



**Town Board Meeting**  
**December 9, 2025 ~ 7:00pm**  
**Manitowish Waters Town Hall**  
5733 Airport Road  
Manitowish Waters, WI 54545

Pledge of Allegiance

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

**Present:** Town Chair John Hanson and Board Supervisors Lynn Schroeder (via zoom) and Doug Zeise; Town Clerk Heather Suffron and Deputy Clerk AnneMarie Wenten.

**Approval of Agenda** as posted on December 5, 2025: A motion was made by Supervisor Zeise, and seconded by Supervisor Schroeder, to approve the agenda as posted. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** from November 18, 2025 (Budget Hearing, Special Meeting of Electors, Town Board Meeting): Approved on motion from Supervisor Schroeder and seconded by Chair. Motion carried.

**Visitors Present:** Fourteen (14) attendees signed in at the Town Hall with +/- 5 attendees via zoom (*sign-in sheet on file with the Clerk*).

**Subjects from the Floor:**

**Abby Vogt (Woods & Water Director, NLDC) – Update on AIS Program:** Abby provided a status update on conditions, progress made, issues encountered, and future goals. Reported on new AIS coordinator (Lydia Dobberstein), seasonal staff, shoreline restoration project, terrestrial invasives, surveys of all the lakes in the MW Chain (curly-leaf pondweed, Eurasian watermilfoil, spiny water flea) and removal/mitigation efforts, point-intercept survey (ascertaining all aquatic plants in given area), Clean Boats Clean Waters inspections, grant funding (totaling \$300,000+ for aquatic management plans, harvesting and prevention efforts, decontamination station, public education), North Lakeland Woods & Water Conference (April 24), and retrofitting NLDC boat for DASH. She thanked the Town for its support. The Discovery Center could not accomplish all of this without the Town's funding.

**Old Business:**

-- **ATV/UTV Tower Road Access Proposal:** Chair Hanson explained that the Town received a proposal to open Tower Road to ATV/UTV traffic from County W to Hwy 51. Rich Hajt (ATV/UTV Club) addressed economic benefits and safety concerns. Other attendees offered comments and concerns (noise level; public input, especially since the Town already conducted a survey a few years ago). Hanson explained that when the Town ran the survey in 2020, the issue was included as a referendum on the official ballot, which is no longer an option. A survey could still be conducted on an election day – but offered on a separate sheet. The Town also surveyed non-voting residents in 2020, and the results for both populations were similar (500 voters: 2-1 opposed to opening up Town roads to ATV/UTV traffic, 500 non-voting property owners: 2-1 opposed). Hanson reminded people that the Hwy 51 bridge will be replaced in 2027. Cty W and Tower Road will act as the detour during construction, and no ATV/UTVs will be allowed on either road at that time. The following year, the dam bridge on Cty W will be replaced, which will also reroute traffic and halt ATV/UTV access for an extended timeframe. Considering these upcoming constraints, what should the Town's next steps be? Supervisor Zeise suggested this summer could act as a trial run for how things go with ATV/UTV use on Tower Road. Hanson confirmed that if a new survey is conducted with voters and non-voters,

he thinks the wording would be similar to the 2020 survey ('all Town roads'). Further discussion involved encouraging the Town's help with publicizing informational meetings, the potential for opening up extended stretches of Hwy 51 to ATV/UTV traffic, the importance of clearly stating the question(s) on the survey and communicating the overall plan/goal for ATV/UTV use to the public. A motion was made by Supervisor Zeise, and seconded by Supervisor Schroeder, to table the topic until the ATV/UTV Club has had a chance to hold informational meetings, with help from the Town to publicize, and then determine when to conduct a survey. Motion carried.

### **New Business:**

-- **Appoint NEMSD Board Member:** Chair Hanson explained that he helped create the EMS District and has served on the Board since its inception. He would like to continue serving on the Board (two-year term). Supervisor Zeise expressed concern about the disagreements amongst the Board members over the upcoming 2026 EMS budget, as well as conflicts over the role the NEMSD Board should play. Hanson acknowledged the issues and hopes the disagreements can be addressed as soon as possible. He strongly believes that the NEMSD Board should serve an advisory role and not dictate to the four Town Boards what they should do. He also shared concerns over the way in which the 2026 budget was created. It was noted that despite the tension on the NEMSD Board, the operation of the EMS District and life-saving services they provide have been exceptional all along. Laurel Tschurwald (in attendance) expressed interest in finding ways to share information about the NEMSD with the public to help them be more informed and excited about this impressive program. Hanson plans to be more proactive about sharing the Chief's (Jason Joling) reports online and asking him to attend Town Board meetings. Zeise asked for confirmation that he (Zeise) was still the official alternate MW rep for the NEMSD Board. A motion was made by Supervisor Schroeder, and seconded by Chair Hanson, to reappoint John Hanson as the Manitowish Waters representative to the NEMSD Board. Motion carried, with Supervisor Zeise abstaining.

-- **Appoint Library Board Members:** Chair Hanson reported that two positions on the Library Board are open -- John Donovan and Dick Henske have completed their terms, and they have both indicated interest in renewing for another term (three years). Hanson noted that the library is doing well and offers several excellent programs and resources for the community. Hanson made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Zeise, to appoint John Donovan and Dick Henske to the Koller Library Board of Trustees. Motion carried.

