

September 16, 2021

TOWN BOARD

Chair

Anthony Varda, 798-9999

Supervisors

David Evert, 576-2935

Mike Statz, 798-4679

Christine Molling, 712-3033

Duane Haag, 798-3638

TOWN OFFICE

Brenda Kahl, Clerk/Treasurer

9046 State Road 19

Mazomanie, WI 53560

(608) 767-4152

Fax: (608) 767-3015

Hours: 7:30 – 4:00, except

Wednesday 7:30 – 11:00

Email: twnberry@chorus.net

Web: www.townofberry.org

TOWN GARAGE

Orlin Danz, Patrolman

(608) 444-0359

Hours: 7:00 – 3:30

FIRE WARDENS

Brenda Kahl

(608) 767-4152, during office hours

WI DNR

1-888-947-2876

<http://dnr.wi.gov>

ZONING OFFICER/BUILDING INSPECTOR

General Engineering Company

Mary Dussling

(608) 697-8003

GARBAGE/RECYCLING

Town & Country Sanitation

(608) 375-5856

LEGAL NOTICE POSTING LOCATIONS

Town website, Town Hall, Festge Park, DH Repair

LOCAL TOWN OFFICES

Two of the five Town Board seats will be up for election on April 5, 2022. All terms are for two years and begin on April 19, 2022. Offices up for election are:

Office: Town Board Supervisor Seat 3

Incumbent: Christine Molling

Office: Town Board Supervisor Seat 4

Incumbent: Duane Haag

The first day to circulate nominations papers is December 1, 2021 and the final day for filing nomination papers is 5:00 pm on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 in the office of the Town Clerk.

All necessary papers are available from the Town Clerk or the Wisconsin Elections Commission website,

<https://elections.wi.gov/index.php/candidates/local/non-partisan>

Brenda Kahl

PART-TIME SNOW PLOWER DRIVER

The Town of Berry will be accepting applications for part-time snowplowing of town roads. Experience preferred. Hours will be as-needed. Wisconsin CDL license is required. Rate of pay will be based on qualifications. Benefits not provided.

Applications are available at the Town of Berry Office, 9046 State Road 19, Mazomanie or on our web site

www.townofberry.org. Questions may be addressed to the Clerk by email twnberry@chorus.net. Applications will be accepted until October 8, 2021.

DISTRICT ONE EMS

7 Smart Reasons to Start your EMT Career Here

1. A Positive environment where you can build your skills.
2. State-of-the-art equipment.
3. Sane schedule commitments.
4. Ongoing CE training.
5. Comfortable, contemporary facilities.
6. Convenient location.
7. Reimbursement of education expenses.

For more information, call District One EMS Director Jim Wick at 608-795-9860 or visit district1ems.com to download an application.

BERRY BACKYARD CLUB

We held a plant swap at the Berry town hall shelter in May. It was wonderful to catch up with a few friends and bring home new plantings. It was not so wonderful to have our activities, and participants, continue to be limited by Covid.

We hope that next year will be better, and more group and social activities can safely take place. But we also need new leadership, ideas and energy. If you enjoy gardening, nature, anything outdoorsy, learning more about the Township and our neighboring communities, and especially potlucks and socializing, the Berry garden club is a wonderful resource. Everyone is welcome, make new friends-the fun is in the doing. Best Jane and Tracy

Jane Varda, jane.varda@tds.net, 608 798 9999

AUGUST 16 TOWN BOARD MINUTES SUMMARY

(A summary of the minutes not yet approved by the Town Board.) Members present: Anthony Varda, David Evert, Michael Statz, Christine Molling and Duane Haag.

Patrolman Report

On Old Settlers Road decorative boulders were added on each side of a driveway that are in the right-of-way. Still working with Everstream to landscape the ditches they disturbed.

Zoning

David Kiefer, 9284 Spring Valley Road, zoning change of 6.11 acres from A-1Ex to AG and 9.36 acres from A-1Ex to RC were approved. Vote 5-0

Driveways

*Elaine Anderson, Scherbel Road, driveway permit application was approved. Vote 5-0
*Indian Trail Farms LLC, Indian Trail, driveway permit application was approved. Vote 4-1. In favor: Statz, Varda, Molling and Evert.
Opposed: Haag

Final Certified Survey Map for David Kiefer, Section 18, was approved contingent upon providing the clerk satisfactory confirmation or correction of the square footage discrepancies. Vote 5-0

Turkey Road Reconstruction Project

The board approved changing the number of liquidated damages days to 5 days which equals \$2,500 plus the \$8,300 asphalt credit for a total

of \$10,800 that will be deducted from the final payment and the final payment be paid contingent upon full settlement. Vote 5-0.

