

**Town of Somerset & Village of Somerset
with Somerset Fire/Rescue Commission
Joint Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 29, 2026
(Unofficial Until Approved at Next Meeting)**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance: Town Chair Doug Plourde called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall. Village Board present: Don Kern, Chris Dubak, Brandon Krohn, Caleb Garn, Jessica Plourde and Janna Stewart. Town Board present: Doug Plourde, Jason Crotty, Tim Witzmann, Shane Demulling and Lenny Germain. Present from the Fire/Rescue Commission: Tabatha Hansen, Byron Patterson, and Tim O'Brien. Fire/Rescue Dept. present: Travis Belisle and Sarah Kobs. Absent: Dave Wolner and Aaron Morrison. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. D. Plourde announced the meeting was on Zoom.

Approval of Agenda:

- *Motion by Germain, seconded by Garn to approve the agenda with the Financial Report moved down. Motion carried.*

Public Input:

- Larry Mondor requested a driveway off Fox Trail. Mondor stated he will be raising the grade so it will help with the Village's walking path construction. Lenny Germain suggested meeting the Town setbacks to avoid any future problems and requested Mondor appear before the August Town Board meeting with the concept.

Minutes from Previous Joint Meeting:

- *Motion by Garn, second by Krohn to approve the April 22, 2026, joint meeting minutes. Motion carried.*

Membership Update

- Travis Belisle gave a membership update.

Old Business:

- **Discussion/Consideration-Village Ordinance on Assessment for Structural Fires Consistent with Town Ordinance, Updating to 15 Days for Billing and Designate a Person Responsible for Billing:** Belisle revised a draft of the Town & Village ordinance requesting the 15-day billing information and appeal. Belisle asked who is responsible for determining the billing. Discussion. J. Plourde clarified that Belisle requests the Fire Chief determines what structure fire is billable and there will be a 15-day period to report for billing. Discussion on both municipalities aligning their ordinances and including an appeal process. Hansen stated the Fire Dept. should bill for every call with consistency in billing, but if there is a hardship or no insurance, there should be an appeal/dispute process. Hansen requested a definition of the type of call that triggers the billing and suggested setting a minimum threshold for billing. Demulling stated New Richmond Fire bills for every call, and we should look at the whole picture, not just structure fires, for billing. Crotty suggested letting the Fire/Rescue Commission define scope of billing. D. Plourde stated we need to get the Town & Village Ordinances aligned, have criteria on charging and documentation on those criteria, with an appeal process for hardship or maybe we proceed to bill them all and they contact the municipality for the appeal or hardship. D. Plourde asked Kern if the Village attorney will review their ordinance and assist with the appeals process. Kern stated if both municipalities agree structure fires should be billed at \$1,000 for consistency, they will look for adoption with an amendment clause. Kern clarified the focus is on the billing for structure fires and requested the Fire/Rescue Commission research what other municipalities do regarding fire call billing.

Budget/Financial Report

- **Financial Report for 2nd Qtr. 2026-Reviewed.** Demulling requested the total fundraising amount from Pancake Breakfast. Belisle reported \$18,000-\$19,000. Sarah Kobs stated some donations

have arrived late, and an update will be provided at the next joint meeting. *Motion by Kern, seconded by Garn to approve the 2nd Qtr. 2026 Financial Report. Motion carried.*

- Discussion/Consideration-2026 Fire/Rescue Financial Split Agreement: D. Plourde presented the historical percentage split calculations from 2009, 2012, 2020, and 2025, stating the four criteria- population, assessed value of improvements, medical runs, and fire runs. 2026 was status quo, but going forward for 2027, the statistical data and split are presented for consideration with 46.4% Town and 53.6% Village. *Motion by Kern, seconded by Witzmann to approve the split for 2027 of 46.4% Town and 53.6% Village, not for capital items. Discussion-Hansen requested clarification that the lease agreement is for 3 years. Kern amended his motion to approve the split for operational purposes for one year to be re-visited in July 2027, seconded by Garn. All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried. Split is 46.4% Town and 53.6% Village (operational purposes only) and will start 1/1/27 and will end 12/31/27 with review in July 2027.*
- Discussion/Consideration-Renewal of Fire Hall Lease: D. Plourde stated the Fire Hall lease is based upon \$6/sq. foot, and the lease stays the same at \$39,000/year. The split is Town 46.4% and Village 53.6% proposed for 3 years. *Motion by Kern to approve. Discussion. Demulling requested a one-year lease and revisit the \$6/sq. foot charge in July 2027. Kern rescinded his motion. Motion by Demulling, seconded by Kern to approve the Fire Hall Lease Agreement for one-year January 1, 2027-December 31, 2027 for \$39,000 with the split for 2027 of 46.4% Town and 53.6% Village. Motion carried.*
- Discussion/Consideration-Review of 5-Year & Long-Range Plans: *Motion by Krohn, seconded by Witzmann to approve the 5-Year and Long-Range Plans. Motion carried.*
- Discussion/Consideration-Fire Truck Committee Members/Update: Discussion on a committee to review truck purchases. Belisle requested that Fire Dept. members rather than community members comprise the committee. Wally Neumann is no longer in the Town and Dave Wolner is now on the Village Board. *Motion by Garn, seconded by Krohn to let the Fire Chief create the committee. Discussion. Demulling asked for clarification on the committee. Belisle stated Fire Dept. members. All in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.*
- Discussion/Consideration-Update on Department Activities & Grants: Belisle updated on FEMA, DNR and Firehouse Subs grant applications, Ice Cream Social & Fire Prevention Open House.

