Town of Phelps, Wisconsin

Minutes - Regular Town Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 11, 2026

Phelps Community Center, White Pine Board Room

Present: Chairman – Steve Doyen, Town Board Supervisors – Maureen Robinson, Jeremy Ryan, Steve Waier and Mary Ann (Mak) Holcomb. Also Present: Shop Foreman – Josh Hedberg, EMS Director – Carole Selin, Phelps Historical Museum President – Pauleyn Nystrom, Phelps Sanitary District President – Dan Kintz, Phelps School District – Jason Pertile, Dick and Deb Ryan, Joe Robinson, Clerk/Treasurer – Sheryl J Ward, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer – Kathleen R Ray, and 17 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 Community Center, Phelps Post Office, Phelps Convenience Center, Town Website, and emailed to the Vilas County News Review November 9, 2026.
5. **Correspondence and Communications: Retirement of Kathy Regenfuss as Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) for the EMS Department. Thank you received from the Headwaters Food Pantry.** Chairman Doyen read a thank you card received from the Headwaters Food Pantry for the Town's generous and thoughful donation. Doyen read the Notice of Retirement letter from Kathy Regenfuss thanking the Town for giving her the opportunity to serve the Phelps community as an AEMT. Doyen also read an email received from by Eugene McCaslin resigning as a member of the Planning and Development Commission.
6. **Reports**
   a. **Chairman Report:** Doyen stated he met with Quantum Technogies regarding IT options in the community center rooms to allow for casting a computer to the tv without compromising the secured network.
   b. **Town Board Supervisors Reports:** Supervisor Ryan read the Notice of Retirement letter the Fire Deparment received from Andy Regenfuss.

      Supervisor Waier reported he is looking into the unexpected expenses the Vilas County Highway Deparment invoiced the Town for regarding the repairs to the manholes on STH 17 downtown.
   c. **Department/Committee Reports:** Shop Foremen Hedberg reported an update on the West Shore Road project and confirmed the US Forest Service is on-site daily and gives him updates.

      Josh stated the Long Lake District received a donation from the Requa family to purchase a bench and do some landscaping at the Long Lake boat landing. Josh asked if the Board had any objection. The Board approved these improvements at the boat landing.
   d. **EMS/Fire Department Reports:** EMS Director Selin reported receiving 20 emergency calls. One mutual aid to Alvin and one to Conover. Two (2) calls received were handled by Land O' Lakes because of the road closure on West Shore Rd. A total of 405.1 miles were put on the ambulance.
   e. **Clerk Report:** Clerk Ward reported she is still in the process of closeout and reconciliation with the State and REL Services on the Community Center Grant. She is also working with Kerber Rose to determine how to receive the donated funds held by the Phelps Area Community Foundatoin (PACF). Ward reported that the Election was well attended with 78% of registered electors voting. Phelps has been chosen for an Audit of the Vote Tabulator Machine. Ward stated

the combined Budget Hearing, Electors Meeting and Special Town Board Meeting will be held November 19th at 6 pm in the White Pine and Tamarack rooms. Ward stated the Town if hosting the Wisconsin Towns Association Unit meeting on Saturday, November 14th at 9 am. The focus will be the grants received from the Town of Phelps and Plum Lake. Ward stated tax bill preparation is process. Tax bills are generally ready to send in mid-December. Included in this years tax bills will be the new Transfer Site (dump) stickers, two (2) per property owner.

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

7. **Approval of the following Meeting Minutes**:
   - October 12, 2026, Special Town Board Budget Workshop Meeting
   - October 14, 2026, Regular Town Board Meeting
   - October 21, 2026, Special Town Board Meeting
   - October 23, 2026, Special Town Board Meeting

Motion by Waier to approve the minutes of October 12, 14, 21, 23, 2026 as presented. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carreid.

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

Motion by Waier to approve the October 2026 Financial Report. Second by Holcomb. All voting aye. Motion carried.

