

MEETING MINUTES

TOWN OF LAFAYETTE 5765 197TH ST. CHIPPEWA FALLS WI 54726

JAN 19, 2026

Call To Order / Roll Call: The meeting was called to order on Monday, January 19, 2026 at 7:00 PM. Roll call was conducted with the following members present: Chairman Staber, Mathwig, Larson, McIlquham and Clerk Carter.

Approval Of Town Board Minutes: The board reviewed and considered the minutes from the December 22, 2025 meeting and the current agenda. Motion made by McIlquham, seconded by Larson.

Financial Report: Chairman Staber presented the financial report, noting that the town came close to its year-end estimate with a carryover of \$403,755.19, very near their estimate of \$400,000. He reported the current checking account balance at \$403,119.73 and the tax account containing \$6,236,267.71. He explained that tax collections were progressing well. Specific items on the financial report included payments to the Chippewa County Humane Association for their annual contract, fire district payments (the first of four payments for capital and operating expenses totaling \$183,770.) Motion made by Supervisor McIlquham, seconded by Larson to approve the financial bills.

Public Comments

Sheriff Hakes provided an update on law enforcement in Lafayette. He reported that ordinances had been forwarded to the chief deputy, sergeant, and office manager on the 16th, but due to holidays and vacations, they hadn't been completely entered into their tracking system yet. The Sheriff mentioned that deputies had been scheduling time in Lafayette, but the town was not being billed for this time as it was serving as a trial. He had personally spent time in the area, including visiting the school. Regarding staffing, the Sheriff reported they were in the best position they had been in for a long time, with only two full-time patrol openings. He mentioned that a job offer had been extended to someone with five years of experience as an investigator at another agency. He also offered board members the opportunity to do ride-alongs with deputies in the area.

New Business:

2025-0014 – 70th Ave And East Of 190th From R2 To R1: The board discussed a rezoning proposal for property on 70th Avenue east of 190th Street from R2 to R1. A resident who owned property in the area expressed initial concerns about the process, noting that typically property owners petition to rezone their own property rather than having it done by the town.

Chairman Staber explained that the process began when one party approached the county about rezoning their parcel. The zoning director then contacted the town about other adjoining properties that were either R2 or A, though their primary use was R1. He noted that the town had done similar rezoning in other areas of Lafayette to align zoning with actual use, and no residents were being billed for the change. Motion made by Supervisor McIlquham and seconded by Larson and passed with one “no” by Mathwig.

2025-0015 – Rezone Petition From R1 & Local Commercial To R1

The board discussed a rezoning petition for property along Highway X, changing areas that were a mix of R1 and local commercial to exclusively R1. Chairman Staber explained that while the land use plan designated the area as local commercial, the actual use of the properties was residential, with houses and garages on the lots. He noted that the chances of the properties ever being developed commercially were slim, especially given that lakefront property was at a premium.

The chairman pointed out that one of the nearby properties was already zoned R1, and only the old Johnny's Donut Shop was zoned local commercial. Board members discussed that the lots in question appeared to have houses and garages on them and were likely not large enough to be conforming commercial lots at 30,000 square feet. Motion made by Mathwig, seconded by Larson.

2025-0016 – Eckwright Rezone From R2 To R1

The board considered a rezoning request for Eckwright property from R2 to R1. Chairman Staber explained this was a 40-acre parcel off 72nd Avenue, with half of it already rezoned. He noted that the owners would likely be coming to the board with a plat in February or March to develop the full 40 acres, with all homes planned to be single-family. Motion made by Supervisor Larson and seconded by McIlquham.

2025-0017 – Berry Rezone From R2 To R1

The board discussed rezoning the Berry property from R2 to R1. The chairman noted this was another property off 70th Avenue, located on the curve. Motion made by McIlquham and seconded by Mathwig.

2026 Annual Monitoring And Reporting For The Town Of Lafayette Landfill

The board reviewed the annual monitoring and reporting contract for the Town of Lafayette landfill. Chairman Staber explained that testing frequency had been reduced to once per year, costing \$3,500. He noted this was a continuing obligation that the town would never be able to eliminate. Motion made by Larson and seconded by Mathwig.

