

Town of Phelps, Wisconsin  
Regular Town Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, July 8, 2026  
Phelps Community Center – White Pine Room

Present: Chairman – Steve Doyen, Town Board Supervisors – Maureen Robinson, Jeremy Ryan, Steve Waier and Mary Ann (Mak) Holcomb. Also Present: Clerk/Treasurer – Sheryl J Ward, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer – Kathleen R Ray and 18 citizens.

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chairman Doyen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call/Quorum Call:** A quorum of board members was present.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited
4. **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 July 6, 2026.
5. **Correspondence and Communications:** None
6. **Reports**
  - a. **Chairman Report:** Chairman Doyen thanked Rollie Alger for setting up the meeting for tonight and all his hard work with the community center. Doyen thanked the Schindler's for their \$5,000 donation for the bike trail maintenance again this year. Doyen reported that demolition of the old town shop has begun. They started removing the doors and windows. I believe they will begin tear-down next week. The same company that took down the old hospital will be doing the demo of the town shop and town hall.
  - b. **Town Board Supervisors Reports:** Waier reported he has had several meetings regarding the West Shore Road bridge project which will begin October 1, 2026. Waier stated the bridge will be built off site and be brought to the site to minimize the length of the road closure. We Energies still needs to remove the existing power poles and install underground power. There will be more meetings as they get closer and we will keep the public informed with specific dates when we know.
  - c. **Department/Committee Reports:** Museum President, Pauleyn Nystrom that the Museum reported the capital campaign is in full swing. There are many needs like having a climate control area for specific artifacts to protect and maintain them. With the increased space we could offer so much more to the community, like basket weaving as one example. Donations can be made directly through the Museum or through the Phelps Area Community Foundation. Information can be found on the Town's website at [phelpswi.gov/Community/Donation](http://phelpswi.gov/Community/Donation). Pauleyn reminded everyone that the Traveling Veterans Wall display is here to view until July 11<sup>th</sup> and possibly longer. Nancy Steenport stepped down as Vice President and Joni Barrett will take her place. Pauleyn stated she collected approximately \$2,654.00 over the fourth of July for firework donations; and \$111.00 in donations from the Convenience Center bucket. There is also a bucket at the Sand Lake Club which she has not retrieved yet. Pauleyn stated there have been questions about possibly donating through Venmo or another source. Sheryl stated she could create a QR Code on the web site. Jeremy also mentioned that online donations can be made through the Phelps Area Community Foundation.
  - d. **EMS/Fire Department Reports:** Fire Chief, Jeremy Ryan stated the fire department had record sales during the 4<sup>th</sup>. Chief Ryan thanked Lucas and everyone who helped set up the fireworks; we had a lot of great compliments on that. Reminder the Fireman's picnic is July 18<sup>th</sup> at Wavering Park. We will be selling shirts and cozies in celebration of our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Jeremy stated Engine 1 is here and they are working out a few kinks. The Command Vehicle came in on July

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3<sup>rd</sup>, just in time for the parade. We still have a few issues that we are working out. On June 30<sup>th</sup> around 9 pm we responded to a fire on Smokey Lake, in which we have a mutual aid agreement with West Iron County. There was some confusion, so Phelps didn't get dispatched until 14 minutes after West Iron County received the page. However, Phelps was the first department on scene, and we ultimately were the ones that distinguished the fire. Our guys did an exceptional job, so thank you for that.

- e. **Clerk Report:** Clerk/Treasurer Ward reported the office is still closed for a little longer than anticipated due to many logistical issues coming up over the next week. We now anticipate reopening Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>. Phone calls and emails will continue to be monitored and addressed as needed. A Picnic License has been issued to the Phelps Recreation Association for the annual softball tournament which will be held July 24 – 26, 2026. In the weeks ahead, we have a meeting with our insurance carrier on July 14<sup>th</sup> at 9 am in preparation for the August 1, 2026, Insurance renewal. A Quorum Notice will be posted so Town Board members can attend. It will be held in the Town Office. August 11, 2026, is the Partisan Primary Election which will be held at the Fire Hall one more time because it is still uncertain if we will be ADA compliant. We will be starting on the 2027 budget soon. The Revaluation is in progress.

- 7. **Approval of the following Meeting Minutes:** June 10, 2026, Special Town Board Meeting and June 10, 2026, Regular Town Board Meeting

Motion by Waier to approve the minutes of June 10, 2026, Special Town Board and Regular Town Board meetings as presented. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

**8. Approval of June 2026 Financial Report**

Motion by Waier to approve the June 2026 Financial Report as presented. Seconded by Holcomb. All voting aye. Motion carried.

- 9. **Approval of Checks and ACH/EFT Transactions: from June 1 through June 30, 2026, including Check #'s 20655 – 20702**

Motion by Waier to approve Checks and ACH/EFT Transactions: from June 1 through June 30, 2026, including Check #'s 20655 – 20702. Second by Holcomb. All voting aye. Motion carried.

