

Town of Phelps
Public Budget Hearing Minutes
Thursday November 13, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Phelps School Commons, 4451 Old School Rd., Phelps, WI 54554

Present: Town Board Chair – Steve Doyen; Town Board Supervisors – Maureen Robinson, Jeremy Ryan, Dave Selby and Steve Waier; Town Clerk/Treasurer – Sheryl Ward; Deputy Clerk/Treasurer – Kathleen Ray; and forty (40) citizen electors and two (2) non-electors. There are 47 Electors present to vote.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doyen at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Verification of Public Notice of Budget Hearing:** Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Ray verified the meeting was posted at the Town Hall, Phelps Post Office, Phelps Convenience Center, Town website and emailed to the Vilas County News Review on November 11, 2025.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited.
4. **Announce Format of Speaking:** Doyen announced the format of speaking procedures will be as follows:
 - a. Please raise your hand, speak loud or use the microphone and state your name.
 - b. Ask your question.
 - c. The Board will give a response.
5. **Will Go Through Entire Proposed 2026 Budget Page by Page:** Doyen stated we will review the Budget page by page.

Grand Summary Page 1 – Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked what the Account Balances are after the proposed money is taken out of the following accounts: LGIP General Reserves; LGIP Capital Outlay Park Improvements; Great North Bank Comm Center CD.

Answer: Chair Doyen explained this is the Summary page. As we go through the budget you will be able to see what the money is being taken out for and what the remaining balance is.

Summary of Revenue Category 2 – Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked about the room tax. You projected \$40,000 in revenue this year, and how much did you receive?

Answer: Supervisor Ryan explained we received approximately \$65,000 however 70% of that will go to the Chamber. It is a 70/30 split between the Chamber and the Town. This year only 3 quarters will be received this year because the 4th quarter will not be received until January of the following year.

Dorothy asked about the Transfer Station drop site Revenue. What is that?

Answer: Chair Doyen explained this is something new. There will not be an employee from Republic operating this site as of January 2026, so we must operate this ourselves. We will be selling the punch cards and projecting \$35,000 in revenue from these sales. We are looking for a partner who will

manage the site for us. We also receive some money from the State for recycling to help offset the costs. We are still contracting with Republic to pick up.

Summary of Expenses Category 3 – No questions.

General Government Category 4 – Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked why there is such a big increase in the Town Web Site & .gov email?

Answer: Chair Doyen explained that the big increase came when we switched to .gov domain for website and email addresses for the 5 Board members, the Clerk/Treasurer and the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer for security purposes. The Fire Chief and EMS Director also have .gov email addresses for a total of 7 addresses. A prevention from getting hacked.

Deb Crawford asked to explain the difference between Line 30 Clerk/Treas. Phone & IT Services and Line 42 WEC Election IT Support?

Answer: Supervisor Robinson explained Line 30 is the projected cost of the new phone system in the new building and the IT service to maintain security. Line 42 is a separate IT cost for WEC Elections website security.

Bill Vierkandt asked how many wages does Line 20 – Clerk/Treas. Wages reflect?

Answer: Chair Doyen stated that it is for one employee. There are two (2) positions, but one employee does both jobs. Doyen further explained the reason for the increase is for a buyout of the health insurance. The Town is doing away with health insurance.

Deb Crawford asked is Line 21 Admin Asst for hiring someone new?

Answer: Chair Doyen explained that it is for continued employment of Marge Hiller and Sarah Kristmann to help with tax collection and elections.

Dorothy Kimmerling asked if General Liability Insurance is higher because of the new building?

Answer: Supervisor Waier stated, yes. Chair Doyen also explained before renewing our policy we went through it and discovered there were buildings that were not covered that should have been so that also drove the cost up a bit.

Public Safety Category 5 – Questions:

Jennifer DuQuaine asked what is the Constable Training?

Answer: Chair Doyen explained we have an issue between Constable and Animal Control Officer. A Constable is required to have the same amount of training as a Sheriff's Deputy and an equal wage. An Animal Control Office needs a one-time course of 40 hours, and we will negotiate the wage. This was brought to our attention by the current Constable and our Deputy Clerk's research. So, to answer your question this reflects the cost for training for an animal control officer. You will be asked later to approve abolishing the constable position. This will take effect after his term is up. In the meantime, we will continue to move forward with creating the animal control officer position.