9. **Approval of Checks and ACH/EFT Transactions: from October 1 through October 31, 2026, including Check #'s 20866 – 20910**

Motion by Waier to approve checks and ACH/EFT transaction from October 1 through October 31, 2026, including Check #'s 20866 – 20910. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

10. **Presentation by Dan Peterson on Gogebic, Iron and Vilas Network (GIVN), a Rural Health Network:** Dan Peterson addressed the Board to explain what a rural health network is and the benefits of joining one, the history of GIVN, their 2025 strategic plan and findings, and current programs of GIVN and priority areas of development. Dan stated GIVN is completely a grant funded organization. They collaborate with several entities to improve health services and cut down costs in rural areas. GIVN has eight (8) organizations right now and in no way am I here to force you to join. This is totally voluntary and does require that you attend monthly meetings and get involved. Dan asked if the Board knows of any services the Town feels are needed in the community. If so, GIVN would be a great source in helping you bring those services to your community. Dan thanked the Board for the invitation to come and speak and welcomed any questions. Information was left for the Board to review further.

11. **Discuss the water-related (fire hydrant) Fire Protection Service costs as approved under Town of Phelps Resolution #89-7. Invite request to Sanitary District President, Dan Kintz.** Doyen stated he put this item on the agenda at the request of Dick Ryan and invited Dan Kintz to speak about this issue. Dick asked Dan if he was willing to have a meeting specific to this issue. Dan stated, there really isn't a need for that. Your Resolution is clear, the Town decided to pay for the cost of Fire Protection Services. Dan asked Dick, do you know how much this cost is to you, on your tax bill. Waier stated he figured it to be about $8.50 per year per property owner. Dick doesn't believe he should have to pay anything because it doesn't directly benefit him. Doyen explained there are several costs the taxpayers pay for that do not directly benefit them. Like for instance, why did I have to pay for Fire Station 2? I receive no benefit from that. It is just part of running a town. Waier agrees, it is not a seriously large impact on taxpayers but it benefits the Town as a whole.

    Supervisor Ryan stated when he had a problem with this it was because that money was going towards operating the district and not set aside for fire hydrant or helping the infrastructure. I think if this money

is for fire protection than money should be set aside to use when a hydrant must be replaced, or other infrastructure needs.

The Board, at that time, believed this was an essential service, and they chose to pay for it. We can not change that. If the Sanitary District is telling us they need this money to operate, then they are not going to want to change this. Doyen stated he sees no other resolution to this, other than to just keep bringing it up and complaining about it. Dick told Doyen he is done, done talking about this issue.

12. **Discuss Phelps Snowmobile Club Radar Run requests:** Joe Robsinson spoke on behalf of the Sowmobile Club and stated they are planning to have the Radar Run on Saturday, January 23, 2027, with an alternative date of Saturday January 30th. As last year, it will be held at the North Twin boat landing. They are requesting the use of the old hospital property for overflow parking, and garbage cans and picnic tables set up at the boat landing. This year they will not be using fencing, rather they would like to request barrels be set up. Also, they will be requesting a picnic license. The Board agrees with the date and requests.
13. **Consider/Approve 2-year Operator's License for Mary Bruskiewicz for the period of November 11, 2026, through June 30, 2028.**

Motion by Waier to approve operator license for Mary Bruskiewicz for the period of November 11, 2026, through June 30, 2028. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

14. **Discussion/Action on proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Phelps School District and the Town of Phelps to utilize the Phelps Community Center as a place where school occupants can relocate in the event of an emergency requiring the school to be evacuated.** Deputy Ray stated there are a few changes she would recommend. It should be an Agreement between the School and the Town to use the community center. Ray stated she would work with Jason Pertile to discuss the details of the rooms he would like access to and if the center should be on "lock down" once all occupants are safely relocated to the center. Jason Pertile was present and stated he agreed to work with Deputy Ray on the details.
15. **Consider/Approve Phelps Recycling Center Hours Change Request:**
    - **Proposed new Winter Hours: Tuesday 9 am-12 pm (noon) and Friday 1-4 pm**
    - **Proposed new Summer Hours: Monday 8-11 am, Wednesday 4-7 pm, and Friday 8-11 am**

      Chairman Doywn stated he has received a lot of complaints of the center being closed on Saturdays. Geno explained people at the site are always asking for the site to be open during the week, so I thought it was what people wanted. After further discussion the Board decided on the following:

      Winter Hours will stay the same: Saturdays from 9:00 am – 12:00 Noon

      Summer Hours will change to: Wednesdays from 12:00 Noon – 3:00 pm
      Saturdays from 8:00 am – 12:00 Noon

      This change will become effective January 1, 2027.