- 10. **Discussion/Action on use of storage space in the Community Center:** Holcomb stated she would abstain from this agenda item because she is an active member of the Women's Club and serves as Chairperson for Scarecrow Fest. Doyen stated that concerns had been raised. Chamber Director Laura Richart said the Chamber Board is seeking fairness in the use of storage space. The Chamber Board discussed the possibility of charging the Chamber \$500 and the Women's Club \$100 in rental fees, rather than having the Chamber pay the full \$600 requested by the Town Board.

Deb Ryan spoke on behalf of the Women's Club and stated they do not feel as though they should have to pay rent. Partly because they are a 501.3C non-profit organization and because all funds raised go back to the town and surrounding communities. Deb stated an overview of some of the ways they give back that are over and above what they give back to the town are: the ATV/UTV Club, Bike Trail maintenance, the Food Pantry, Foster Care, Special Olympics, and Wildlife Instincts.

Within the Town of Phelps the Women's Club supports; the Chamber – for Music on the Lake and Maple Fest; the Fire Department – with donations for the Wheeler, AEDs, Help Stop the Bleed, Life Vacs, smoke detectors and fire blankets; the Parks Department – with upgrades to Wavering Park bathrooms, and the purchase of a refrigerator for the pavilion kitchen, and we paid for the sides to be

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put on the bandstands at Lake Front Pines Park; the School - we have given money for the speakers for the sound system, microphones, a recumbent bike, and the bike program and the Library – the Women's Club has supported the Library, in fact, since 1940 giving a donation every year.

Some of the smaller things we give to within Phelps include: Project Santa, Scholarships to students and adult education, the Snowmobile Clubs Radar Run, Phelps Beautification helping Shelly with the baskets, we do the flower boxes, we donated for snowflakes, we started the treks program and received 3 benches, we have a kindness crew that gives to the needy, we gave meal vouchers to low-income apartments and the seniors, we gave groceries to some of the bus drivers going to the food pantry.

Deb Ryan stated that some of the Women's Clubs larger donations in recent years include \$7,500 to Lakefront Pines Park for the bathrooms, a planned \$7,500 donation to the Museum's Capital Campaign, and a \$10,000 donation last year to the Community Center project. She stated that, over the past 10 years and especially within the last five years, the Women's Club has given well over \$125,000 back to the community. She also noted that the Women's Club started the Tree Lighting event and that this is the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Scarecrow Fest, which brings many people downtown, supports local businesses, and generates funds for the area. Deb asked the Board to consider not charging the Women's Club rent. She also asked whether, if the Women's Club purchased a storage building, the Town would allow it to be placed on Town property and where it could be located. The Board agreed that a shed could be placed at Wavering Park near the Lions Club shed behind the tennis courts.

Motion by Waier to allow the Women's Club to use storage space in the new community center free of charge. Second by Doyen. Four (4) voting aye, Holcomb abstained. Motion carried.

11. **Consider/Approve Lease Agreement with Phelps Chamber of Commerce:** Doyen stated that a lease agreement had been drafted and reviewed by the Town's Attorney and the Chamber Board. The initial lease term will be six months for budget purposes, with rent set at \$600 per month. The rent includes utilities, phone service, maintenance, cleaning, and related expenses. Laura noted that the agreement did not include storage space, which is why the issue was raised. Doyen stated that storage space should be included and asked how it should be addressed in the lease. The Board did not feel specific square footage needed to be identified. Laura suggested dividing the storage space equally among the Chamber, Library, and Women's Club; however, some space must be reserved for building supplies, such as paint and extra ceiling tiles. Library President Lisa Volkman stated that the Library installed shelving on the south wall for its storage needs. Chamber member Stephanie Sorn stated that specific square footage did not need to be added to the lease, as long as storage space was guaranteed. Sheryl requested that the lease also state when monthly rent payments are due. The July payment will be prorated to \$300. It was further agreed that the Chamber will pay \$900 for July and August by August 1. The lease agreement should be revised to show a term of July 15 through December 31.

Motion by Ryan to approve the Lease Agreement pending adding language to add storage space in the garage area known as Rm 129 and the monthly payment to be due on the 1st of each month. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

12. **Town Lakes Committee Report by Joe Robinson, Chairperson:** Joe addressed the Board and gave an update on what took place in 2025 and a preview of what they are doing in 2026. In 2025 Chemical treatment was added to North Twin, South Twin and Long Lake to help fight eurasian milfoil. South Twin reported it was very effective. Big Sand also conducted chemical treatment in 2024, and

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they reported in 2025 that there was zero regrowth of milfoil. There was also diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH) on North and South Twin, Long and Smokey Lakes in 2025. We continue to have Clean Boats Clean Water Programs on a majority of our lakes. Seven lakes have requested funding for invasive species control activities to continue in 2026. Imogene Lake remains free of invasive species. Buoys were placed on North Twin Lake to help protect the bullrushes. This year they plan to adjust the placement of the buoys to further protect the bullrushes.