Stormwater Ordinance Revisions

The board considered revisions to the stormwater ordinance that had been introduced a few months prior but not acted upon.

Chairman Staber explained that the changes mirrored county ordinance revisions and primarily dealt with requirements for developers to include long-term maintenance agreements in the deeds for lots in new subdivisions. This would ensure new owners are aware of their responsibilities regarding stormwater management on their properties. The chairman explained that the township would take initial enforcement actions by sending letters to property owners in violation, with the possibility of assessing cleanup costs to property taxes if issues weren't addressed. The county would handle subsequent enforcement if necessary. Motion made by Larson and seconded by Mathwig.

Ideas For 2026 Operations Of The Brick Boat Landing (Requested By Jerry Zais)

Jerry Zais requested that this item be tabled until the February meeting so he could first share his ideas with the commission.

Motion made by Mathwig and seconded by McIlquham

Wakeboard Boats - Presentation By Don Hauser Of The Lake Wissota Improvement Association

Don Hauser and colleagues from the Lake Wissota Improvement Association gave a presentation about concerns regarding enhanced wakes from wakeboard boats on the lake.

They outlined several issues:

- Safety concerns due to reduced visibility when boat bows rise
- The creation of 3-4 foot high wakes
- Plumes of energy reaching lake bottoms up to 20 feet deep, disturbing sediment and damaging plants
- Potential release of phosphorus from disturbed sediment, fueling algae blooms
- Impact on other lake users like fishermen, swimmers, and paddle boarders
- Shoreline erosion from large wakes
- Risks to wildlife and fish habitats
- Concerns about ballast tanks in wake boats that can't be completely emptied, potentially transferring invasive species and antifreeze between lakes

Don Hauser explained that all boats can create enhanced wakes temporarily, but wake boats specifically maintain their stern-down position at slower speeds (9-11 mph) to continuously generate large wakes. He shared survey results from Lake Wissota residents, noting that 94% of respondents supported establishing zones for enhanced wake operation, 91% supported prohibiting enhanced wake activity on Little Lake, and 84% supported similar restrictions on the river north of O'Neill Creek. The association representatives shared a map showing deep water areas (blue) where wake activities would be safer, shallow areas (yellow), and areas too close to shore or too shallow (pink). The board discussed next steps, including obtaining copies of ordinances from other townships, consulting with their attorney, discussing with the sheriff's department, and coordinating with other townships surrounding the lake.

Benefit Review - Nondependent Member

The board considered a request from an employee seeking benefits for a non-dependent member.

Chairman Staber explained that after reviewing the request, the only way to offer such coverage would be if the employee paid the full price for the non-dependent member's insurance without impacting other employees' coverage.

Board member McIlquham strongly objected to allowing non-family members on the town's insurance policy, describing it as a "slippery slope." She argued that most businesses and counties require covered individuals to be family members such as spouses, children, or wards. She also expressed concern about potential premium increases if a non-family member experienced a catastrophic health event. Motion made by McIlquham, seconded by Larson, that health insurance coverage would only be offered to family members such as spouses or dependent children (up to age 26), and that this policy should be clearly stated in the town's policy manual.

Town Communications From Board & Road Supervisors, Town Clerk & Town Chair

Tom commended Mark, Matthew, and Kyle for doing a good job with the roads during icy conditions. It was noted that the scraper blade on the bottom of plow trucks was working well, and the plow on the recently purchased loader was effective for cul-de-sac roads. The flashing green lights alternating with orange lights on the trucks were also mentioned as providing good contrast and getting people's attention.

Mike was recognized for building a nice box for collecting cardboard at the recycling center, which cost about \$200.

Mathwig asked whether anything needed to be done regarding a portable bait shop set up on the ice by the boat landing, citing concerns about consistency with previous discussions about vendors selling from the water or beach areas. The chairman wasn't sure what actions the board could take, if any.

Chairman Staber introduced Jami Carter as the new town clerk who started on January 5th. He noted she was doing a great job but was still on a learning curve, asking for patience from residents who contact her.

Motion To Adjourn was made at 8:06 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Jami Carter / Clerk

These minutes are intended to reflect the discussed topics and propositions during the Lafayette Town Board Meeting, ensuring transparency and providing a clear understanding of the deliberations and decisions made.