

**TOWN OF GIBRALTAR  
SPECIAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021  
GIBRALTAR TOWN CENTER  
4097 HIGHWAY 42, FISH CREEK WI 54212  
6:00 PM**

**Approved: March 3, 2021**

**Call to order:** Steve Sohns called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll call/quorum:**

Board members present: Steve Sohns, Bill Johnson, Tim Luetzgen, Brian Merkel, and Jayson Merkel.

Board member(s) absent: none

**Agenda/proper notice/adopt agenda:** *Motion: (Johnson, Luetzgen) to adopt the agenda as posted. Carried*

**Special Assessment Timeline Overview and Town Board Comments:** Sohns opened the meeting and gave a summary of the assessment process so far. A copy of the summary is available from the clerk's office.

**Public Comment:** Carol Vande Walle – Asked if the meeting can be put off because the community was denied discussion of the special assessment and town administrator at the budget hearing.

Jim Kuzma, 9358 Park Place – The improvements benefit the entire community not just the downtown properties.

Cathy Hoke, Peninsula Art School - Need to figure out a way to make the assessments fair for the entire community.

Scott Schmitz – Need to make Town meetings more effective/attendable. How much would it cost per \$100,000 of assessed property?

Rachel Stollenwerk – Would like to see a more strategic process for future projects.

Carol Skare – Wondering if the Board would consider special accommodations for private home owner's vs businesses

Eric Apfelbach – There have been communication issues where people are surprised and uninformed. The Town is underperforming compared to other Towns. There has been no betterment to his property. The tax should be spread throughout the Town.

Brett Lecy – Professional communication from the Board has been frustrating.

Karl Stubenvoll – Board should consider raising the room tax.

Lynn Krause Weddig – Room tax dollars benefit the entire community. Should also be brought into the mix.

Peter Diltz – 4080 Main St., Should be on the general levy. Especially the lighting. The Board should exercise discretion with sidewalks being assessed but the lighting be included with the Town Levy

Elizabeth Lorraine, 9287 Half Mile Bridge - Only have easement rights along the frontage. Half Mile Bridge is unfairly imposed. What is the criteria?

Robert MacDonald – Echoes it is unduly burdensome for a residence. Businesses around the corner are also benefitting. It is an unfair burden.

Paul Woerfel – Supports the idea of putting it on the tax roll.

Cal Burnton, Fish Creek Condominiums - The assessments are not fair or equitable. Suggests condo owners were targeted. Compare condo assessments to Nor Door frontage.

Barbara Boes – Brian Merkel should not recuse himself. He should be there to represent the downtown property owners.

Carmen Lang, 4155 Bluff Ln. - Frustrated in the process. Questions why Bluff Ln. is being assessed without sidewalks or streetlights on their property.

Wayne Kudick, 9287 Half Mile Bridge – Agrees with the sentiment to spread it out. Make the process fair.

Steve Gomoll, 3994 Rileys Ln – Reiterated that the entire Town benefits as a tourist destination.

Sally Pfeiffer, representing the YMCA – Will be very difficult for them to budget the proposed assessment. Benefits the whole community.

Karen Krause, 9349 Windmill Ln. – The value in her assessment will never pay off.

David Lea, 4037 Main St. – Suggests the entire Township share in the assessment. The documents do not provide an explanation.

Tom Thurman, Gibraltar Bluff Rd. - Has no issue with the public improvements the Town has engaged in. The assessments are unfair. They are not downtown and have no issue sharing in the burden. Part of living in a well-maintained community.

Jim Eggers, 9149 Half Mile Bridge – Half Mile Bridge is being unfairly assessed. Do not have frontage on Hwy 42. It is an easement.

Matt Ranzau, 4135 Bluff Ln. – Hopes the Board addresses the methodology.

David Boes, Fish Creek Condominiums – The tourists benefit the most from these projects which benefits the entire community. Process has a lot of flaws.

Glicksman, 9265 Half Mile Bridge Ln. – This process is pitting the community against each other.

Sande Solomon, 3444 Cty F – The sidewalks and lighting are good for the whole community.

Mitch Larson, 4132 Bluff Circle – Everyone benefits

### **Agenda Items:**

Brain Merkel left the table 7:09 P.M.

### **Street Lighting Special Assessments:**

**Review Methodology Along with Assessment Schedules B & C:** Sohns stated that back in previous minutes there was a discussion about the Town contributing additional money toward the assessments. He had Dennis calculate \$200,000 and \$400,000 scenarios.

The total assessable cost is \$1,277,688. From that amount, the State contributed \$466,560. Leaving \$811,128 to be assessed.

The methodology is based on 50% of assessable cost attributed to the value of the property. The other 50% to be charged to the acres of these properties.

