



**Annual Town Meeting  
May 19, 2020 7:00 p.m.  
Town Community Building**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman John Hanson.

Chairman Hanson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Approve Agenda as Posted:** A motion was made by Bob Becker and seconded by Mike Kramer to approve the agenda as posted. Motion carried.

**A moment of silence** was called for in memory of long-time employee, Larry Becker who passed away in April.

**Approve Minutes of Last Annual Town Meeting:** 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes were approved on a motion from Mike Kramer and seconded by Jan Rayala. Motion carried.

Prior to beginning with the agenda items, an informal recognition honoring retired Vilas County Board Representative, Charlie Rayala Jr. was presented. Charlie served as the District 3 representative of Manitowish Waters on the Vilas County Board for 32 years, during which time he served on a number of multi-county and regional boards and commissions. Highways were Charlie's primary interest, serving 27 years on the Highway Committee, and 18 of those years as Highway Committee Chair. He also served on the Wisconsin County Highway Association Board of Directors, chairing that group in 2009 and going on to serve as Vice-Chairman and Past-Chairman. In addition to his years on the Vilas County Board, Charlie also served as a Supervisor on the Manitowish Waters Town Board. We are grateful for his many years of service and wish Charlie all the best.



**Introductions:** Chair Hanson introduced Supervisors Bob Becker and Mike Kramer, Clerk/Treasurer Dana Hilbert, and recently elected County Board Supervisor Mike Biszak. Mike Biszak shared a few words, acknowledging he had big shoes to fill in following Charlie Rayala Jr. as the District 3 Representative on the Vilas County Board.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was available in hard copy at the door. Chair Hanson allowed for comments or questions, to which there were none. A motion was made by Don Rayala and seconded by Mike Biszak to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

**2019 Clerk's Financial Report:** Main categories of the Financial Report, (available in print at the door), were read aloud by Chairman Hanson with ample time for questions or comments. A motion was made by Jan Rayala and seconded by Don Rayala to approve the 2019 Clerk's Financial Report. Motion carried.

**Set Date for Next Annual Meeting:** The 2020 Annual Meeting, scheduled to fall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, was set for April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and approved on a motion from Bob Skrobot and seconded by Bob Fuller. Motion carried.

**MW Chamber of Commerce Report:** Chamber Director, Sarah Pischer was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following presentation to be read aloud by John Hanson:

What a year the Chamber has had. We started out a year ago with Jessie being brand new to the office. What a great addition she has been. I couldn't ask for a better teammate. The office is continuing to grow and thrive – just what we need for the Manitowish Waters area – a nice strong Chamber and great working relationships with the Town offices and townspeople. I am happy to say we just hired a summer intern – Rylie Cibelli – she will be starting right around June 1. She is currently studying marketing at Florida State University and has grown up spending her summers in Manitowish Waters. Make sure you stop by after June 1 to see the new office and meet Rylie. It is so hard to believe that I have been here over 6 years now. What a pleasure this has been. The accomplishments have been grand, however, this has been the best year yet. We are officially moved into our new office. Thank you to the Manitowish Waters Town Residents and many thanks to the Town offices. While we still have some organizing to do and figuring out how to keep everything up to par with the new guidelines – we are THRILLED to be in the new office. This is a fully functional, beautiful new office space where we can welcome visitors to our area and help residents and businesses find what they need. This past year – our events drew quite the crowds – even though we didn't have perfect weather for each event, we always still have fun. Each event we host has great volunteers that help them run smoothly – thank you to all those volunteers – we couldn't do it without you! Another new accomplishment for the year was designing and launching a brand new website. We are quite proud of this beautiful and easy to navigate website. If you haven't checked it out yet – I highly encourage you to do so. Room tax continues to grow each year – that means we are able to market the area with extra dollars to make sure visitors know how great of a place Manitowish Waters is – whether you vacation here or live here. In looking towards the summer of 2020 - I ask each of you to continue great communication with the Chamber and Town. These past few months have been quite interesting to say the least. Please – if you need anything at all, don't hesitate to ask and we will try our hardest to help. Thank you for the continued support of the MW Chamber. Stay healthy!

