

Town of Phelps
Minutes - Special Town Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 24, 2025
Phelps Town Hall

Present: Town Board Chairman Steve Doyen, Town Board Supervisors – Maureen Robinson, Jeremy Ryan and Steve Waier. **Excused Absence:** Dave Selby. **Others Present:** Clerk/Treasurer – Sheryl J Ward, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer – Kathleen R Ray, Shop Foreman – Josh Hedberg and Women’s Club President – Mak Holcomb.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chairman Doyen called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call/Quorum Call:** A quorum of board members was present
3. **Verification of Public Notice by Town Board:** Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Ray verified the agenda was posted at the Phelps Town Hall/Community Center, Phelps Post Office, Phelps Convenience Center, Town Website, and emailed to the Vilas County News Review on September 22, 2025
4. **Correspondence and Communications:** Mak Holcomb stated Scarecrow Fest was a great success again with the Women’s Club making \$27,000, Lions Club \$2,300, Fire Department \$3,000, Snowmobile Club \$3,000 and the Historical Museum \$600 for a net income of \$35,900.
Mak stated the reason she mentioned this successful event is because the Women’s Club greatly supports the plans for the Lakefront Pines Park improvements and we hope that nothing gets cut out of the budget because we feel it is important. Mak stated the Women’s Club will gladly support this project financially, we just don’t know how much yet because our budget cycle is in June.

Discussion/Action on the Following Agenda Items (Public Comment will be Allowed on Each Agenda Item):

5. **Approve, by formal motion, the purchasing of the new Western Star 47X plow truck:** Steve Waier stated we need a formal motion to approve the purchase so we can sign the contract to borrow.

Motion by Ryan to approve the purchase of the new Western Star 47X plow truck utilizing the Bureau of Public Lands for a 10-year loan at 5.5% beginning 2027 and using \$80,000 of LGIP Reserve as a down-payment. Second by Doyen. All voting aye. Motion carried.

6. **Approval of additional \$1,000 for interior design for the monument sign:** Selby stated that the design of the sign is not part of the grant funding, and Jean Petrick has offered to meet with Lakeland Sign and Graphics from Minocqua, coordinate with Hoeft and the team to come up with something that fits with our Northwoods theme and aesthetic. Doyen asked if this cost would affect the grant money and Selby explained no, this is above and beyond the cost of the sign written in the grant. It’s an additional cost, as is her design expertise of the community center building, to continue a cohesive look. This will be paid out of our match funds through donations.

Motion by Waier to approve an additional \$1,000 for interior design for the monument sign. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

7. **Discussion/Action: Consideration of collaboration with the Town of Conover regarding potential withdrawal from the Landfill Venture Group (LVG), including authorization for one or two Phelps Town Board members to represent the Town of Phelps in such discussions, and to approve sharing in related costs, including but not limited to legal expenses and actuarial fees, as necessary.**

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Jeremy updated the Board on the intent by the LVG to take out a \$15 million dollar loan in January 2027. Jeremy stated he believes there is a 90-day notice period for letting LVG know we want to withdraw our membership. Jeremy stated he does not want our town and its citizens to be liable for that loan. The Town of Conover is working on a potential withdraw and I would like the Boards approval to work in conjunction with Conover and share in those costs rather than doubling the cost by each having attorney fees and other expenses.

Motion by Doyen to approve sending a letter to the Town of Conover to collaborate with them regarding potential withdrawal from the Landfill Venture Group, including authorization for Dave Selby and Jeremy Ryan to represent the Town of Phelps in such discussions, and to approve sharing in related costs, including but not limited to legal expenses and actuarial fees, if necessary. Second by Waier. All voting aye. Motion carried.

