

TOWN OF COTTAGE GROVE
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
APRIL 15, 2014

- I. The meeting was called to order by Town Chair Kris Hampton at 7:00 P.M. Town Clerk Kim Banigan recorded the minutes, and Attorney Connie Anderson provided legal counsel. A list of other attendees is available in the Town Clerk's Office. Hampton reminded everyone to sign in and that only Town Residents may participate in any votes taken tonight. Atty. Anderson read a list of direct powers of a Town meeting according to Wisconsin Statutes.
- II. Flag Pledge.
- III. The minutes of last year's Annual Town Meeting were available in printed form. There was no reading of the minutes at the meeting. **MOTION** by Mike DuPlayee/Kristi Williams to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2013 Annual Town Meeting as printed. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**
- IV. Additions to agenda by Electors: Sheryl Albers, 4274 Vilas Road, asked to add a discussion regarding the per diem amount for the Police Commission Chairperson. Otto K Otteson, 2173 Nora Road, asked to have the population included in future Annual Reports and Newsletters.
- V. Presentation of the 2013 Annual Town Financial Report: The 2013 Statement of Revenues and Expenditures was printed on the back side of the agenda. Clerk Banigan pointed out that the Town was under budget by \$18,907 in 2013, and that indebtedness at the end of the year was at just \$307,000. She said that the Town Board does a good job of creating and following the Town's annual budget.
- VI. Update on Deer-Grove EMS: Chief Duane Erschen said that while call volumes were unusually low in 2013, the draft audit of 2013 DGEMS financial statements shows that the service came in under budget for 2013. He described the staffing model used by DGEMS, which utilizes paid staff to ensure that at least one ambulance is staffed at all times. Volunteers allow for staffing of the second ambulance and the first responder vehicle, which is fully stocked with medical supplies and equipment in the same manner as the ambulances. Call volumes for 2014 so far are higher than they were in 2013.

Chief Erschen was asked to describe the Community Medic initiative that DGEMS is participating in. Currently DGEMS puts on blood pressure clinics at local community centers and elder care facilities, using the opportunity to provide education about medications, fall prevention, etc. and allowing community members to become familiar with DGEMS staff. Hopes are to eventually expand the program to provide preventative or hospital follow-up services to generate revenue for the service.

Hampton said that Deer-Grove EMS provides a great service to the Town, and can always use more volunteers.

- VII. Update on future policing options for the Town of Cottage Grove due to the dissolution of the Joint Police Department on December 31, 2014: Hampton described the events that have led up to the need for this discussion: In March of 2013, the Town and Village of Cottage Grove signed a 10 year agreement to continue the Joint Police Department. In a letter dated December 17, 2013, the Village President stated that the Village intends to withdraw from the Joint Law Enforcement Agreement effective December 31, 2014. Neither the Town Board nor the Chief of Police had any prior knowledge of the Village Board's plans to withdraw, as all discussions took place in closed sessions, and no reason was stated for the withdrawal.

The Town Board has been looking at options for policing in the Town beginning in 2015. While State Statutes do not require Towns to provide any more police coverage than what is provided by

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the County, the Town Board does intend to have a local police force of some kind. The creation of a Town only police department has been eliminated due to cost, which leaves two options: Contracting with the Dane County Sheriff's Office or contracting with the Village of Cottage Grove. Preliminary proposals have been received from the Dane County Sheriff's Office and the Cottage Grove Police Chief. A letter from the Village President indicates that the Village Board may be interested in discussing the possibility of contracting services to the Town once their consultant's study is completed sometime in June. Hampton listed several benefits of contracting with the County, including the ability to participate in selection of the officers, more access to County detectives and other support staff, no personnel issues or legal liabilities to contend with, no need for a Police Commission. Several area municipalities already contract with the County and have expressed their satisfaction with the services provided. On April 7th, the Town Board voted to begin negotiations with the County to determine such things as how much coverage the Town will need, during what hours, and where the officers will be housed. Hampton stated that the board intends to keep the cost within the currently budgeted amount, so no tax increases due to police services are expected. No final decision will be made before July 7th, to allow the Village time to submit a proposal as well.

Sheryl Albers said she has inquired with the Wisconsin Towns Association about police data and statistics for comparable towns. She expressed concerns over whether ordinance prosecutions will lead to overtime, how much less service will we have compared to now, and will we still have access to the canine officer. She said she is proud of our current police department and commended them for their service. Hampton said that the Town Board has no problems with the CGPD officers or Chief, but while the Town Board had no part in the decision to dissolve the joint department, they do need to decide how to police the town going forward.

Steve Querin-Schultz, 2293 W. Ridge Road, asked if the Village has expressed interest in contracting to the Town. The Clerk read a letter from the Village President dated March 18, 2014 indicating that the Village Board may be in a position to discuss contracting after their study is complete in June.

Sarah Hurley, 2284 Uphoff Road, asked if the dissolution of the joint police department is a done deal. She admitted that she was not well informed as she had just heard about it, but felt that there must be some reason why the Village Board decided to withdraw. There followed much discussion and speculation as to the reason. Village Administrator Matt Giese was present but refrained from providing any explanation.

Dane County Captain Jeff Teuscher provided background and answered questions about the Sheriff Office's history of contracting police services to municipalities. Roger Williams, 3768 Bohnsack Lane, said that the benefits that would come with contracting with the County all add up to make it seem like a good way to go.

Hampton closed the discussion by saying that the Town Board will be working on requirements for a police contract at their next meeting on April 21st.

- VIII. Stormwater Management Education: Hampton reminded residents that the Town's Phase 2 Stormwater Permit requires monitoring of stormwater run-off, which takes place primarily in the ditches. He urged residents to keep leaves and pet waste out of the ditches, and be mindful when applying fertilizers and pesticides that any excess will follow the ditches to area lakes and streams. In addition to hiring a consultant to complete the required annual Stormwater report to the DNR,

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the Town is also participating in a study to track nitrogen, which is expected to be the next limited nutrient, in an area north of Lake Mendota.

- IX. Set date for next year's Annual Town Meeting: **MOTION** by Mike DuPlayee/Kristi Williams to hold next year's Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. at the Town Hall. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.**
- X. Other Business: Police Commission Chair per diem rate: Sheryl Albers had prepared and distributed copies of her argument for increasing the per diem rate for the Police Commission Chair. **MOTION** by Sheryl Albers/Romayn Rote that as a matter of equity and fairness, the per diem for the Police Commission Chair be increased to \$50 (when the Chair is a Town appointed commission member). **MOTION CARRIED 23-0-0.**
- XI. Adjournment: **MOTION** by Steve Anders/Mike DuPlayee to adjourn. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Kim Banigan
Clerk
Approved 04-21-2015