New Business:

- Discussion/Consideration 2026-2046 Fire Dept. Strategic Plan, Fire Station RFP/RFQ: Belisle stated Village Board approved initial draft at May meeting. Discussion on clear separation from the Fire and Police Dept. and GIS study for Fire Dept. Village Clerk will be primary point of contact. Fifteen updated goals in the revised document. Joel Trepczyk stated they would like to send it out for Request for Proposal and Qualifications. Trepczyk stated if it comes back and the numbers are not within our budgets we do not have to move forward. Determination if the Town wants to participate and the cost will be a separate decision. Kern clarified that GIS needs to happen to figure out if the current Fire Station, where it sits, is in accordance with the GIS study. Kern stated the due date would be October 2 and will give the dollar amount so joint boards could meet in September and decide whether to proceed or not. Crotty stated he understands the RFP process is free but asked if going forward, the grant process will be included. D. Plourde inquired about going to referendum. Hansen asked why RFP is also an RFQ and suggested removal of RFQ and Lakeview in document. *Motion by Kern, seconded by Garn to proceed. Discussion. Witzmann-eliminate RFQ, Hansen-eliminate Lakeview as no established agreement and just state*

EMS, not Lakeview EMS. D. Plourde called for a vote on the motion-all in favor; none opposed. Motion carried. Kern stated all communication should go to Village Police Chief.

- Discussion/Consideration-Parnell Prairie Preserve Mowing, Maintenance & Portable Toilet: D. Plourde stated the Town finances all of the mowing, maintenance, and portable toilet and this is a jointly owned facility so does the Village want to contribute or should there be a split for the maintenance. *Motion by Garn, the Village to cover 50% of the mowing, maintenance, and portable toilet. Discussion. Kern stated the Town get the costs to the Village, and they will consider covering it. Garn revised his motion to October 31 for the Village to start paying for the mowing, maintenance, and portable toilet, seconded by Germain. Discussion. Kern asked who makes the decision for authorizing. D. Plourde stated when disc golf went in there was discussion on shared mowing. D. Plourde added the Town is not asking for any reimbursement for the paving, shelter, disc golf baskets, brush removal; it is just the maintenance. Kern requested motion fail and a Parnell Prairie Committee be established with costs brought back to the joint meeting. Call to question-roll call vote for 50% split of maintenance, mowing and portable toilet with J. Plourde requesting mowing go out for RFP, Crotty stated that this could be addressed at budget time and not opposed to be having a committee to review costs. Roll call vote: Germain rescinded his second, therefore, the motion still stands without a second. D. Plourde called for a second for a 50/50 split, no second, motion died. Motion by Kern requesting tabling the matter until the next joint meeting to discuss a committee between the two boards, seconded by Krohn. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.*
- Discussion/Consideration-Deadline for Tammy Baldwin's Appropriation: March 2028-Deadline is March 2027 for 2028 appropriation.

Next Meetings:

- Fire/Rescue Commission Meeting, Wed., Sept. 16, 8 pm Fire Hall
- Joint Town, Village, Fire/Rescue Commission Meeting, Wed., Sept. 23, 7 pm Town Hall-D. Plourde asked for location to be clarified. *Motion by Kern, seconded by Krohn, to have the Sept. 23 joint meeting at the Village Hall subject to the availability of the Village Clerk. Motion carried.*

Motion by Kern, seconded by Krohn to adjourn joint meeting-meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

TOWN BOARD BUSINESS ONLY:

- Discussion/Consideration-Truck #772 Single Axle Repair Estimate from Triple Tire: Crotty updated on Triple Tire's DOT inspection of Truck #772 and the antifreeze cylinder six, O-ring failure with head needing to be built. Triple Tire provided two options for repair, along with an invoice for the diagnosis. Replace with long block \$64,639.74 or rebuild platinum engine rebuild for \$41,325.84. Discussion. Crotty proposed bringing more information to the Transportation meeting with a vote of the full Board on August 5. Demulling requested a verbal quote from Axleford for comparison.

Adjourn

- *Motion by Demulling, seconded by Crotty to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.*

Jeri Koester,
Town Clerk