Whippoorwill Road Cul-de-sac and Cost Sharing

The board set it over. Vote 5-0

The Working Budget Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Vote 5-0 **Amendments to the Town of Berry Zoning Ordinance**

Amending the text of the Town Zoning Ordinance Related to Livestock Harvest Facilities was approved. Vote 5-0

Solar Energy System License Ordinance 500.10 was approved. Vote 5-0

Driveway, Field Road and Right-of-way Ordinance 301.1 was revised. Vote 5-0

STH 19 Project Forms, Authorizing the Town Chair to Sign on Behalf of the Town

The board approved ratifying the signature of the town chair on July 5, 2021 as consistent with previous adopted town ordinance. Vote 5-0

Sunny Hill Cemetery Grave Site Markers Maintenance Proposal

The board approved to take up at the working budget meeting. Vote 5-0

ARPA Local Recovery Funds Update

Discussion only. WTA has a calculator that the town can use to figure loss revenue.

Update on Property at 8785 State Road 19

Discussion only. An administrative search warrant to inspect the property will be issued.

Committee Reports

*Cross Plains Fire District: The proposed budget was distributed and the major changes were the officer stripends, rapid response vehicle, lawn care and tires for vehicles.

*District 1 EMS: Set a proposed budget and it increased due to additional personnel; new assistant director was hired

*Cross Plains EMS: Distributed the proposed budget; Berry's estimated share of the district population is down to 10%; will be hiring another salaried employee due to a retirement; still discussing consolidating and sharing costs with the Middleton and Waunakee districts

*Railroad is requiring the town to paint pavement lines and update signs by the tracks on Scherbel Road

Adjourn: 9:06 p.m.

Brenda Kahl

2022 PROPERTY REVALUATION

The Town of Berry will be performing a market revaluation next year, in 2022. The last time Berry performed a revaluation of all property was in 2009, 12 years ago. Since then, the market has changed and assessed values no longer reflect the current market.

Assessments, what are they?

Your first reaction is probably, “They want more taxes!” However, it doesn’t really work that way. Your assessed value is only one factor in the amount of tax you pay. An increase in your assessed value doesn’t necessarily mean more taxes. Berry doesn’t get to collect more taxes just because your value increases. In fact, if all values increased the same and no new taxes were needed, the tax you owe would not change. The amount of tax collected is determined by 4 entities:

School District(s), Municipal, County, and Technical College.

Each of these entities collect tax dollars that service the community such as police, fire, education, snow plowing, etc. If there’s an addition to the school or town roads are resurfaced the amount of total tax needed to be collected will increase. This total tax will be divided by all property owners in Berry, including commercial property.

How is my assessment calculated?

Your assessment is based on a State regulated value known as equalized value. The Wisconsin Department of Revenue reviews property sales annually. They require all assessed values to be within 10% of their equalized value. Once a community is above or below 10% of equalized value, a revaluation is required to become compliant with the State.

Basically, every sale that takes place in Berry is analyzed, and new equalized values are set by the State annually. Market sales are also reviewed by the assessor and broken down by location, style, square footage, etc. to determine your new assessment based on the fair market value of similar property. The difference in the two values is called the ratio:

Ratio = Assessed value ÷ Equalized Value

Your assessed value is used by Berry to determine your municipal tax portion (just what you pay Berry). The ratio is used by the other three entities: School District, County, and Technical Colleges, their taxes apportioned based on equalized value.

Why are values increasing?

Assessed values have been increasing every year because properties on the open market are selling for more than their assessed values. Let’s say properties are selling for 3% more than assessed values for 4 consecutive years. By the end of those 4 years assessed values in Berry would be 12% lower than the States equalized value, or out of compliance. A revaluation would be required to bring all properties to 100% market value and get back into compliance with the State. Values don’t always increase. When sales values in Berry drop, your assessments will drop to match.

How will this affect my taxes?

What really matters for taxes is the mill rate or difference between assessed values and taxes. The Mill Rate is a simple equation:

Mill Rate = Total Taxes Needed ÷ Total Assessed Value

When all values in Berry increase the Mill Rate decreases.

There are a many other factors where values affect taxes. If you own a desirable property in a nice area, then yes, your value may increase more than the average and your taxes can increase. Market tastes change. Right now, newer ranch style homes in a nice neighborhood with a good-sized lot are selling like hot cakes. Is it fair that an older two-story house on the corner lot of a busy street should be similar value and taxed the same? Assessors set values on property to ensure fairness and equity among all property types, so everyone pays only their fair share of taxes.

In summary...

- A revaluation of all property in Berry will take place next year, in 2022.
- An increase in assessed values doesn’t trigger Berry to collect additional taxes.

- Taxes are collected by 4 main entities: Municipal, School District, County and Technical College.
- When additional services are needed the total tax that needs to be collected increases.
- The natural market is used to determine the value of all property in the State of Wisconsin.
- The State of Wisconsin requires Berry to be within 10% equalized value based on market sales.
- Assessing property every year ensures fairness and equity among all property types.

