

Village of Hawkins Meeting Minutes
August 4, 2025
5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Pres. Doug VanDoorn at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call: Quorum Present

Amanda Bratlie, Patricia Johnson, Lisa Kuznar, and Kyle Austad.

Others present: John Burkman, Mark Case, and Woodene Stevens.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance led by Village President Doug Vandoorn

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 7, 2025

Motion by Johnson, second by Kuznar to approve the minutes as read from the July 7, 2025 meeting.
Motion carried.

Public Comment (5 minute time limit)

No public comments.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE MOTION

Hawkins Area Library Joint Agreement

Valentine shared information she received from Phillips Clerk, Shelby Kosmer regarding the Phillips library. They are the same as the Village in regards to building ownership, insurance, and public works/maintenance. In Phillips, if the library has a large project, the City bills the library for the work and the public works time. The City is the financial agent of the library. The Phillips library budgets for major repairs of roof, furnace, electrical, etc... Kosmer recommended that if the Town of Hawkins becomes the fiscal agent, documentation may be needed regarding a separation of duties since the Library Director is also the Town of Hawkins Treasurer. Kuznar asked what the pros and cons of the fiscal agent changing from the Village to the Town of Hawkins. If the Village continues as the fiscal agent, the pro is library building assets are beneficial when acquiring a loan. The con is the retirement liability. During the review of the library agreement, Stevens informed the Board that she had an updated version which no one on the Board had a copy of. Due to this, it was determined to not go any further with discussing the agreement. Once the updated agreement is received, the Board will review the information.

MotorSports Sponsorship

Kuznar motioned to have the Village sponsor the upcoming Motorsports events, by allowing John Burkman to use the Village backhoe/equipment, second by Johnson. Motion carried.

Waste Hauler Agreements

Waste Hauler agreements were received and approved from Ken's Septic Cleaning, Northwest Sanitary, and Golat Sewer & Excavating. An annual application and certificate of insurance is now required.

Sewer Rate Increase

Last sewer rate increase was June 2020. To keep up with inflation, a 3% annual increase is needed. Monthly meter service fee for 5/8" will increase from \$8.09 to \$8.33, treatment charge will increase from \$13.47/thousand gallons to \$13.87/thousand gallons. New rates will be effective January 1, 2026. Bratlie motioned to approve sewer rate Resolution #08042025, second by Kuznar. Motion carried.

PSC Simplified Rate Water Rate Increase

Village qualifies for a 3% water rate increase. Motion by Bratlie to increase rates by 3% with an effective date of January 1, 2026, second by Kuznar. Motion carried. Valentine will submit the appropriate information to the PSC. Notice will be placed in the Ladysmith News. Monthly fees that will increase: Fire Protection from \$5.40 to \$5.56; meter service fee \$15.00 to \$15.45; water fee per 1000 gallons \$12.35 to \$12.72.

Portable Container Ordinance #2025-07

Purpose and Intent: To regulate portable storage units such as shipping containers, portable on demand storage (PODS), store and move containers (SAMS), and semi-trailers that are being used as storage options by property owners. The Village of Hawkins Board desires to regulate their placement and use. Residents can request a copy of the complete ordinance by contacting the Village Clerk. Effective date will be the Ladysmith News publication date. Residents are required to submit an application. The review and approval by the Public Works Director and Village Board is needed before the container is placed on the property. Pres. VanDoorn motioned to approve Ordinance #2025-07, second by Kyle Austad. Motion carried.

School Playground

Improvements are needed for safety. Wood chips or sand under and around the equipment will make the area safer. Board will do research to see if the Village can get a donation of wood chips.

Public Works Report

PW Director, John Burkman reported the following work was completed since the July meeting: roadside mowing, weed spraying, lawn repairs, school crossing sign removed, tires replaced on plow truck, tree trimming, July water/sewer reports complete, and ordered two new meters and endpoints. To do: remove dead trees that are a safety concern, install noon whistle siren timer, install women's bathroom faucet, Factory St water project, cross connections, duo-jet compressor repair and valve box repairs.

