

MINUTES OF TOWN OF HULL BOARD
MEETING MONDAY JANUARY 4, 2010 – Regular board meeting

1. Call to order regular Town Board Meeting by Chairperson John Holdridge at 6:55 p.m. at the Town Municipal Building, 4550 Wojcik Memorial Dr., Stevens Point WI 54482.

Present: Chairperson Holdridge, Supervisors Melvin Bembenek, Dave Pederson and Dave Wilz.

Excused from the meeting Supervisor Robert Brilowski.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. Minutes:

Chairperson Holdridge, on last page, item #9 the statement relating to need for audit of treasurer records and some system for supplies. Chairperson Holdridge suggests following supplies adding **equipment controls**.

Motion Supervisor Bembenek, second Supervisor Pederson, approve the minutes of the November 24, 2009 Finance Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

Motion Supervisor Wilz, second Supervisor Bembenek, approve the minutes of the December 7, 2009 Town Board meeting.

Motion carried.

3. Vouchers: Moved by Supervisor Bembenek, second Supervisor Wilz, postpone action on vouchers.

Motion carried.

4. Citizens wishing to address the board non-agenda items. Agenda items are for discussion with possible action.

Todd Hoerter, 2105 Driftwood Dr., present regarding a receipt sent in to Hull relating to a broken windshield.

Place on agenda

- Concern no signs up to have traffic slow down – traffic was flying through.
- Insurance company would give call, however never received copy of letter from insurance co, until copy sent from Hull.
- Signs posted on Granite Ridge Road but not on Casimir Road

Boy Scout Tanner Hoerter, son of Todd, also present and feels Driftwood Drive should be paved. Will send Tanner the 2010 budget.

Pete Kaminski, to double seal Driftwood would cost \$25,000. Road material is needed. Bedrock is starting to show. There is a low area by Dennis Rutta and just as turn on to Driftwood Dr.

Tanner is in 7th grade at St. Peter middle school. Tanner's older brother just made Eagle Scout, less than 4% of scouts achieve Eagle Scout.

5. Announcements – Chairperson and Supervisors

Chairperson Holdridge will be out of town from January 5 to January 23. If there are issues contact Supervisor Brilowski regarding meetings. Janet and Barb will handle in office.

A Planning Commission in-service to be held on January 15th. This is the first time for this type of in-service in Portage County.

The Building Committee will meet at 5:30 p.m. on Monday January 11.

6. Selection of Insurance for Town of Hull

Supervisor Pederson, after reviewing materials earlier this evening I move the Town of Hull goes with Rural Insurance with the exception of the Accident and Sickness coverage which Mark Kluck will review, second Supervisor Bembenek.

Chairperson Holdridge cost comparisons as follows:

- Current carrier – Property insurance liability Horton Group approximately \$19,764
- Property insurance liability Rural Insurance is at \$15,173
- Basically the coverage is similar but in some cases Rural Insurance has lower deductibles.
- The Workman's Comp. is a little lower although that should be stabilized based on the income of the participants.
- The blanket bond, Horton is at \$800 and Rural is at \$510.

Mark Kluck will review both of the accident policies. One is significant as it excludes pre-existing conditions. That may sway it over to Horton. The cost would be more expensive but we need to have that coverage for our firemen.

Motion carried.

Moved by Supervisor Pederson, second Supervisor Bembenek, go with recommendation of Mark Kluck regarding Fire Department policy of Accident and Sickness.

Motion carried.

7. Use of snowplowing vehicle at Fire Station – Mark Kluck and Pete Kaminski

Mark Kluck, allow Mark and Pete to sit down and work out the plowing at the FD. There is a need to get snow away from the doors.

- The Fire Department has a snow blower
- One of the trucks clears the door by 2”

Supervisor Pederson, this can be worked out.

8. Hiring of 4th road crew – review of health insurance cost – John Holdridge

Chairperson Holdridge, initially you have an 8 week waiting period to get into the Teamster Health Insurance.

- If Bill Omernik started on January 1 he would not be able to get into the Teamster health insurance until February 28. That wasn't a real big deal because Bill's wife is still carrying health insurance.