13. **Discussion/Action on proposed Draft Watercraft Wake Enhancement Ordinance to promote reasonable and prudent operation of watercraft that utilize wake enhancing equipment:** Chairman Doyen stated this item was tabled last month until we had all Board members present to vote.

Doyen stated he is still not in favor of an Ordinance. Now the DNR suggestions will have to be followed. The DNR has guidelines, but they won't enforce them. Doyen stated he would like to propose the Town purchasing signs to post at the town-owned boat landings.

Robinson stated the Board is not looking to "ban" wake boats, we just want to educate people on safe usage on our small lakes.

Ryan stated he wants the Town to authorize the language used on the signs but wants the Lakes Committees/Associations to use the money the Town gives them and buy their own signs.

Holcomb stated she would also like to see Lodging Facilities notify renters of the concerns.

Motion by Waier to not move forward with an Ordinance but to move forward with creating signs to post at town-owned boat landings. Second by Holcomb. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Doyen stated he will help with the language for the signs.

14. **Consider/Approve Community Center/Library Key Holder List:** Sheryl provided a preliminary list of requested key holders for the Board's review. Fire Chief Ryan stated he would like three (3) keys now for emergency situations. Sheryl will contact Hoeft to get Ryan keys immediately. The Board approved the preliminary list as presented.

15. **Consider/Approve appointment of Brian Bong to the Planning and Development Commission to fill a vacant Citizen Member position to finish a 3-year term expiring 04/30/2027.**

Motion by Doyen to approve the appointment of Brian Bong to the Planning and Development Commission pending their approval. Second by Waier. All voting aye. Motion carried.

16. **Consider/Approve donation of freezer for Wavering Park concession stand from Northwoods Living Care Foundation:** Deputy Ray stated there was some concern by Josh Hedberg with regard to space and proper electricity for the additional freezer. Jeremy stated he would talk to Josh and address his concerns.

Motion by Doyen to approve the donation of the freezer for Wavering Park by the Northwoods Living Care Foundation. Second by Ryan. All voting aye. Motion carried.

17. **Consider/Approve Request to change the existing Town Road Right of Way on E Kerr Lane:** This item was tabled until the owner can attend and better explain their request.

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**18. Consider/Approve private road name selection Wandering Woods Trl off Deerskin Rd – Pudlo subdivision**

Motion by Ryan to approve the private road name selection Wandering Woods Trl. Second by Waier. All voting aye Motion carried.

**19. Consider/Approve selecting a new road name for Big Frank Rd due to continued theft of the sign:** Doyen stated this sign continues to get stolen, so it has been suggested to change the name. Property owners, Dick and Marge Hiller, are the only addresses on Big Frank Rd so the Board wants to reach out to them for a road name suggestion. This will remain on the agenda for next month.

**20. Consider/Approve the new Use of Town Park Facilities Reservation Request Form**

Motion by Ryan to approve the new Use of Town Park Facilities Reservation Request Form. Second by Waier. All voting aye. Motion carried.

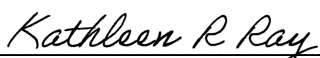
**21. Update on new Community Center project:** Dave Selby updated the Board on the community center project. Dave stated there are a lot of small issues to take care of, wiring issues, IT and tv's installed this week, the video conferencing cameras need to be finished, demolition to be done next week, and then parking lot and lighting installation. Hoeft is giving us a project estimation completion date of August 24<sup>th</sup>. We are planning a Grand Opening event on Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 2pm. Then on Saturday there will be an Open House for tours. Also, don't be alarmed if you see people on the roof tearing them off. There is quality defect in the shingles, and the roofing company is replacing the entire roof at their cost.

The monument sign is something we didn't plan for in the original grant, so we are working on that. We were estimating \$50,000 but the quote came in at \$90,000, which seems high. I would like to recommend the Town to send out an RFP and hope we can come in under that amount. The risk in sending out an RFP is that when we have our grand opening, we may not have the monument sign installed.

- **Temporary public access to Community Center during demolition:** Supervisor Holcomb stated she talked with Hoeft and access to the building may change daily during demolition. Hoeft will be setting up signage to direct cars to the building. So, just look for the directional signs. Rollie Alger stated that church will allow parking across the street in their parking lot if need be.

Joni Barrett asked what consideration has been given to the parking lot lighting? Dave stated that it will be all down lite, eco-friendly and there will be very little light pollution. Doyen asked if there will be an option to shut the lights off if we decide there are too many? Dave stated he will raise the issue with Hoeft and the engineer.

**22. Adjournment at 7:24 pm**

  
Kathleen R Ray, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

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