-- **Reroute of Marathon Road:** Chair Hanson explained that Marathon Road used to cut diagonally across the airport property. It was recently rerouted so that the road now aligns with the property line, based on a recent survey at the behest of the DOT. The Board now needs to retroactively approve this reroute to make sure the records correspond with the work done. A motion was then made by Supervisor Schroeder, and seconded by Supervisor Zeise, to approve the reroute of Marathon Road based on the survey conducted (survey documents attached). Motion carried.

-- **Resolution for Returned Check Fee:** Chair Hanson shared that the Town does not currently charge for returned checks and introduced the returned check fee resolution (\$20). The bank charges the Town for each returned check, and the Town must take the time to recalculate our deposit figures, update our records, prepare correspondence for the check writer, and try to recuperate the money owed. Vilas County also imposes a fee (\$30). A motion was made by Supervisor Zeise, and seconded by Supervisor Schroeder, to authorize the clerk/treasurer to impose a \$20 fee for checks returned to the Town by a financial institution, approving Resolution #2025-11. Motion carried.

-- **Ordinance 09-2025, Creating Chapter 46-9 of MW Code – Finance and Taxation (Underpayments and Overpayments):** Chair Hanson explained that the Town sometimes receives checks that are off by a small amount of money. Rectifying these negligible amounts may not be worth the time and hassle necessary to do so. By adopting Ordinance 09-2025, the Town follows a similar ordinance already in effect at the County level and will retain overpayments  $\geq$  \$5.00, unless a refund is requested in writing. Similarly, if the Town receives underpayments  $\leq$  \$2.00, the clerk/treasurer can waive the remaining balance. A motion was made by Supervisor Zeise, and seconded by Supervisor Schroeder, to adopt the ordinance based on County's example. Motion carried.

-- **Approve New Urn Plot Layout:** Chair Hanson noted that Deputy Clerk AnneMarie Wenten has been working diligently on updating the cemetery records to more accurately reflect reality. This has involved sifting through old deeds and files, trying to contact people with plots, and making various visits to Pine Lawn Cemetery. The Town hopes to migrate to a digital filing system for the cemetery in the relatively near future, and in order to do so, we're first trying to get things as precise as possible. An expansion is also on the horizon. In the meantime, since the Town decreased the original space reserved for urn burials in favor of more regular casket plots, it's become apparent that

some restructuring of that area would help what's happening underground match what's happening above ground to a greater extent! To that end, Hanson proposes adjusting the urn plots to 2.5 x 3.5 feet (instead of 2' x 2') and decreasing the number of plots (from 16 → 8), which still allows for a walkway between sections (diagrams attached). A motion was made by Supervisor Zeise, and seconded by Hanson, to approve the new urn plot layout as presented and previously approved at the recent Cemetery Committee Meeting. Motion carried.

-- **Approve Repurchase of Cemetery Plots:** Deputy Clerk AnneMarie Wenten explained that Chuck Kramer is requesting that the Town purchase four plots back from him, and he will then purchase four plots in a new section. Chair Hanson made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Zeise, to repurchase Chuck Kramer's four plots at the price he paid for them. Motion carried.

### **Standing Reports:**

**Vouchers:** November 25 – \$158,152.87. Of this, \$64,409.82 went to the MW Visitors Bureau for their share (75%) of third quarter room tax receipts. And \$59,450.00 paid Chuck's Excavating for dredging the channel between Fawn and Clear Lakes. December 9 – \$74,956.35. This includes \$25,000.00 to the North Lakeland Discovery Center for our fourth (and final) payment for their AIS program in 2025. Additionally, \$4000.00 paid our 2025 appropriation to the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation. Vouchers approved on motion by Supervisor Schroeder and seconded by Supervisor Zeise. Motion carried.

**P&L/Bank Balances:** *On file with the Clerk.*

**Airport Report:** Chair Hanson shared that the Town continues to work on a 20-year master plan, as requested by the FAA in order to receive federal funding. Plan descriptions and diagrams are available to the public in the airport terminal. The plan involves expanding the hangar area. Currently, all hangar space is already assigned. Just waiting on final approval of financing for the Town's new hangar (6-unit T hangar). New maintenance supervisor, Chris Moon, seems to be off to a good start, especially considering the debris he had to clear at the end of runway 3-2 and the amount of snow we've received already this year. Hanson thinks the master plan should be ready for approval by the Board, Bureau of Aeronautics, and FAA sometime this spring.

**Road Report:** As Supervisor Schroeder was out of town, Chair Hanson and Supervisor Zeise highlighted some items on Tom Lentz's report (on file with the clerk), including installing the Christmas decorations. Hanson also noted that they're cleaning up the areas where trees have been removed lately (along the shoulders). And Schroeder suggested they've been busy plowing!

**Transfer Station Report:** Supervisor Schroeder shared that things are going fine at the TS. Only issue to note is that with all the snow, the Town had to close access to the brush pile for the winter, unfortunately, as there's no way to guarantee reasonable, plowed, safe access to it.

**Cemetery Report:** Much of the cemetery news was already covered, but Supervisor Zeise reiterated that the Town is poised to switch over to a digital filing system and pursue a contract with a company that hosts this software.

**Broadband Report:** Chair Hanson explained that the project officially ended on November 30, 2025, but the crews are still working to complete the remaining connections. The Town pledged \$160,000, which will be paid by the end of the year. ARPA funds (COVID aid) cover \$60,603.10, and the rest of the funds were budgeted a few years ago.

**Northwoods EMS District Report:** As this was primarily addressed earlier, nothing additional to report. *Chief's report on file with the Clerk.*

**Correspondence:** None.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Heather Suffron, Clerk/Treasurer