Clerk Wolle, as per conversation on this date with Mike Michelini of Central States Health Fund and per the memo to the board:

- Once the board decides to make Bill a full-time employee, the contract begins and the town is obligated to pay eight weeks of health premium for Bill thus showing his eligibility is established.
 - The discussion is then between Bill and Mike as to when Bill wants to begin health insurance with the town.
- Mike indicated having this bank build up is what allows the union to give lower premiums and guarantee for three (3) years. Without that the union premiums would be much higher
- The union trustees are now deciding what premiums will be and we should know probably later this week.

- In the current contract for 2010 the rate is not to exceed \$252.70 per week per covered employee.
- The 2009 rate was \$230.70 per week per covered employee

The board has to decide if you are hiring Bill as a fourth full-time road crew member. The town will be paying 8 weeks of health insurance premium without a benefit to Bill.

Supervisor Wilz not until the ninth week.

Clerk Wolle, that is exactly right.

Supervisor Wilz if we start January 1.

Chairperson, I suspect if we start him anytime.

Wilz, pay eight weeks of premium without any benefit.

Holdridge, the question is why. Both Mike Michelini and Mitch Perkl of the union had the same answer, because the Teamster Health Insurance does not exclude people with preexisting conditions. They know that at some point they will get someone who has a condition and that will cost them money and they collect this pool of money to cover that. This is basically what they both confirmed.

- At the last meeting we authorized hiring Bill Omernik. We still want to do that.
- I want to see getting this resolved because I'm very reluctant to support paying \$2,000 for health insurance that the town pays and the employee gets no direct benefit from.

Wilz, the issue is you are looking at buying a benefit and receiving no value. There is no benefit. That is a deposit.

Supervisor Pederson, Bill Omernik would continue his current coverage for the 8 weeks and then begin with town coverage.

Holdridge, he would stay on his wife's plan.

Supervisor Bembenek, for eight weeks?

Holdridge yes. Bill states \$2000 is a lot but from my standpoint I am paying \$500 a month. If he is on the Teamsters program he is paying less than \$50. He can recover that in four (4) months or so.

Wilz, the eight (8) weeks of eligibility pay, Janet I think that was in the paperwork on the actual insurance plan.

Wolle, yes it is. I said to Mike today I have not been real involved in union however I know what you are talking about, but in all honesty I would not have thought we would have to pay eight weeks and not receive a benefit.

Wilz when we converted over it was a non-issue because we were just converting from one plan to another, so this is the first time this has come up.

Holdridge but also the economic situation is much different. We have been cut 11% in state aids. We did not have the whole general economic problems we have in this country. We did not have the freezing of the pensions and all the impact. It has impacted the 2,000 households in the Town of Hull. When we started there were all positives and now the unions are giving back benefits, public employee unions are now giving back benefits. Mitch Perkl of the union agreed during our phone conversation this date. The taxes from the various sources it is tough to support the current operation we have. We are one of the few governments that would actually be hiring somebody. Most are steady or people retire and they are not replaced, or they are actually laying them off.

Mitch was going to talk with Mike to see if anything could be done.

Wolle, when I talked with Mike this date, I indicated that when I first talked with you I somehow had the impression you were going to talk with Mitch about lowering the premium. The Trustees are now deciding what the premium for 2010 will be and Mike feels the premium will come in lower than the amount in the contract (not to exceed \$252.70 per week per covered employee) however the amount will not be a lot lower.

Holdridge, Mitch had not talked with Mike and Mike had not talked with Mitch. John talked with Mitch. Right now we have 3 union and 2 non-union. The town pays 95% of the premium. Only 5% is paid by the employee, this is less than \$50 a month. This is a program that has dental, vision, no preexisting condition. It is a very good program.

- The previous insurance with the state the premiums were much higher and there was less coverage.

Bembenek, the town has helped ourselves out by going with the union plan. We have saved the town money.

Wilz, I disagree with the second statement. We saved a little bit. Most of what was saved was turned around and given back in wages. It was a win, win though.

Holdridge, Bill understands this, he is working and agrees you give \$2000 and receive nothing for it. If they could work out something that maybe at the end of the thing either give them 2 more months of coverage or something. It's almost like a bribe to get him into that program.

The 8 weeks is not an issue Bill is prepared to stay with his wife's insurance for 2 months.

Bembenek, but what happens after that 2 months?

Holdridge, if we can work something out then he can go on the Teamster plan.