Motion by Ryan to approve the new hours at the Phelps Recycling Center effectivew January 1, 2027. Second by Waier. All voting aye. Motion carried.

- **Transfer Site Use Permit Sticker Distribution** Sheryl stated she is looking for direction on how to distribute the stickers. Her thought was to put 2 stickers in with their tax bills but has concern they may not see them and throw the envelope away with the stickers still inside. We are printing extra stickers to hand out to Smoky Lake residents however not enough to cover all who may

throw theirs out. Sheryl mentioned the idea of placing the sticker in a small envelope within the tax envelope. The Board agreed that the stickers should be sent with the tax bills however Sheryl decides.

16. **Consider/Approve Fire Department External Budget Amendment to cover invoice from MacQueen Equipment for $7,067.77 to complete the SCBA and compressor upfitting. Suggestion to use the following accounts for payment of the invoice:**
    - **Expense Account: 575602 Capital Outlay KME Pumper Tanker**
    - **Revenue Account: LGIP Fire Department Reserve**

Motion by Holcomb to approve the Fire Department External Budget Amendment to pay the MacQueen Invoice for $7,067.77 from the LGIP Fire Department Reserve account. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

17. **Discussion/Action on the proposed conceptual development of a workforce/affordable housing project on Town-owned property, Parcel ID 18-177-01, 4.14 acres on Kinner Lane adjacent to Wavering Park**: Doyen stated this issue will also be discussed at the electors meeting but the CDA is working to possibly put some affordable housing on this lot. The reaosn the town purchased it was to secure the snowmobile trail going through it, so the development will have to keep that in mind. This property is close to the school, the park and walking distance to downtown so this is a good property to consider for a housing project.

    Steve Waier stated the Commuinity Development Authority (CDA) is looking for approval to move forward with trying to work with a developer to create lots, have afforadable housing with restrictions of them being single family homes and not short-term rental units. We just want a yes (nod) to pursue this project. Doyen stated initially the request was for a resolution, but after further discussion I think a resolution will be required later when the property is sold. That can be done in April at the Annual Electors meeting, or we can call a special town elector meeting whenever it's ready for resolution approval. Steve thinks the project should be further along before we approval a resolution. Jeremy Ryan asked what the point is in doing it that way. Then we will need essentially, two (2) approvals. I thought the whole idea of bringing it for an elector vote now is to allow us to move forward with the project and sell when ready to do so. Doyen stated he feels the electors should know what they are voting on, so the project should be further along than a concept. Ryan doesn't feel as though a developer would want to commit time and money to put this plan together to be told no later. The CDA will outline the project details in the Resolution and then we stick to the plan. Ryan doesn't believe we will get any further along without something "formal" in place.

    Doyen stated we will be asking the electorate to approve moving forward with this project. Ryan stated that it does have to be a formal vote. It will be and the electorate decides is they want a hand-count or ballot vote. Doyen stated once they approve it, we can have the Resolution ready at the next elector meeting.

18. **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 –** Review applications for clerk position

Motion by Waier at 7:15 pm 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 to review applications for clerk position. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

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

Motion by Waier at 7:31 pm to adjourn closed session pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85 (1)(c) and return to Open Session. Second by Ryan. All voting aye. Motion carried.

20. **Board May Consider Any Action Taken in Closed Session:** The Board set a date of Tuesday, November 24, 2026, at 4:00 pm for interviews. Sheryl will notify the applicants.

21. **Move into Closed Session pursuant to Wis. Statutes 19.85(1)(g) for purposes of conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved –** Discuss resolution of legal matter involving a former town employee

Motion by Waier at 7:32 pm to move into Closed Session pursuant to Wis. Statutes 19.85(1)(g) for purposes of conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved to discuss resolution of legal matter involving a former town employee. Second by Robinson. All voting aye. Motion carried.

22. **Adjourn closed session pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85 (1)(g) and return to Open Session**

Motion by Doyen at 7:48 pm to adjourn closed session pursuant to Wis. State Statutes 19.85 (1)(g) and return to Open Session. Second by Ryan. All voting aye. Motion carried.

23. **Board May Consider Any Action Taken in Closed Session**

Motion by Ryan that he will work with legal counsel regading this matter. Second by Waier. All voting aye. Motion carried.

24. **Adjournment at 7:49 pm**

Kathleen R Ray
Kathleen R Ray, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

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