Dorothy Kimmerling asked what Fire Dept Other was?

Answer: Supervisor Ryan stated that was a category set aside because I forwent my wages.

Dorothy Kimmerling asked why such a big increase in Fire Training Officer?

Answer: Supervisor Ryan explained that the Secretary was making more than the Training Officer which Ryan didn't feel was right, so he split the difference and now they make equal amounts of money.

Dorothy Kimmerling also asked why there is an increase in the Capital Outlay-Equip Reserve?

Answer: Supervisor Ryan explained we are trying to replace a fire engine, and they are at a cost of over \$1 million now. The more we put away the less we have to borrow. Currently there is about \$90,000 in this account.

Public Works Category 6 - Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked to explain Line 11 – Payment in Lieu of Health Insurance.

Answer: Chair Doyen explained we will be offering everyone insurance in 2026. Those that don't want it will sign a waiver that they don't want health insurance, and we will give them a raise to offset not offering insurance. Those that want health insurance will get cost of living raise and we will provide insurance for them. Starting in 2027 the Town will not be offering health insurance to employees. We will be creating a step-program for wages of incoming employees.

Arnie Frizzell asked; "each year moving forward are you going to increase the wages as the insurance goes up?"

Answer: Chair Doyen stated, there will still be cost-of-living raises annually. This increase will also help employees increase their retirement pensions.

Jennifer DuQuaine asked about Line 29 – Capital Outlay Hwy Bldg Reserve. You were approved for \$95,000 in 2024 and only show you used \$30,000. Where is the remaining \$65,000?

Answer: Clerk/Treasurer Ward stated, she believes the money was used for preliminary expenses for the new building that needed to be spent through budget amendments which can be found in the minutes of our meetings on the website. A Resolution is also made at the end of each year showing all budget amendments throughout the year. This is usually done in December. You can find it on our website.

Dorothy Kimmerling asked what are all the NEW categories in the Public Works budget?

Answer: Supervisor Ryan explained new accounts are created for new expenses/purchases, etc. We create these accounts for transparency. There are new equipment purchases, new road projects, new loan proceeds, etc.

Human Services Category 7 – No questions.

Culture Category 8 – Questions:

Jennifer DuQuaine asked if all the increases are due to the new building?

Answer: Chair Doyen answered yes. These are just projected at this point. We have no idea what the true costs will be.

Recreation Category 9 – Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked about Line 27 – Bike Trail Maintenance Reserve. Why are we not setting aside money for bike trail maintenance.

Answer: Supervisor Selby explained that donations are taking care of maintenance. There have been very generous donations in the last 2 years.

Dorothy Kimmerling asked about Line 30 – NEW – Riffle Range Improvement. What is this account for. **Answer:** Supervisor Selby explained the improvements will include a 200 yard range, berms to separate the ranges, and also a regulation trap range to hold competitions.

Dorothy Kimmerling asked about Line 31 – Sod/Grass for LP Park. Is that for downtown? Why didn't we do it right away, because of costs?

Answer: Supervisor Selby explained at first there was a lot of debate amongst the commission and the community about what should be done. Yes, cost was also a factor. We decided on sod at a cost of \$35,000. We also want to include pouring a slab for a 24' x 30' pavilion to be built in 2027. This will be a 2-phase project.

Debbie Crawford asked about Line 58 – Fireworks Materials and Line 59 – Fireworks Supplies. Are these costs based on our fire department still managing and lighting them off ourselves?

Answer: Supervisor Waier stated yes, this is based on the same people lighting them off.

Conservation & Development Category 10 – Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked about Line 7 – CDA (Community Development Authority). Is it still active?

Answer: Supervisor Ryan stated, yes as of last night.

Debt Service 2026 – Questions:

Dorothy Kimmerling asked about Great North Bank Promissory Note. What is this for?

Answer: Supervisor Waier stated it is for road projects and some BCPL loans what we had because the interest rate was so low.

Dorothy Kimmerling also asked about Western Star Dump. Is it true, the first payment will not be due until 2027?

Answer: Supervisor Waier stated yes. Once we secure the loan with Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL), our first payment will not be due until 2027.