Pederson, but I can go an entire year without any medical costs and I'm still paying the insurance and I didn't get anything for it. The whole idea is you share the risk with everybody else that is in the plan. They are taking away the pre-existing condition in exchange for spreading that risk over everybody that is paying in.

Holdridge the other strange thing is the single people have the same premium as someone who is older and has a couple of kids. That may be sound until you get more people up on the age bracket with families. We have one employee who is single who is paying the same premium as a married employee with children. This is unusual.

J Wolle, the long and short of what Mike stated today one the board hire Bill as a full-time employee the contract kicks in and the town has to start paying. If Bill is kept as a part-time employee, the union will not say you have to give benefits.

Bembenek, we already made him a full-time employee at last week's board meeting.

Holdridge, I know we made that but we can put that on hold. That's an affirmative vote and anybody who votes in the affirmative can recall it and put it on hold. We haven't sent any letters. I called Bill last week and have explained the situation. He understood. I would like to see this get resolved but I for one am not prepared to spend \$2000 and give it to the Teamster Union and get no benefits from it for the employee.

Wilz, the way you left the conversation, is someone to get back to us with your request?

Holdridge, Mitch was going to get back to us.

Wilz, maybe we can reach some common ground of some sort.

Bembenek, but is he going to get back to us, Janet talked with Mike.

Holdridge, I don't know but I am saying what Mitch told me and Mitch is the guy who sits down and negotiates right across from us. I would look for some resolution there. The other thing that ought to be considered if Bill wants to pay and get into the union system and get out of that \$500, because it is a family budget, get out of that \$500 and we can work something out there I would be supportive of that. I don't know about the restrictions on the union, etc. I'd jump at paying \$50 a month as opposed to \$500. You have to get up to that because you are starting in the hole of \$2000. Bill is working, we employ him forty (40) hours a week, we could have a big snow storm tomorrow and he might work 14 hours a day. He is needed as an employee, we need a fourth road crew person and right now he gets overtime benefits but he does not get health insurance, sick days, etc.

Bembenek, why doesn't he receive sick days, etc?

Holdridge, he doesn't receive benefits because he is a seasonal worker under the union contract.

Bembenek, but didn't we make him full-time last week?

Holdridge this is why I put this on the agenda. We didn't know about the \$2,000.

Bembenek, I know that but the \$2,000 does not have anything to do with him being a full-time worker. If he doesn't want the insurance he should still get the other benefits.

Holdridge, he is going to take the insurance. That is the problem. They are saying he has to take the union insurance. That is the issue.

Wolle, if he is full-time.

Holdridge, Pete's wife carries the insurance. If Bill could stay like Pete it would be a piece of cake.

Wolle, but this is someone new coming in and we have had the insurance where Pete could opt out.

Pederson after the initial contract.

Wolle, if Pete would ever decide to take union insurance, he could not get out of the union insurance or something like that.

Holdridge, I think that is right.

Pederson that information should be coming in sometime this week?

Holdridge, I hope so. We have dealt with Mitch before on some issues. I find it difficult to get a hold of the union people.

Todd Hoerter, 2105 Driftwood Dr, is taking the insurance listed right in the contract that Hull has with Teamsters Local?

Holdridge, yes it is.

Hoerter then anytime you would bring in a full-time employee you are going to deal with that regardless. If he is a full-time employee you have to follow the contract which means you are going to pay that \$2,000 every time otherwise you are in violation of the contract.

Holdridge, but that \$2,000 I do not think that is in the contract.

Wilz, to answer your question, that particular language is not in our union agreement, but we switch to a different insurance carrier through the union and that in of itself has its own language.

Hoerter so that is like a side agreement.

Pederson, it is how they (union) define the eligibility period that is the issue.

Bembenek, when does the 8 weeks start?

Holdridge, the 8 weeks is January 1 to February 28.

Bembenek, when does the \$2,000 have to be paid during that 8 week period?

Pederson, that would be paid monthly.

Wolle, yes when we pay the insurance. I would add Bill's name and social security number to the insurance monthly paperwork.

Bembenek, money would come out of his paycheck.

Wolle, no this would be what the town has to pay in to show his eligibility. The amount paid in is based on the weekly rate for all of us.

Pederson, but he would still pay his share.