The latest draft is dated February 22, 2021. Value and acreage were used together.

Dennis explained how the condos were assessed.

Cathy Hoke, Peninsula School of Art – How was the value determined for non-profits?

Insured values were used.

If the Town contributed an additional \$200,000 or \$400,000 it would reduce the assessments by 25-50%.

The projects have already been paid through the bond. Taxpayers are already being assessed through debt service. The assessment would allow the Town to recoup some of those costs.

The Town's assessable portion is \$113,263, paid by the entire Town.

The boat parking lot and the beach are not included in the assessments. The light post brackets are included but not the decorations.

Rachel Stollenwerk, asked if the B1 column could be included with the entire Town. An assessment throughout the entire Town would be better than an increase in tax. An increase in tax would never go down but an assessment throughout would have a sunset.

The bond is funded through the tax base.

Cathy Hoke, could a Town-wide assessment be done?

Brett Lecy, how much would the taxes go up per \$100,000?

Carole VandeWalle, there are many "out-of-town" businesses that benefit from the improvements.

Robert MacDonald, no-one from the west end of Town are in attendance. They also benefit from the improvement.

### **Sidewalk Special Assessments:**

**Review Methodology Along with Assessment Schedules B & C:**

50% of the sidewalk cost against the value of the property. Other 50% by frontage. Total cost to of the project is \$724,311. The assessments are calculated equally as some areas were covered by the DOT and certain stretches are wider. Net to be special assessed \$567,584 based on total cost of sidewalk. Town properties would \$62,213.

Dennis also presented models with the Town contributing more.

If the assessments went on the tax roll it would be about \$20 per \$100,000 for the next 20 years. It also means we wouldn't have about \$1.3 million coming back to the Town to put towards Phase 2.

Cathy Hoke – Is there the possibility of a Town wide special assessment and not permanently raising taxes?

Johnson would like more time for consideration.

J. Merkel not in favor of special assessments. Would like more time to review and think on it a little more.

Luetzgen, also feels the whole town benefits. Perhaps the businesses should contribute more or reach a little farther. Assessing the entire Town is something to look into.

Johnson would like to look through the documents regarding the additional contribution of \$200,000/\$400,000. Would also like to look into the possibility of assessing the whole Town.

An administrator to help lead us through would be helpful.

In order to amend the boundary would need to discuss with our attorney. Will need to look at assessment for Town as a whole. Would we need to start over? Need to determine what can be done.

*Motion: (Johnson/J. Merkel) to schedule another special meeting to provide time to study the proposal and variables for continued discussion. Carried.*

**Determination of Special Assessment Payment Plans:** No Discussion/Action

**Set Dates for the Special Assessment(s) Public Hearing:** No Discussion/Action

Brian Merkel returned to the table at 8:58 P.M.

**Storm Water Study Update for the Cedar Court Area:** The Storm Sewers are collapsing along Cedar Ct. mid-block, between Maple St. & Spruce St. About 50 ft of the pipe does not have a bottom. It was clogged last fall and jetted. The road is beginning to collapse and needs to be addressed soon.

The sizing of the pipe could be sized for a 5-year or 10-year rain event. A 10 year is normal for commercial areas.

Cedar provided mapping of the water flows throughout the downtown.

A concrete pipe would have twice the life expectancy than corrugated steel.

Concrete would be easier for other properties to connect to.

Is the 12” pipe sufficient for future development along Cedar Ct. Suggest upsizing to 15”.

Would like to look at streetscaping plans for Main Street from Cottage Row to Sunset beach. There is a low area that water may pond.

B. Merkel is there a band aid that could be done to buy time for further engineering and decisions.

Need to determine if there is anyone that can get the work done. Need to determine width of the road.

*Motion: (Johnson, Luetzgen) to have Dennis’ proceed with the removal of the pipe along Cedar Ct. between Maple St. down to Spruce St. with replacement to be the 10-year pipe, 21”, concrete pipe. Set so the existing pipe north of Maple will feed into the replacement manhole. North of Spruce St. will feed into the existing outfall pipe. Carried.*

**Beach Bath House Driveway/Sidewalk Revisions:** Dennis presented preliminary drawings of the beach sidewalk and driveway revisions to correct the mistakes made by SEH. The plans will need to be submitted to the DOT. It was discussed whether or was preferred to have the ADA grates or striping.

*Motion: (B. Merkel, Johnson) to allow Dennis to propose the plans to the DOT for approval with the stripes, unless they require the plates. Carried.*

**Adjourn:** *Motion: (B. Merkel, Johnson) to adjourn at 10:10 p.m. Carried*

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Murre,  
Deputy Clerk