



TOWN OF DOVER

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SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES ADOPTION OF THE 2026 LEVY-BUDGET TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025 6:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Sam Stratton called the meeting to order at 6pm.
2. **Roll Call:** Chairman Sam Stratton, Supervisor #1 Mike Shenkenberg, Supervisor #2 Jared Guillien, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Kim Springer, Clerk/Treasurer Camille Gerou. Residents in Attendance: Zero
3. **Verify Posting of Meeting:** The clerk verified the posting.

4. **General Town Information by Chairman Stratton:**

Tax history:

2023: Revaluations were conducted in 2022 resulting in the mill rate dropping down to \$1.43 from \$2.05. This mill rate means that for every thousand dollars your property is worth, the Town of Dover gets \$1.43, the rest of the taxes you pay go to the schools. A \$300,000 operating loan was taken out as the costs associated with running a municipality such as Fire/EMS (Emergency Medical) staffing, Insurance, Humane Society sheltering, Garbage Collection, Water Patrol, the cost of repaving roads, the cost of a piece of equipment, etcetera continue to increase significantly.

2024: To help ease the budget shortfalls the board adopted special assessments:

- \$450 charge for fire service
- \$150 charge for garbage service

(annually for improved parcels \$1,000 or more)

By law, a municipality can only raise their mill rate by approximately one percent a year. Due to adding the special assessments, again by law, Dover's mill rate was reduced to \$1.01.

This mill rate means that for every thousand dollars your property is worth, the Town of Dover gets \$1.01, the rest of the taxes you pay go to the schools, except for the special assessments.

2025: The special assessment rates:

- lowered to \$400 for the fire assessment
- lowered to \$75 for the special garbage assessment

(annually for improved parcels of \$5,000 or more)

The town board pays taxes, has bills of their own, and certainly understands the costs associated with raising a family and maintaining a home. Could the town have utilized the higher income, obviously!

The future:

2026: The special assessment rates:

- \$450 for the fire assessment
- \$75 for the special garbage assessment

(annually for improved parcels valued over \$5,000 or more)

Included in the 2026 budget is to pay off the remaining operating loan of \$150,000. The goal is to maintain what we have. No roads will be enhanced, only cold patch for potholes and no additional roads equipment such as a front-end loader for loading salt will be purchased. Water

Patrol hours have been reduced. No town hall building enhancements are planned such as new access doors, a generator, or a new roof. Just maintain. Obviously, we need to find a better long-term plan to enhance our town finances.

Referendum is the only route we feel can help us get to a better financial standing. This means you as residents will vote on the town's financial road to recovery. With specific special assessment accounts, by law, you can only utilize that money for that subject. The \$111,375 yearly fee that is collected for garbage, pays for the yearly garbage collection at the town, our proportion of the August Clean Sweep event, hauling of compost, tree disposal, and in 2024 the replacement of the town hall parking lot damaged by the heavy garbage trucks. The \$668,250 fire assessment will not cover the FD operating budget of \$675,000. Included in FD budget number is \$248,476 to cover a portion of the new fire engine. \$403,000 is already in a savings account from previous year's special assessments to help cover the full engine price of \$789,243. Pending the delivery time of the engine an additional loan may need to be taken out.

After the Fire Department expense, EMS (Emergency Medical Service) Department has the next highest budget at \$503,602.84. Our goal is to raise our mill rate with a referendum to cover the EMS Department expense. The monies that would be spent on the EMS area would be freed up to fund road repairs, tree disposal, or replace worn signage. A mill and overlay road enhancement came in at \$311,000 in 2025 for a mile of road. FYI- Dover now has 38.93 miles of road.

In 2026, the mill rate continues to be \$1.01.

Please note budget meetings, all meetings are open to the public.

2025 year in review:

- The Seagrave Fire Engine Lawsuit was resolved resulting in Seagrave paying for Dover's attorney's fees, providing the fire engine initially agreed upon at the same contract price with an extended warrantee, and additional supplements.
- The EMS Union negotiation continues.
- A mile of Cunningham Road was resurfaced.

5. Adoption of the 2025 Town Tax Levy to be Paid in 2026 Pursuant to Sections 60.10(1)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes: Jared Guillien made the motion to approve the 2025 Tax Levy to be paid in 2026 as presented, seconded by Mike Shenkenberg. VOTE: 3/0 (Jared yes, Mike yes, Sam yes) Motion carried.

6. Adjourn: Jared Guillien made the motion to adjourn at 6:10pm., seconded by Mike Shenkenberg. Motion carried.