Wolle, he would pay after the 8 weeks.

Wilz it is not insurance.

Bembenek, this is to get in, this is not a monthly

Jim Kruziki, would this apply if one of our road crew members quit and we hired a new one?

Wilz/Bembenek yes.

Kruziki, it's an initiation fee.

Bembenek, I think when I got into the Teamsters or the other union, come to think of it I think there was a fee for the first time plus the monthly that I had to pay.

Wilz, that is not uncommon to see a membership fee for health insurance. But I have never seen 2 months worth of premium basically.

Bembenek, I think they took more out of my regular check besides the dues.

Holdridge, I think most plans wouldn't accept pre-existing conditions.

Wilz, no group plans have to accept pre-existing conditions if you are going from group to group.

Holdridge, why is pre-existing conditions such a huge issue?

Wilz, because of what I just said. If you are in a group plan and you go into another group plan there is not break in coverage and pre-existing is covered. Where most people are getting into trouble with all of this health care stuff is they are not in a group plan or else they have come from a group plan, they have been terminated and they let the coverage lapse. There was a lapse in coverage and pre-existing starts all over.

Hoerter, the difference in cost between having a pre-existing condition and not is huge.

Mark Kluck, but you would have the option of recouping that \$2,000 if you could work a deal with him through his salary, correct?

Holdridge, I certainly would try to work out something if we could do that.

Wilz that is what you are saying. You are saying we have to try to figure out where we are going to go with this not just for Bill but for the future employees we have not met yet. How are we going to deal with this?

Hoerter, do you have any kind of a probationary period where the wage rate would be a step lower for a 6 month period which would allow you to recoup that?

Holdridge, there is a probationary period but I don't think it affects salary. It affects the accumulation of sick days, etc.

Bembenek, all of the other benefits.

Pederson that is something to consider the next time we negotiate.

Bembenek, I remember that was an initiation fee that I had besides the regular premium.

Wolle, that would have to go through payroll, you couldn't pay the union directly could you?

Bembenek, it went through payroll.

Holdridge, we don't have a lower rate during the probationary period. Bill's problem is that he has been here. I wouldn't even have him, if he didn't have to be per the contract, be on probation. He has worked for us and we know what he can do.

M Kluck, in all fairness you might have to eat this one but make some kind of deal for the next one.

Holdridge, I'm not prepared to eat this. We have tough times. We have gotten along with 3 road crew and if this kills the 4th road crew member, we'll get along with 3 road crew and we'll hire the 4th road crew during the winter months. If we can work this out fine but if we can't, that is my position. Most people's taxes in Hull did not go up because of the Town of Hull the taxes went up because of the School Board, the

County and VoTech. But they went up and they impacted people and we need to be fiscally conscious about this. Let's make a decision on this and move on.

Bill is working. He is prepared to continue to work here probably through March. We need to work this out. Hopefully we can.

Wilz, while you are gone do you want us to pull in Mitch and who ever we need to talk about a possible resolution?

Holdridge, I have talked with Attorney O'Brien about this so he is apprised. I think whatever we do we do above board and will be in the record. I look to Mel and Dave Pederson on the Personnel Committee we have all been involved in the negotiations.

Following discussion motion Supervisor Bembenek, second Supervisor Pederson, table action.

Motion carried.

Holdridge, Mel or Dave Pederson should be a contact if Mitch should call. Also get Attorney O'Brien involved in communicating with Mitch.

9. Building Committee update – Dave Pederson and Mel Bembenek

Dave Pederson:

- Building Committee will meet Monday January 11 at 5:30 p.m.
- Asked Todd Grunwaldt to do is to put numbers on what the cost comparisons would be
- The consensus of the Committee that building an entirely new building is not in the works unless we could truly justify it and there is an obvious advantage through grants or something
- The Committee asked for costs of a new building, for upgrades and additions and fixing the Fire Station and the Municipal Building separately
- Generally feeling for the Fire Department building even if we did all of the repairs and upgrades it was still not going to be serving the town the way it should be

Mel Bembenek, a new building has not been ruled out we would still like to see some figures.

Pederson, the Committee would consider the Fire Department building for cold storage of equipment.

Chairperson Holdridge, the age of the Municipal Building is 32 years old and the Fire Department building is probably going to be 40 or 50 years old.

