

Regular December Town Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 8th, 2025

The meeting was posted on December 4th, 2025 at the Bayfield Town Hall and the town website. Chairman Craig Hoopman and Supervisors Robert Meierotto, Karen Boutin, Fred Erickson, and Carol Fahrenkrog were present. Clerk Kelly Faye, Treasurer Billie Hoopman, and Road Foreman Carl Butterfield were also in attendance. Chairman Hoopman called the meeting at 6:00 PM.

Public Comment: Approximately 50 people were in attendance and several provided input on the Pike's Creek Trail issues. The following is a summary of their comments...

1. Jim Bryan:

- Shared appreciation for Town Board's work.
- Has not seen problems such as littering on the trail that would affect neighbors.
- Does not see any reason to invalidate findings noted in DNR letter.
- Suggests turning bridge over to DNR.

2. Mick Parent:

- Stated he was involved in routing the new trail, very rugged ground the last few hundred yards.
- Bridge placement choice is important due to flood plain, already in the best place.
- Moving bridge would be expensive and difficult.
- Has never seen the trail affect adjacent properties.
- Suggests leaving trail as is, it is valuable to the community.

3. Sheree Peterson:

- Was surprised to see the trail closed during the summer.
 - Has been a well-traveled road since the 1830s used for logging, homes, and recreation.
 - Has walked herself for years and would be concerned if it was permanently closed.
 - Public rights deserve public input.
 - People love trails as they enhance their quality of life.
 - She would never knowingly choose to encroach on private property. Signage along the Casper's land may be appropriate.
 - Moving the bridge may not be appropriate.
- Provided her comments in writing for the record.

4 Jen Maytum:

- She has walked the bridge since 1996, it is an important public space.
- She was a donor in support of the establishment of the trail.

5. Clint McCowen:

- Trails were a big part of why they located here.
- They are almost daily users of the trails in the summer.
- Suggests keeping the trail open.

6. Steve Sandstrom:

- He formerly served on the Town of Bayfield Plan Commission.
- Walked the trail 2-3 days a week for 20 years and hardly ever saw other people.
- It is important to allow people to experience it.
- Suggests the Town Board reference the Town's Comprehensive Plan to see what it says about sustainability.

7. Tom Galazen:

- When he was nine-ten years old, a friend took him to Pike's Creek and the dam, it was regarded as public property and used as such then.
- Doesn't understand why there are problems as the DNR believes it is the town's right-of-way.
- He recently skied the trail.
- Suggests that if it needs to go to litigation the town should spend the money.

8. John and Jennifer Crump:

- They have worked on the trail and walked on it many times.
- Asked if there is a survey not available to the public showing the Casper's own the land as the Turnquist survey suggests it is not a problem.
- Asked the Town Board to pause and maintain public access.

9. Joyce Kiel:

- Commented that if Casper's don't sue the town, they could sue the DNR.
- Asked what the town would be getting by taking the bridge out.
- Asked what trail Agenda Item #12 is referring to when it stated Pike's Creek (Pileated Woodpecker Trail).
- Asked if the town has authority to keep people off a town road and/or DNR land.
- Brought up agenda item #11 and suggested several factors would need to be tested to be able to abandon a town road and that the Town Board should wait to understand the process.
- On Agenda Item #13 she suggested the town simply ask the DNR for their records (as they have suggested they were willing to share them) to avoid the cost of a public records request.
- On Agenda Item #14 she suggested the town retain an attorney.
- On Agenda Item #15 she suggested the town board should continue working with Bayfield Area Trails (BATs).

Provided her comments in writing for the record in advance of the meeting.

10. Ted May:

- Suggested the decisions made in November should be rescinded and that DNR approval would be needed to move the bridge.
- Noted that \$80,000 in grants/labor was provided to build the trail.
- Not wise to close the Pileated Woodpecker Trail without closing the road.
- Town Board should not stop working the BATs.

11. Kevin Casper:

- Read statement aloud which was also read at the November Town Board meeting.
- Noted challenges to him and his family due to this conflict.

- Commented on no trespassing signs that have been removed or damaged, lack of communication, concerns about statements made in the WI DNR letter suggesting town ownership of St. Paul Road.
- Working with an attorney and if the town does not resolve to move the trail and bridge away from their property they will start legal proceedings.
- Hopes for a positive outcome.

12. Bryce Thompson:

- Stated he worked with titles/surveys in the past.
- Claimed that the Casper's do not own the road.

13. Bill Bussey:

- Commented he is thankful for trails.
- Has lived next to and been using the Brownstone Trail since the 1980s. Has never experienced any negative impacts.
- Trails are a great asset. Hopes this trail will be available for public use permanently.
- Suggests the Town Board rescind the motion made at the last meeting and talk to the Town Attorney.
- Possible Quit Claim Deed to the DNR for St. Paul Road. DNR could enter mediation with the Casper Family.
- Town Board should continue working with BATS.