Burkman is monitoring lagoons to track how treatment parameters are affected now that we are receiving waste from hauler's again. Burkman has noticed that haulers are discharging waste from customers that are not within the ten mile radius of Hawkins. Valentine will send a reminder along with a map to the haulers. Burkman requested Board approval for himself and Mark Case to attend the WRWA outdoor expo in Plover on August 28th. Burkman will receive continuing education credits for attending. Bratlie motioned to approve John Burkman and Mark Case to attend the WRWA expo, second by VanDoorn. Motion carried.

Clerk's Report

Valentine reported that the DOR will be completing some property appraisals which will be used to adjust the 2026 Equalized Value. This will not impact individual property assessed value. Village received the League Insurance 2024 dividend of \$1603.00. 2025 safety grant is \$600.00. All lp/fuel oil switched over to Lemke. Clerk/Treasurer back-up is a problem all small municipalities have. Recommendation is to have a clerk from a local municipality or previous clerk step in if there is an emergency. Kuznar indicated that her initial question was regarding cross training rather than Clerk back-up information. Letter received from the Rusk County Humane Officer regarding unregulated breeding of dogs and cats; and the impact this is having on the community. Valentine will touch base with the Officer regarding problems in the Village. Valentine negotiated a lower fee for the GFL garbage service. This will save the Village \$150 per month. WRA inquired if the Village had projects they could help with. Board would like to improve the school playground and ball field. Valentine will contact WRA. Accounting program switchover and training will be in February 2026. The fees will be split between 2026 and 2027. Valentine requested to attend a free Workhorse conference in Wausau Friday, September 26th. Complaint received regarding the condition of the 320 Chestnut property. Letter will be sent to the property owner.

Valentine is researching an Urban Forestry Grant. The Village will need to match 50% of the project cost. This may help the Village remove the trees on Main St that have grown up into the electrical wires. Application deadline is 10/1/2025. Complaint received regarding the professionalism of the Village's assessor. Board directed Valentine to look into other assessors.

Board Comments

Brattie spoke on behalf of the Lions Club: Lions Club would like to use the Community Center/parking lot for walk/run on August 31st. Informed Public Works of the pothole by the ball field. August 18th is a work day to prep for the installation of the new playground equipment and Harvest Festival. Emily Hartman agreed to paint the Hawkins Sign. Village will pay for the paint. Lisa Kuznar informed the group that EMT's from Ladysmith will assist with keeping the Hawkins ambulance in service. Public Works will help with the removal of old furniture in the Ambulance facility. Kyle Austad questioned when the Village stopped doing sewer adjustments when water is accidentally left running. Pres. VanDoorn confirmed that it was approved in 2023.

Set Next Agenda

Monday, September 8, 2025; 5:30 p.m. Approval of Hunting permits, MSA-Teresa Anderson, Fire Dept Pump Repair, Public Works Report, Clerks Report, and Approve Bills.

Approve Bills

Board members reviewed time sheets and bills for the month of August/September. Bills approved: General Fund \$3,126.22, W&S \$5,550.82, Refuse \$472.21, and ACH/Card Receipts \$9,003.94. Motion by Austad, second by Johnson to approve bills. Motion carried.

Adjourn

Motion by Austad, second by Kuznar to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried.

Alicia Valentine, Clerk

Updated 9/30/25 per September 8, 2025 meeting – Lisa Kuznar requested to add the following information:

- Kuznar asked what the pros and cons of the fiscal agent changing from the Village to the Town of Hawkins. If the Village continues as the fiscal agent, the pro is fiscal visibility and no conflict of interest; the con is the retirement liability and the fiscal state of the Library is hidden.
- Kuznar indicated that her initial question was regarding cross training rather than Clerk back-up information.