

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING FOR THE
TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CASTLE ROCK, GRANT COUNTY, WI
Tuesday, August 22, 2023, 6:00 PM
Town Hall, 15070 County G, Muscoda WI**

Present: Chairman Brian Johnsrud, Supervisor Randall Foreman, Supervisor Donald Hrubes.

Call to order. The Chairman called the meeting to order. There were eleven people present.

Chairman Johnsrud introduced the meeting as an opportunity for the community to learn more about the Town finances, budget, and the need for a tax levy increase. There were questions from the audience to the Board. Some of the major points presented were:

The Town no longer has enough money to maintain all the roads properly and adequately in a smooth, hard sealcoated condition. Sealcoating in 2011 was about \$14,500/mile, today it is \$25,000/mile. Fuel prices are going up again. With 30 miles of Town road to maintain, sealcoating 3 miles per year alone would cost \$75,000. The Board does not want to revert back to gravel roads.

Recent expenditures on Shemak Road were about \$258,000 for the bridge and \$224,000 for the road upgrade. Even with cost sharing programs, the Town now only has \$20,000 savings for bridge replacement and/or storm damage. The Board would again like to build up the bridge and storm fund to avoid long term borrowing and the payment of interest. One of the bridges on the replacement radar is the bridge on Shemak Road over the Blue River.

The Town's mower needs replacing, and that is ballparked at \$25,000 if a unit is even available. Many sections of the Town roads need serious brush and tree overhang work, again no money for this.

Clerk Hrubes added that Fire & Ambulance expenses have increased about \$10,000 in the last five years. Election expenses have similarly increased about \$2,000. The solid waste expenses for the "big trash collection day" have also increased. All these take away money from the road budget.

The Board is asking for a \$25,000 increase in the property tax levy specifically for the maintenance of the Town roads and bridges.

Clerk Hrubes said that the present property tax levy is \$117,800. It was \$114,000 in 2019. The \$25,000 increase would be about a 21% increase in that levy. The total property tax levy for the Town for 2023 was \$445,921 which also includes taxes collected for the School Districts, Grant County, and Southwest Tech. The \$25,000 increase would be about a 5.6% increase in all taxes, everything else the same.

When the discussion and questions ended, Chairman Johnsrud asked for a Board vote on the proposed \$25,000 tax levy increase. Voting for: Johnsrud, Foreman, Hrubes. Voting against: none. The Chairman called for a Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 6 PM at the Town Hall for the Town electors to vote on the proposed tax levy increase.

Adjournment. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:15 PM.

Lavern Hrubes, Town Clerk