Pederson, the Municipal Building would be renovated with that in mind.

Holdridge, you have not totally ruled out a new building based on energy standards or stimulus monies that would be a big influence on it.

Pederson, if we find those funds then we could probably sell it to the electorate. The feeling was that the taxpayers are not going to support a new building unless you can show them the numbers.

Holdridge, show them in terms of their own taxes.

Bembenek, we went through all of the issues with the buildings, the maintenance, the parks, the Fire Department issues.

Holdridge, you have made one big decision that the Fire Station is not renewable.

Moved by Supervisor Wilz, second Supervisor Bembenek, accept the report.

Motion carried.

10. Training for Fire Chief - paying for missed work

Mark Kluck:

- This is special training seminar in Wisconsin Dells
- Training is 8 hours relating to railroad car incidents
- State will pay for room (1 night)
- Request the town pay 8 hours so Mark does not have to take 1 day of vacation.

Motion Supervisor Wilz, second Supervisor Bembenek, reimburse Fire Chief for day missed at work, mileage and meals contingent upon Chief providing hourly wage at work to Town Clerk.

Motion carried.

11. Replacement of FD laptop

Mark Kluck:

- Have had a laptop for seven years
 - o On/off switch no longer works
 - o CD door on side not working

- Loose internet connection
- Taking laptop to Staples just to look at would cost \$375, charge to repair above that
- Get used laptop from RCO with more power and memory for \$630
- RCO will take laptop for \$50 reducing the cost to \$580.00
- RCO will transfer date, emergency contacts, power point

Len Kawlewski, purchased new laptop from TigerDirect.com for \$375 with 1 year warranty.

Kluck, cost \$580 with trade-in, with 1 year warranty, twice as powerful/twice as fast.

Supervisor Pederson, do more checking.

Supervisor Wilz, suggest looking at Milwaukee PC by Copps on east side.

Chairperson Holdridge, give us something in writing, select preferably the lower cost laptop, compare capabilities.

Kluck, need service. FD is set up by-monthly for updates.

Wilz, concerned about a rebuilt screen.

Motion Supervisor Pederson, second Supervisor Wilz, Chief Kluck continue research, and get back to town clerk with all information.

Motion carried.

12. Purchase of stick saw and additional oil – Peter Kaminski

Pete:

- Have a Stihl stick saw (5 years old)
- Requests to purchase new saw with extra bar and chain
- Prefer to go with Echo with extension
- Fleet Farm sells Echo - \$650

Moved by Supervisor Wilz, second Supervisor Bembenek, approve the purchase of a stick saw with extra bar and chain.

Motion carried.

Pete:

- Have totes in garage for oil
- Request permission purchase 1 additional tote (120 gallon)
- This tote for 5W20 motor oil
- \$450 for a 120 gallon tote

Moved Supervisor Bembenek, second Supervisor Wilz, approve purchase of a 120 gallon tote as requested.

Motion carried.

13. Reports:

a. Supervisors

Who does Hull sell used oil to?

Pete – Rock Oil

b. Treasurer – Jim Kruziki

- i. Report on yearend cash balances
- ii. Plan to get better handle on cash flow over next 3-4 months
- iii. Jim will look at web pages for the new quarter and do survey to see what would like included on web pages

c. Road Foreman – No report

d. Fire Chief

- i. Save on the old Fritsch house on Lakeview Drive
 1. Rosholt manned Hull Fire Station
 2. Five other FD's on scene
- ii. Will continue with ISO to lower FD number, the lower the number the better rates citizens in Hull will receive
 1. Stevens Point – 3
 2. Town of Hull – 8Hull will never have a rate like Stevens Point as Stevens Point has fire hydrants.

e. EMS – No report

Supervisor Wilz, had a situation in the neighborhood with CO². The neighbor involved was overwhelmed on how treated. Thank God for the Town of Hull. Four ended up going to the hospital. They are all very grateful.

Mark Kluck, semi burned on Interstate. The company has been billed \$500.

February 1, next board meeting.

Supervisor Pederson, do we need coverage of rental property (in city)? Does Hull need liability?

Len Kawleski, this is already covered.

14. Adjournment: Motion Supervisor Wilz, second Supervisor Bembenek, adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Janet Wolle, Clerk