. Chairman Schmick will see if Constable Ralph Kalies or Zoning Admin Tom Thiel have talked with the neighbor, and whether he thinks he has the right to a dog kennel there.

9. Set date in November 2026 for the Proposed 2027 Budget Hearing & Special Meeting of the Electors Monday, November 9, 2026 at 6:00pm, Town Board meeting to follow.
10. Town-owned equipment available for purchase to Town residents: laptop, desktop, printer, miscellaneous supplies
Clerk Sonnleitner stated it is Town property, so should offer it to Town residents first. The computers are so old, would work with Link Computing to destroy the information prior to electronic recycling.
11. Adjournment
7:07pm

Jenny Sonnleitner, Clerk

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