**Solid Waste and Transfer Station Report:** Supervisor, Mike Kramer expressed sympathy of the passing of Larry Becker and asked that everyone keep Judy in their thoughts and prayers. We welcome Scott Clendening to the Transfer Station staff, to cover the weekend shifts. Amnesty week will begin Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and run through Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Over the past year, the summer hours were changed to May 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>, and the winter hours will go into effect November 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. The holidays will still be closed with the exception of Memorial and Labor Days. We are still in the process of having 2 years worth of wood chips hauled away.

**Planning and Zoning Report:** Planning Commission Chairman, Dan Sleight was not in attendance. Chair Hanson noted that 2019 was a pretty good year based on permits.

**Cemetery Report:** Bob Becker opened by announcing the members of the Cemetery Committee, which includes Chuck Kramer, (Cemetery Sexton), Jody Miller, Chuck Rayala, Carol Schott, and Marilyn Wittry. In 2019 the cemetery was treated twice for ants and bugs. The treatment will be repeated this year. It is the recommendation of the Committee that a drilled well be installed this summer. The Cemetery Monument was cleaned and stained. The Community Garden Club has offered to spruce up the landscaping at the entrance, which is currently overgrown and weedy. This will be tackled after the well is installed. The overall grounds need to be leveled and planted after a well is installed. A long range plan may include an addition to the road and new blacktop.

**Parks and Recreation Report:** John Hanson commented that we continue to keep our parks in pretty good shape. The new dock system at Koller Park is a main focus at present. This will entail two 30' boardwalk sections along the shore and four 24' floating piers going out from the boardwalk. Overall, we have a really great park system in Manitowish Waters.

**Water Patrol Report:** Supervisor Bob Becker named members of the Water Safety Committee, including Carla Hammeister, Dan Stella, Frank DiLeonardi, Greg Holt, John Butler, and Patrick Solar. Becker was pleased to announce that last year we only had one part-time officer, Leah Alexander, but this summer we will have 3 part-time officers patrolling our chain, adding Phil Horter, (water Patrol Officer from southern Wisconsin), and Dan Perry, (DNR Officer) to our staff. The Water Safety Committee recently sent out a survey to see what the general feeling is in the community. Results will be reviewed later this month. Buoys will be installed by the Rest Lake and Clear Lake boat landings to demonstrate what 100' from shore looks like. Different options are being considered to inform the public about the slow-no-wake areas. A you tube video may be created and put on the website to demonstrate slow-no-wake infractions. Boater safety education will remain a key focus for the committee.

**AIS Program:** Chairman Hanson stated that the Town of Manitowish Waters will continue to contract with the Discovery Center to fight the nasty battle with Curly Leaf Pondweed. Emily Heald, who is in charge of the AIS program, is doing a fantastic job, however she will only have the assistance of one intern this summer, rather than 3 interns as she has had in the past. Purple Loosestrife is also a problem in some areas. If you happen to observe what you think may be invasive species, get a sample to Emily at the Discovery Center and let her know the location of the suspect vegetation. We will continue to be very aggressive in protecting our lakes.

**Library Report:** According to Librarian, Janelle Kohl, the Library has 1,509 registered borrowers, and owns 18,512 books. There are 2,504 Audio books, 4,026 DVD's, and 157,400 EBooks available. In 2019, a total of 20,388 materials were checked out of the library, and 2,583 Ebooks. The 4 public computers and WIFI were logged on 541 times. The Library wireless had 5,989 individuals log on, however this number is unable to count how many times that person logged onto the wireless. The amounts for materials purchased in 2019 include \$9,322 for printed items and \$5,428 for Audio/Visual materials. All money for material purchases came from donations, grants, memorial gifts, and Friends of the Library. Funding for wages, utilities, and various building maintenance are provided by the Town of Manitowish Waters. Renovation for the Library addition started with ground clearing the end of July 2019. Thanks to the Sue Rasey Trust and Better Koller Trust, the Library was able to contribute \$225,000 toward the construction project, as well as all the furniture and equipment inside the addition. The Library will receive \$30,000 a year for 50 years from the Koller Trust. The first \$10,000 of this money goes to the Town to help pay for the addition; \$8,000 will help pay for the yearly internet/Merlin; and the remaining funds will go toward speaker fees, computer replacement costs and other equipment. The Library's many services brought in 12,552 visits, (up 1000 over 2018). In addition to checking out materials, these services include monthly Book Club, , Medicare Consultations, Bridge Group, Movies, Craft Club, Author Events, Maj Jong, Children's Events, copies, faxing, scanning, postage stamp sales, digitizing, book binding, laminating, WIFI, Lunch & Learn, and various speakers. The Library houses a meeting/work room utilized by many groups including, but not limited to the MW Historical Society, Lions, Lioness, Veteran Services, and the Garden Club. Friends of the Library staff a book sale, brat sales and Music in the Park Concessions to raise funds for the Library. They also host a *New York Times Best Selling Author* Book Talk and Signing. Last year featured Ann Hillerman. Appreciation was expressed to Mrs. Uihlein for donated grounds care, and also to the many community members who donate their time and support.