If you would like to learn more about the assessment process or have questions please contact Accurate by email: info@accurateassessor.com or call 920-749-8098. You can also visit www.accurateassessor.com
Chris Plamann, Director of Sales and Marketing

SUMMER NEWS FROM ROSEMARY GARFOOT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Spring and summer were very busy indoors and out. The Library has gradually opened up to allow patrons into the building, within the parameters of current COVID masking and numbers restrictions. Many good things are happening, and much appreciated, but for the foreseeable future, protocols will remain in place to keep patrons and staff safe from infection.

Most programs for both adults and children, will continue on ZOOM through fall and into winter. Dungeons and Dragons will likely be back by popular demand. If any activities are permitted indoors, participation will be limited to afford social distancing, and masks will be required for the protection and safety of all.

Childrens' Storytime sessions will continue to take place outside on Thursday morning while temperatures remain comfortable.

Tuesday evening bedtime stories on fb have begun. Tune in at 6.30 pm!

Tween bookclub on September 27th from 4-5 pm. Features "The Mysterious Benedict Society" by Trenton Lee Stewart.

The beautifully executed Story Walk has moved from the BEC boardwalk, back to the Library

where it is displayed in the windows across the front of the building.

The summer Library program was very popular, beginning with Magic Morgan and Liliana via ZOOM, and wrapping up with a terrific outdoor aviary event by Hoo's Woods.

Music by Corey, entertaining wriggly young children with a variety of music, singing and instruments participation, featured 4 sessions in August. Three of my grandchildren attended a session on a very hot morning and enjoyed it immensely!

Takeaway kits continue to be very popular, and have included magic kits, mini wind chimes, beeswax wraps, and all you need to grow a spaghetti garden.

The Black Earth Historical Society is working on a National Endowment for the Humanities grant proposal that is requesting funds for digitization of the News Sickle Arrow from 1915 on. The maximum grant request would not be enough to cover the entire project. Cross Plains and Mazomanie libraries have been approached to write companion grant proposals. More information is awaited to ascertain if the grant writing time-line is feasible.

As always, a huge, huge, thank you to the Library Director and her staff for all they do, with care and dedication, out front and behind the scenes.

Check out the website for more happenings, in-depth details and further useful information at: <https://www.rgpl.org/>

A public library is the only source of free and continuing education from cradle to grave. Respectfully submitted,
Jane Varda (Town of Berry Library Trustee)

NORTHWEST DANE SENIOR SERVICES

NWDSS is a nonprofit organization that provides programs and services to older adults and their families. Some of their programs include:

Adult Day Respite Program, Case Management and Advocacy, Nutrition – Mobile and On-site Meals, Supportive Home Chore, Transportation Coordination, Volunteer Opportunities and Wellness Programs and Activities

TOWN OF BERRY BOARD MEETING

September 20, 2021, 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, 9046 State Road 19, Mazomanie, WI 53560

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approve minutes of August 16, 2021
3. Public Comments: You may address the Board on any item not on the agenda. A discussion item may be placed on a future agenda. Public comment may be heard on any agenda item either now, or at the time the agenda item is to be discussed, or at the discretion of the Town Chair at any other time the agenda item is discussed. Comments are generally limited to three minutes.
4. Patrolman Report, if necessary
5. Discussion/action re:
 - A. (R-2021-6) Zander Marital Trust, 5043 South Valley Road, zoning change of 1.0 acre from A-1Ex to SFR creating a residential parcel around existing home and 60.34 acres from A-1Ex to EA
 - B. (R-2021-7) Doug Wolfe, 5755 County Road KP, zoning change of 14.64 acres from RH-3 to AG, creating 2 lots, with a transfer of development right
 - C. (D-2021-4) Dane County Parks, Scherbel Road, final field road approval
 - D. (D-2021-2) David Ohnstad, 9425 Blackberry Road, final driveway approval
 - E. (D-2021-10) Ann Hanson & David Ward, Breezeway Drive, driveway permit application
 - F. (D-2021-11) Geoffrey & Stacey Eslinger, Enchanted Valley Road, driveway permit application
6. Discussion/action re: Whippoorwill Road cul-de-sac and cost sharing
7. Discussion/action re: Resolution to Dane County Public Health re Emergency Order
8. Discussion/action re: Refunding permit deposit for Friends of Blue Mounds State Park
9. Discussion/action re: Set date, time and location for the Public Budget Hearing and Special Town Meeting of the Electors
10. Budgetary Matters
 - A. Discussion/action re: Payment of bills
11. Committee reports/Correspondence/Communications
 - A. Fire Districts
 - B. EMS Districts
 - C. Other
12. Discussion of future agenda items
13. Closed Session: The Board may meet in closed session, pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(c). Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.
14. Reconvene into Open Session per Wisconsin Statute 19.85(2)
15. Adjourn

As of September 16, 2021 the final agenda will be posted. The board attempts to finalize the agenda prior to the distribution of the newsletter.

