



## DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

### **Helipad-Landing Zone....A BIG THANK YOU to Blackstone Asphalt of WI out of Bloomer.**

Blackstone stepped up to the plate without hesitation to reseal and repaint the landing zone for the Town helipad.....We can't say enough about our appreciation and the outstanding workmanship! This was done at a very large expense to Blackstone. The Helicopter flight teams using the landing zone this past summer, many times, express how nice, how safe and how secure the helipad is for them to provide emergency critical/trauma care. Our area Fire Departments also appreciate the ease of securing and setting up the zone for incoming helicopters. Nice job Blackstone!!!

**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.....

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

Enclosed with this tax mailing and the Town newsletter the Town has included a Town Wilson Road 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. Announcement of the newly purchased property for brush disposal is in the preparation stages consisting of start date, personnel on site, property map (showing brush disposal location), dates open for disposal, restrictions, announcement of start date, this will be done through the recycling center - flyer given out and the Town Web Site front page. Expectation for opening is the first quarter of 2022. Watch for details, guidance of disposal and restrictions. Disposal will be done by attendant only, for set dates and hours of operation. The Wilson Road property is otherwise secured by an entrance gate.

### **COMMENTS FROM ORDINANCE/PLANNING CHAIRMAN.....BOB DAVIS**

In 2019 the Town of Big Bend surveyed the property owners in the Town. The purpose was to find out how people felt the Town was being run, what improvements could be made in the Town and what direction they want the Town Board to take with respect to the future use of lands. Our Town is currently not zoned and a significant number of requests from the survey asked for the Town to get involved with zoning.

In order for the Town to enter into zoning it needed to have a Comprehensive Plan. While COVID slowed our progress in 2021, a Comprehensive Plan was approved and put in place by the Town Board at the

November 2021 monthly meeting. At that meeting the Board formally requested the Ordinance/Planning Committee to do a full evaluation of zoning. Your committee met in November and started that project. We will be meeting again on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 9 AM at the Town Hall to continue compiling information regarding whether the Town should be zoned and whether we should accept Rusk County Zoning or enter into zoning on our own. All meetings are open to the public and input into this matter is encouraged.

This committee was formed at the request of former Town Chairman John Stencil. Since formation, the committee has completely gone over our Code of Ordinances, modifying many and eliminating roughly two thirds of the old Code where they merely cloned State Statute or were redundant or unenforceable. The committee is a volunteer organization made up of one Town Board member and 6 at large citizens. Your involvement is welcomed.

## **COMMENTS FROM LEPC CHAIRMAN.....BOB DAVIS**

### **Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)**

As this report is written the Emergency Planning Committee for the Town of Big Bend has had a very quiet year - there have been no emergencies that have required our attention. However, we are prepared if an event happens. We have upgraded our radio system to where all members can communicate with each other from any point in the Town. Training sessions are being planned for the winter of 2022. While our current member staffing is adequate, we are always looking for new people to join our group.

Our goal of having a mobile response trailer continues. We feel we need at least \$10,000 before we can consider purchasing and equipping the unit. To date we have just under \$2,000 raised. We will accept, any generous cash donations, and would consider a donation of a 16 to 20 foot covered trailer. Please contact the Town Clerk or the LEPC Chairman, Bob Davis, if you wish to donate.

Your Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a totally volunteer organization of your fellow citizens. The forming of this group was mandated by law after 9/11. If an emergency is called in our Town this group of citizens will be out checking on citizens who may need help, clearing roads for emergency vehicles and directing traffic until County and/or State help can arrive.

## **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 one already received, the second amount expected in 2022. The Town Board is currently deciphering what the funds can be used for, i.e. Infrastructure (Roads), Covid Supplies, Loss of Town Revenue, Public Safety, Fire Protection, other. The final decision has not been handed down as of this writing. 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. The guidelines are broad today, the board would like more clarification.

## **TOWN ASSETS....**

The Town continues to invest in itself for the benefit of Town citizens. This year the Town purchased a steel building and acreage located on Wilson Road. The Town is considering several uses for the property. One being storage, the maintenance part of the Town business was lacking good indoor storage for expensive equipment. The building has a large garage door and has a heated floor. Acreage of the property is approximately 29 acres. The Town receives many inquiries as to brush, leaves and concrete disposal area within the Town. The Board is currently making a Wilson Road property map and considering areas on the property for disposal of those items. The disposal will only be available to Town citizens. The board is deciding how to control that, possibly with some type of Town card or vehicle sticker. Each may require an

annual fee. The fee would cover additional labor of Town personnel to be available at set times to direct citizens to the disposal area. Any input to the Board would be appreciated.

**ELECTIONS in 2022....** First the Town would like to Thank each voter for their consideration in Social Distancing, masks and hand sanitizing for each election. The Poll WORKERS appreciate that the new "normal" was accepted by everyone! Town Clerk, Sandy, would also like to Thank those WORKERS during a stressful time, please thank them also!

**ELECTION METHOD - NEW VOTING MACHINE in 2022....** Town Clerk, Sandy, was on a committee for discussion and selection of a new county wide voting machine. The decision by Towns and the County is to continue with the same company. The best part of this is the use of ARPA funds for the purchase. Rusk County decided to use County received ARPA funds to purchase a machine for each Town. Thank you Rusk County Clerk and Board! The largest change is that the new machines will be done by ballot marking and insertion. This will provide very accurate tabulation and quicker end of the day tallying and forwarding to the County Clerk for County-wide results. Purchase choice was to keep them uniform throughout the County for supplies, spares, repairs and updates. Expected delivery is near first quarter of 2022.

## **2021 TAX 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.

**2022 Payment Dates in person at Town Hall:** Friday December 31, Saturday January 29 - - 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](http://www.townofbigbend.com) - Use "Town Contacts" tab.

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

Check out the Town Web Site, [www.townofbigbend.com](http://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.

## **ELECTIONS - 2022....**

Spring General Election - Tuesday, April 5, 2022 (County Supervisor, Local Municipal, School Board, State Judicial)

Fall Partisan Primary - Tuesday, August 9, 2022

Fall General Election - Tuesday, November 8, 2022 (County Constitutional, State Legislative and Governor)

**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....**

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 at the January 4 2021 and October 06 2021 Town meeting received 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. Several areas in the Town are a concern and being reviewed.

## **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. Fees are established for each size bag. Building Materials must be taken to the dump located in the Town of Stubbs.