14. Not Identified:

- Has witnessed children enjoying the trail and thinks it is valuable to many people.

15. Janel Ryan:

- Addressed Kevin Casper directly to say that she is sorry he is going through this.
- Suggested solution could be that signs are put up noting that hikers are walking on private property.

16. Jim Steffenson:

- Stated the trail might be turned into a legacy for the Casper's and be renamed to Bud Casper Trail.

17. Kate Kitchell:

- Thanked the Town Board for their support.
- Lots of previous Town Board members also supported the area.
- Memorandum of Understanding lays out their mission.
- Has been a lot of time and commitment for the town but has mostly gone well up until now.
- Sorry to the Casper Family and everyone else that we are here.
- Nobody foresaw this situation.
- Questions need to be answered including where the boundary is with the Casper's land.
- Asked town to take time to figure things out and press the pause button. There are long-term effects from these decisions.
- Regarding abandonment of the Right-of-Way, consider handing it over to the DNR. They seemed receptive. May be a simple project.
- Town should follow up with Terry Bay with the WI DNR for records.

-Moving bridge is not a good idea. Will take time to get approvals, find a good location.
 -Look for an opportunity to work with Casper Family to put up a rope line to delineate where people can go.
 -Complex legal issues, sad about burden to town.
 -Transfer Right-of-Way and work with mediator. Litigation may be avoided. Could have a special work group reporting to the Plan Commission or Town Board.
 Provided her written comments for the record.

Items for Future Agendas: None.

Discussion and possible approval of minutes of the Budget Hearing and Regular Town Board Meeting of November 24th, 2025: A motion was made by Boutin, seconded by Meierotto, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Receive and Place on File Treasurer's Report:

12/08/25

GENERAL CHECKING ACCT. #50062

CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$57,327.73
Less Checks Outstanding (To Date)	\$2,932.43
CURRENT AVAILABLE BALANCE	\$54,395.30

MONEY MARKET ACCT. #150375

CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$727,018.34
Less Designated Funds:	
• Growth Incentive Fund	\$39,745.58
Pileated Woodpecker (Hatchery) Trail (for bridge & trail remedies) 12200.04 - \$120 legal bill)	\$9,580.04
• Economic Study/ Other Trails (assumes carry over/transfer of funds):	\$2,249.17
• Salmo Trail Project (Essential and Tamarack Health)	\$8,250.00
TOTAL of Designated Funds	\$59,824.79
CURRENT AVAILABLE BALANCE	\$667,193.55

LOANS:

BREMER BANK LOANS	Loader	Star Route Project
• Issue Date	2/21/2020	2024
• Maturity Date	2/21/2028	12/05/2028
• Interest Rate:	2.5%	4.2%
Original Balance	\$433,918.28	\$1,587,286.00
Last Payment Amount	11/21/2025 - \$4,998.52 \$4,706.24 \$292.28	12/05/25 - \$141,263.72 \$121,821.00 \$19,442.72
Current Balance	\$131,058.81	\$365,465.00
Next Payment Due	12/21/2025 = \$4,998.52	12/05/2026 - \$141,263.72

NOTES:

1. Received invoice from City of Bayfield for past Fire Department CIPs in the amount of \$149,779.43, processing payment tomorrow.
2. Anticipate receiving 2025 Tax Statements from the Bayfield County Tax Lister's Office in the next 10 days. Will send out as quickly as possible. NEW: Bayfield County On-line Dog Licensing portal. REMINDERS: Tax Bills can be accessed at Bayfield County Tax Novus and are expected to go up in part due to the Bayfield School District Building Improvement Referendum (Approx. \$69.00/\$100,000 evaluation for 20 years). The Pike's Bay Sanitary District Levy was reduced significantly from last year.
3. Working on Valley Road Agricultural Road Improvement Project Grant Application for submittal on December 15, 2025.

A motion was made by Fahrenkrog, seconded by Boutin, to approve the report. Motion carried.

Report from Pikes Bay Sanitary District: Jim Bryan was in attendance. He commented that the town is not alone in having complicated legal issues. Chairman Hoopman stated that he appreciates their work, and that the reduction they said would be made to the tax levy was in fact made.

OLD BUSINESS**Brief Presentation by Chairman Hoopman on the Pike's Creek (Pileated Woodpecker)**

Trail issues including information on the land disputes: Chairman Hoopman gave an overview of the issues. He reported that a sub-committee made up of himself, Supervisor Fahrenkrog, Clerk Faye, Treasurer Hoopman, Kate Kitchell, Plan Commission Chairman Finn, and two members of the Casper Family met at the Town Hall to discuss the dispute with Terry

Bay of the DNR (online) the previous week. Several unanswered questions were brought up for further research at that time.

