



OCTOBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

COMMENTS FROM TOWN CHAIRMAN.....TOM MEISNER

I want to take the opportunity to address several topics. It has come to the Boards attention that ATV's and UTV's have been driving on State Hwy 40. Hwy 40 is Not an approved route nor open to ATV/UTV use. Please obtain a area map for a small fee that designates the approved roads and trails for use.

Additionally, our Town road maintenance crews see signs of ATV/UTV's burning donuts on Town gravel roads, making gravel roads driving dangerous. This costs the Town and taxpayers budget money. Extra road grading must be done to remove the damage and keep roads safe. Should you see this being done please note the ATV/UTV State sticker number and report it to the Town.

To date tax dollars have been disbursed to: Bruce Schools \$215297.46, Chetek/Weyerhaeuser Schools \$545297.46, Lake Holcombe Schools 433.45, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC) \$29241.45, Rusk County \$548150.71 and Town of Big Bend (Towns Portion) \$191000.00.

Town Ordinance Committee/Planning Commission has had many meetings, many hours reviewing the Town Survey and look at Town Zoning to help the Town with controlled land use and planned growth. Presentations will come soon.

There are new rules coming from the county on what is and is not recyclable. Please pay close attention to the approved items for recycling. Please sort properly as it costs the Town and County money for the recycler to sort the dumpsters. Some items are no longer acceptable.

I invite you to attend the Town Board Meetings and any Committee Meetings. The Board and Committee members value your input. Please attend the budget / levy meeting to better understand where our Town budget dollars are allocated.

Know where your tax dollars go.....To find out where your tax dollars go review your tax bill when it comes. In the center area of the statement there is the taxing jurisdiction and the percent of change from the previous tax year.

Taxing Jurisdiction	2017 Est. State Aids Allocated Tax Dist.	2018 Est. State Aids Allocated Tax Dist.	2017 Net Tax	2018 Net Tax	% Tax Change
STATE OF WISCONSIN				0.00	
RUSK COUNTY	170,170	182,601	1,474.57	1,682.72	14.1%
TOWN OF BIG BEND	109,675	109,675	378.56	381.30	0.7%
WI INDIANHEAD TECH COLL	98,723	103,819	86.47	91.72	6.1%
CHETEK-WEYERHAEUSER SCH	290,245	287,352	1,986.05	2,080.47	4.8%
Total	668,813	683,447	3,925.65	4,236.21	7.9%
	First Dollar Credit		72.81	73.16	0.5%
	Lottery & Gaming Credit		127.42	177.67	39.4%
	Net Property Tax		3,725.42	3,985.38	7.0%

COMMENTS FROM ORDINANCE/PLANNING CHAIRMAN.....BOB DAVIS
Property owner survey results are in...

A total of 654 surveys were mailed to property owners in the Town. There were 295 completed surveys returned for a return rate of 45%, which is outstanding.

Briefly:

- Citizens are satisfied the way the Town is being run – 82% satisfaction rate.
- The biggest challenges in the future are keeping taxes low (24%), protecting the environment (24%) and maintaining or improving roads and infrastructure (18%).
- Some sort of zoning is needed, either adopt the County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning or adopt our own.

The Ordinance/Planning Committee is continuing their research and education regarding zoning and plan on having educational meetings, perhaps starting as early as this fall.

You can view the entire survey results and all comments made on the Town website – www.townofbigbend.org. Or you can request a printed copy by e-mail at bigbend@brucetel.net or by letter to Town of Big Bend, N1195 State Highway 40, New Auburn, WI 54757. Please include your name and mailing address.

COMMENTS FROM LEPC CHAIRMAN.....BOB DAVIS
Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

July provided some “unplanned” training for LEPC. Three storms (July 4, July 15 and July 18) resulted in a call-out to the committee to assess any damage and remove trees/debris from Town property and to assist citizens if requested. These call-outs were the first formal call-outs ever for the committee. We learned our radio system is outstanding from anywhere in the Town. We also learned the

Town of Big Bend / N1195 Hwy 40, New Auburn, WI 54757 / 715-868-5775

process of proper communication over these radios as well as proper documentation of action taken. In all 3 situations roads were cleared of all debris within a two hour time frame. Not only were we able to provide quick response, but were also able to save the Town considerable money because if this group wasn't in place, clean-up of roads would fall to the Town employees. Therefore, money is saved from salary and equipment cost by having the volunteer group. The LEPC is an entirely volunteer organization. An LEPC organization was mandated for every municipality by the Federal government as a result of 9/11. We were the first to form a group in Rusk County and have an excellent response program in place. We are now in the process of wanting to move to the next level of response. Our normally expected command center will be the Town Hall. However, should a storm destroy the Town Hall, it could be very difficult to provide proper emergency assistance. Therefore, we have designed a mobile command center and are now ready to get it up in running. Simply, it will be a fully equipped enclosed trailer that will be stored off site. A properly equipped trailer is expected to cost around \$15,000. Our major problem, however, is just how can we fund the project?

The Town has no ability to increase taxes by State law, therefore, we will be starting a donation drive, much like we did for our Helipad, to fund this program. Look for information in the near future regarding this project but in the meantime, if you can donate to the fund, please contact the Town Clerk or Bob Davis, Chairman of the committee.

"STATE" OF STATE HWY 40.....

Notice from SHE Inc., D Bacha, 715-861-1941

Repair of a spot on South 40 just South of Chippewa Trail and North of Old Highway D. This section of the road will be closed beginning **Thursday October 10, 2019 at 7:00 AM and opening back up on Wednesday October 16, 2019 at 7:00 PM** There will be no through traffic in that area.

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.

Thank You to all those that put in so many hours of time.....

2018 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.

Payments in person at Town Hall: Saturday December 21, Saturday December 28, Saturday January 25, Friday January 31 - - 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 WEB SITE....Your source of Town Information....

Check out the Town Web Site, www.townofbigbend.com, for the up to date town news. Important information will be on the main page, either as a "Spot Light" on the left, or "News and Notices" on the right. Calendar for the Town of Big Bend or area events is a great place to see Town Meetings scheduled. If you have a "community" event the Town would like to add it to the Web calendar. Web site has Town Contacts, Agendas & Minutes, Ordinances, Snow Plowing, Tax Information, Forms & Permits, Links, and more.

TOWN HELICOPTER LANDING ZONE....

The Town of Big Bend recognized the need and supported the idea of having a localized helicopter landing zone (LZ). It has been asked about how often it is used.....Update on use is that recently the Landing Zone was used 3 times in two weeks, two helicopters for the same incident.

TOWN CITIZENS VOTE TO SUPPORT LEPC RESPONSE TRAILER....

The aluminum can collection program at the town hall recycling center has benefited the Emergency Medical Responders (Formerly called the First Responders). Then at a later Town meeting it was vote to use the funds for EMR/EMT new hires-education. The idea continues with the funds now be ear marked for the anticipated LEPC Response Trailer. Please bring your aluminum cans to the recycling center on Saturdays.

ELECTIONS - 2020.....

February 18 - Spring Primary Election

August 11 - Partisan Primary Election

April 7 - Spring Election

November 3 - General & Presidential Election

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.

CLEARING OF RIGHT-OF-WAYS.....

TheTown 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.

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!

Finally 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 or attend your County Board or Committee meetings. This is your Town, your County.....