6. **Will Ask for Any Additional Comments and Take Any Action Deemed Necessary to Complete the Hearing:** No additional comments.

7. **Close Budget Hearing:** Adjourn at 7:10 p.m.

Special Town Meeting of the Electors of the Town of Phelps Minutes
Thursday November 13, 2025
Phelps School Commons, 4451 Old School Rd., Phelps, WI 54554

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doyen at 7:10 p.m.
2. **Verification of Public Notice of Special Town Meeting of Electors:** Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Ray verified the meeting was posted at the Town Hall, Phelps Post Office, Phelps Convenience Center, Town website and emailed to the Vilas County News Review on November 11, 2025.

Motion/Discussion/Voting on the Following Items:

3. **Ask for Motion:** Ask for a Motion to establish compensation for Elected Town Officials for the next term of office pursuant to 60.32(1)(a) and 60.10(1)(b)1).

Motion by Mac Holcomb to establish compensation for Elected Town Officials for the next term of office pursuant to 60.32(1)(a) and 60.10(1)(b)1). Second by Pauleyn Nystrom.

4. **Discussion:** Brian Beversdorf asked what we are voting to compensate? Doyen explained by law the town electors have to vote to compensate paying Elected Town Officials for the next term.

5. **Close Discussion:** Call for a vote by a show of hands. Aye: 45 Nay: 0 Abstaining/Not Voting: 2. Motion carried.

6. **Ask for Motion:** Ask for a Motion to approve by Resolution 2025-06 the total Town Tax Levy for 2025 of \$1,710,898.65 (to be collected in 2026), pursuant to Wis. Statutes 60.10(1)(a).

Motion by Jennifer DuQuaine to approve by Resolution 2025-06 the total Town Tax Levy for 2025 of \$1,710,898.65 (to be collected in 2026), pursuant to Wis. Statutes 60.10(1)(a). Second by Quita Sheehan.

7. **Discussion:** No further discussion.

8. **Close Discussion:** Call for a paper ballot vote. Aye: 40 Nay: 6 Abstaining/Not Voting: 1. Motion carried.

9. **Ask for Motion:** Ask for a Motion to authorize by Resolution 2025-07 the abolishment of the Elected position of Town Constable pursuant to Wis. Statutes 60.10(1)(b)4.

Motion by Carol Wilson to authorize by Resolution 2025-07 the abolishment of the Elected position of Town Constable pursuant to Wis. Statutes 60.10(1)(b)4. Second by Arnie Frizzell.

10. **Discussion:** Quita Sheehan asked who will take care of stray dogs for the Town. Chairman Doyen

stated, by Statutes the Chairman is responsible. Doyen stated, by Statutes, the Constable should be taking extensive training, like a police officer, and the town should be paying him equal wage, which the town can not afford. The Board is working on creating a new position of Animal Control Officer. This requires a one-time training of 40 hours to get certified.

11. **Close Discussion:** Call for a paper ballot vote. Aye: 44 Nay: 2 Abstaining/Not Voting: 1 Motion carried.
12. **Close Electors Meeting:** Adjourn at 7:28 p.m.

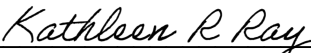
Special Town Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday November 13, 2025
Phelps School Commons, 4451 Old School Rd., Phelps, WI 54554

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doyen at 7:28 p.m.
2. **Verification of Public Notice of the Special Town Board Meeting:** Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Ray verified the meeting was posted at the Town Hall, Phelps Post Office, Phelps Convenience Center, Town website and emailed to the Vilas County News Review on November 11, 2025.

Discussion/Actions Items are as Follows:

3. **Make any Changes to the Budget (if necessary) per Town Electors Meeting:** No changes made at this time.
4. **Adopt the 2026 Budget Pursuant to Sec. 60.40(4) Wis. Statutes:**

Motion by Waier to adopt the 2026 Budget of \$1,710,898.65 pursuant to Sec. 60.40(4) Wis. Statutes. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.
5. **Correspondence and Communications:** The Board had no other correspondence or communication to report.
6. **Adjourn:** 7:30 p.m.


Kathleen R Ray, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Minutes are subject to approval as the next Regular Town Board meeting.