Hoopman listed several of these questions pertaining to the land dispute, abandonment of Old St. Paul Road, the option of gifting and moving the bridge, the potential closing of the trail, and the authority of the town related to any of these things.

Discussion and possible action to Rescind/Modify Actions taken related to Pike's Creek Bridge at the Regular Town Board Meeting of November 24th, 2025: A motion was made by Fahrenkrog, seconded by Boutin, to rescind the action taken at the November 24th, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

Discussion and possible action related to the abandonment of Old St. Paul Road: A motion was made by Boutin, seconded by Meierotto, to table this item until after the town has spoken the Town Attorney Max Lindsey.

Discussion and possible action on closure of Pike's Creek (Pileated Woodpecker) Trail: Chairman Hoopman stated he does not believe the town can close the trail until we talk to the Town Attorney. Fahrenkrog mentioned she hoped that the Casper Family would give the town grace related to their deadline to allow time for the town to work with the Town Attorney.

Discussion and possible approval to submit Public Records Request to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources requesting all documents related to the Pike's Creek (Pileated Woodpecker) Trail, Pike's Creek Bridge, and related land disputes: A motion was made by Meierotto, seconded by Boutin, to approve the public records request. Motion carried.

Discussion and possible approval to hire Town of Bayfield Attorney to research and provide legal guidance on all Pike's Creek (Pileated Woodpecker) Trail and land ownership/use issues: After lengthy discussion, it was decided that the town would turn all of these issues over to the Town Attorney.

Discussion and possible action on Town of Bayfield involvement in present and future Bayfield Area Trails operations: Chairman Hoopman stated he asked that this issue be on the agenda for discussion purposes only. He brought up the local snowmobile club that operates independently with their own checkbook and financial management operation. He stated he is in favor of trails, but someone will need to continue to maintain them all. There may be financial responsibility attached to this in the future. Fahrenkrog suggested that the \$5,000 town contribution to the Bayfield Area Trails listed in the 2026 budget could be used to cover the legal fees related to this dispute. Kate Kitchell noted that she heard Hoopman loud and clear in his request that the town not take on any more trail projects at this time. She asked if the intention was still to continue work on the Salmo Trail. Hoopman responded that the Salmo Lakewalk Trail improvement project should continue.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and possible recommendation to Bayfield County Zoning related to request from Roger and Heather Branham to Rezone (Zoning District Map Amendment) of a 38.9-acre parcel (Tax ID #5484) from Forestry (F-1) to Agricultural 1 (Ag-1) to allow for

agricultural use and grazing of cattle on the property. (This request will be considered by the Bayfield County Planning and Zoning Committee at their December 18th meeting):

Fahrenkrog stated the Plan Commission recommended approval of the zoning change from F-1 to Ag-1 with the request that the applicant find out (and report to the town) if fencing needs to be installed to keep the cattle out of the ravine. A motion was made by Fahrenkrog, seconded by Erickson, to approve the change from F-1 to Ag-1 with the request that the applicant find out if fencing needs to be installed to keep the cattle out of the ravine. Motion carried.

Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2025-06: A Resolution in Support of the Valley Road Project for the Wisconsin Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) Funding:

TOWN OF BAYFIELD
Bayfield County, Wisconsin

Resolution 2025-06:
In Support of the Valley Road Project for the
Wisconsin Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) Funding

WHEREAS, the Town of Bayfield, Bayfield County, Wisconsin is authorized under the Wisconsin Statutes to improve and maintain its local road network; and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) administers the Agricultural Roads Improvements Program (ARIP) to assist local governments with projects on roads that provide access to agricultural lands or facilities, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bayfield has identified a critical need to reconstruct and upgrade Valley Road, a Class B agricultural route, and

WHEREAS, Valley Road provides vital access for agricultural producers to farms and fields, and its deteriorated condition impacts agriculture productivity, transportation efficiency, safety, and economic vitality for the local agricultural community; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bayfield seeks financial assistance through the Agricultural Road Improvement Program (ARIP) to ensure the project can be completed to proper standards without creating undue hardship on local taxpayers;

WHEREAS, the ARIP requires a local match for the project, and the Town of Bayfield commits to providing its share of the local match for this project, in the amount of 10% of total costs, through Town road funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Bayfield, Bayfield, County, Wisconsin:

1. The Town of Bayfield fully supports and endorses the Valley Road reconstruction and application for any grant funding available, including, but not limited to, ARIP Funding.

2. The Town Board hereby authorized the Town Chairperson to sign all necessary applications and related documents to secure said funding from WisDOT.
3. The Town Board commits to providing the required local matching funds for the project.
4. This resolution shall be part of the official record of the Town of Bayfield.