**Fire Company Report:** Fire Chief, Bob Skrobot, reported that in 2019 there were 42 Ambulance calls, 17 fire calls which includes structure fires, mutual aid calls, wild land, gas leaks, and downed power lines. There were 8 accidents, including car, motorcycle, and snowmobile. The annual Harley Davidson Raffle for 2020 will be a 2020 Road King Special edition. The new Fire Station is being constructed and is looking great! The project is on schedule with an estimated completion date of the end of June. The project is currently coming in under budget.

**Road Report:** Supervisor Mike Kramer reported that 2019's big purchase was a side boom brush cutter for our tractor. The final phase of our new road sign replacement will be completed by this fall, The Road crew fabricated sneeze guards that have we have been using for our elections to protect poll workers during the COVID 19 pandemic. The crew has also been busy over the winter months building the boardwalks for the new Koller Park dock system. The crew also puts in a lot of time at the Transfer Station as well as taking care of all maintenance of Town facilities. Chair Hanson added that about 75% of our roads are rated a 7 or better on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest rating.

**Airport Report:** Bob Becker announced the members of the Airport committee, including Rob Schmidt, Tom Ahonen, Amy Kobussen, and Jim Hannemann, adding that the Town Chairman attends all meetings and is the hardest worker at the Airport. Becker expressed gratitude to Airport Manager, Don Fields, for the great job he does. Regretfully, Rob Schmidt recently resigned from the committee. Rob has been an invaluable asset for the past 7 years and will be missed. The airport continues to make progress toward the goal of being self-sustaining. Two new private hangars were completed in 2019, bringing our private hangar tax collection to about \$3,300. We are working with the State to purchase a piece of property from Benji Roemer that adjoins the airport. We are also working with the Bureau of Aeronautics to finally sign aviation easements with neighboring property owners. The COVID 19 CARES Act made us eligible for \$30,000 in funding that will be put towards a new credit card reader system and emergency generator for runway lights. We still are experiencing some maintenance issues with the small Airport truck, but overall, our equipment is in good working condition.

**Subjects from the Floor:** Retired Vilas County District Representative, Charles Rayala Jr. spoke of starting up the Vilas Co. Economic Development organization and the construction of their two office locations. He also commented on Manitowish Waters having one of the lowest tax rates in the County and State. He went on to discuss the many, many improvements he has witnessed during his 32 year tenure on the Vilas County Board. He expanded on his pleasure of serving on both the county and state highway committees and how far they've come over the years. In closing, Charlie expressed how proud he is to have served his community in many different capacities throughout his life. All in attendance gave Charlie a round of gratuitous applause.

**Lands Traded, Gifts, Easements:** None

**Resolution Authorizing the Town Board to Issue General Obligation Refunding Bonds by John Hanson:** Chair Hanson explained the bonding process, needed to fund the Town Hall and Library additions and the new Fire Station, noting that the interest rate would be at about 2.25%. He read aloud Resolution #5-20, asking for a motion to adopt such resolution. A motion was made by Bob Fuller and seconded by Don Rayala to adopt Resolution #5-20 authorizing the Town Board to issue General Obligation Refunding Bonds. A hand vote was taken, resulting with 11 "ayes" and zero opposed. Motion carried. Hanson added that a comprehensive report for electors to access will become available when the process is completed.

**Adjourned:** 7:50pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dana Hilbert  
Clerk/Treasurer