8. **2026 Budget Preparation – Review, discussion, revisions of all submitted 2026 budgets:** Sheryl stated the budget packet is in the order she would like to discuss it. Something to keep in mind as we go through the budget are my notes from the 9.24.25 budget meeting: 1. INSURANCE – it is inflated this year due to the different payment schedule with R&R, so the balance owed for 2025 is \$27,000. Sheryl would like to find reserve money to pay this down now. 2. DEBT – just a note that the debt for the John Deere brush mower was moved to the Hwy budget, as it is not considered General Obligation Debt, and therefore cannot be levied on taxes. 3. ROADS – the draft budget contains Gross Expense of \$1,175,000; projected Grant Revenue of \$845,000 for a net expense of \$330,000. 4. INTERNET RESERVE – There is \$25,000 in the LGIP Internet/Planning Commission Reserve, and \$20,000 budgeted in 2025 to be added to this Reserve. We removed the \$20,000 being proposed in the 2026 budget. With Spectrum providing internet access for the Town, perhaps the \$45,000 in Reserve could be used for the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. *Note: see below – the \$20,000 budgeted in 2025 to add to Reserve is now being proposed to pay R&R.*

The Board reviewed and made further changes to the following budgets:

General Government:

Line 31 – Phone & IT Services	\$7,200.00	
Line 64 – General Liability Insurance	\$44,500.00	Note: the Board directed Sheryl to pay R&R the balance owed for 2025 of \$27,000 using the \$20,000 budgeted for LGIP Internet Reserve and the remainder out of the General LGIP Reserve.

Fire Department:

Line 37 – Fire Hydrants	\$34,533.00	Keep in Fire Department budget
Line 39 – Capital Outlay Equip Reserve	\$100,000.00	

EMS/Ambulance:

Line 58 – EMS Retirement/LOSA	\$4,000.00	
Line 71 – Ambulance Equipment	\$17,000.00	
Line 73 – Capital Outlay Ambulance Reserve	\$15,000.00	
Line 78 – Ambulance Fees	35,000.00	
Line 80 – EMS Grant	\$10,000.00	
Line 82 – Donations – Ambulance	\$0.00	Removed from the budget

Museum:	\$5,000.00	
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Park Expenditures:

Line 31 – Sod/Grass for LP Park \$52,000.00

Fireworks:

Line 58 – Fireworks Materials \$17,000.00

Planning & Development Commission:

Line 15 – Fire Tower Reserve \$0.00

Highway Expenditures:

Line 15 – Equipment Parts/Repairs \$35,000.00 Note: Josh requested \$40,000 but agreed to reduce with the understanding if he goes over he will be back to asked for more money.

Line 26 – Equipment Rental & Tools \$6,000.00

Line 34 – New ¾ Ton Chevy Pickup w/plow \$45,680.00 take out a 3-year loan with 1st payment starting in 2027

Line 35 – New Plow for Cat Loader \$30,950.00 } to be purchased in 2025 with
Line 36 – New Flail Mower for John Deere \$16,200.00 } Idle Sites Grant monies

Sanitation Expenditures:

Line 86 – New Employee Wages & FICA \$5,400.00 Note: part-time person at transfer Station

Line 87 – New One Contract Garbage & Recycle \$40,000.00

Sanitation Revenue:

Line 91 – New Drop Site Revenue \$25,000.00

9. **Move into closed session Pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85(1)(c) for purposes of considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility**
– Budget preparation regarding Employee Health Insurance and Wages for 2026

Motion by Ryan at 6:30 p.m. to move into closed session Pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85(1)(c) for purposes of considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility – Budget preparation regarding Employee Health Insurance and Wages for 2026. Second by Waier. All voting aye. Motion carried.

10. **Adjourn closed session pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85(1)(c) and Return to Open Session.**

Motion by Waier at 6:50 p.m. to adjourn closed session pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85(1)(c) and Return to Open Session. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

11. **Board May Consider Any Action Taken in Closed Session:** No action taken

12. **Adjourn at 6:51 p.m.**


Kathleen R Ray, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Minutes are subject to approval at the next Regular Town Board Meeting