Adopted by the Town of Bayfield Board of Supervisors by a vote of - .

Dated this 8th day of December 2025.

TOWN OF BAYFIELD

Craig Hoopman, Chair

Fred Erickson, Supervisor

Robert Meierotto, Supervisor

Karen Boutin, Supervisor

Carol Fahrenkrog, Supervisor

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly and legally adopted by the TOWN OF BAYFIELD at a regular meeting held on the 8th day of December 2025.

Kelly N. Faye, Clerk

A motion was made by Boutin, seconded by Erickson, to approve the resolution. Motion carried.

Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2026-07: Appoint Election Inspectors:

**TOWN OF BAYFIELD
Bayfield County, Wisconsin**

**Resolution 2026-07
Appoint Election Inspectors**

WHEREAS, the Town of Bayfield Chairman of the Board of Supervisors shall appoint Election Inspectors in the odd numbered years in the month of December per State Statute 7.30 to be confirmed by the Board of Supervisors.

AND WHEREAS, the following individuals shall be appointed for a term beginning January 1, 2026 and ending December 31, 2027 and shall include names provided by the two major parties in accordance with State Statutes.

Election Inspectors

Claudia Ferraro
Lynn Weber

Janet Dale
Diana Lind

Ellen Hauser
Sheree Peterson

Jane Hauser
Perri Campbell
Fran Boris

Nancy Bussey
Patricia Noordsij-Jones
Brenda Dandeneau

Beverly Lindell
Kristin Connell

AND WHEREAS, the Board authorizes the Town Clerk to appoint additional election inspectors as required to appropriately and efficiently conduct elections for the Town of Bayfield.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of the Town of Bayfield, at a Meeting held this 8th day of December, 2025, that the Town Board is officially adopting said resolution.

TOWN OF BAYFIELD

Craig Hoopman, Chair

Fred Erickson, Supervisor

Robert Meierotto, Supervisor

Karen Boutin, Supervisor

Carol Fahrenkrog, Supervisor

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly and legally adopted by the Town of Bayfield at a regular meeting held on the 8th day of December, 2025.

Kelly N. Faye, Clerk

A motion was made by Fahrenkrog, seconded by Meierotto, to approve the resolution. Motion carried.

Discussion and possible action on proposal by Town Resident to designate Star Route Road an official “Rustic Road”: Discussion took place about the program. It was decided that Fahrenkrog would research this to find out the details and report back at a future meeting.

Approve and place on file Clerks Report for December 2025:

11/19/2025 - 12/05/2025						
DISBURSEMENTS						
Checks written	\$18,370.63					
Range	22532	22543				
BUDGETS vs. ACTUAL						
		November 2025	Y-T-D	Budget	% of Budget	
	Revenue	\$ 25,112	\$ 1,318,598	\$ 1,921,624	69%	
	Expense	\$ 51,261	\$ 1,243,958	\$ 1,921,624	65%	
	Balance	\$ (26,149)	\$ 74,640			

A motion was made by Boutin, seconded by Fahrenkrog, to approve the Clerk's Report. Motion carried.

Approve and place on file the Correspondence:

(Due to late November meeting, list pertains to November 24th to December 5th)

Received

1. Letters related to the Pike's Creek bridge and land disputes from: Kevin Casper, Joyce Kiel, Mick Parent, Jennifer Maytum, and Kate Kitchell.
2. Request for Roger and Heather Branham to Rezone (Zoning District Map Amendment) of a 38.9-acre parcel Tax ID #5484 from F-1 to Ag-1 from Bayfield County Zoning Department.

Outgoing

1. Federal Payroll Taxes for End of November and Beginning of December to US Treasury.
2. WI Payroll Taxes for November to WI Department of Revenue.
3. Details and photos related to Valley Road insurance claim to Zoe DeBates, Claim Representative- Continental Western Insurance Group.
4. Length of Service Award paperwork to Lyn Cornelius-Ambulance Coordinator in preparation for annual EMS member award contributions.
5. Signed Mill Rate Certificate to Bayfield County Land Records Office for preparation of tax bills.
6. Snowplowing Sign-Up Sheet, and information about Zoning and driveway requirements, to new owner of 36675 Bresette Hill Rd.
- 7.

A motion was made by Meierotto, seconded by Boutin, to approve the correspondence. Motion carried.

Chairman and Supervisor Reports: Chairman Hoopman thanked everyone for coming and invited all to stay for the holiday dinner.

Date and time for Caucus and Regular January Town Board Meeting: Monday, January 12th, 2025- 6:00 PM.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Boutin, seconded by Meierotto, to adjourn. Motion carried.

Minutes presented by: Kelly Faye, Clerk.