

**Town of Lake Holcombe
Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2023, 7:00 p.m. @ Lake Holcombe Town Hall**

Members in attendance: Tom Rocque, Supervisor Dave Staudacher, Darrell Hornick, Bill Kochevar, Randy Crank, and Mark Cigan

Others in attendance: Supervisor Doug Olson, Town Chair Brian Guthman, Pam Guthman, and Susan Badtke (WCWRP)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Town Board Chair Brian Guthman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call was taken confirming a quorum of members in attendance.

2. Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves. Susan Badtke, Senior Planner with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) welcomed committee members and introduced herself and the organization. WCWRPC has been contracted by the Town to facilitate and prepare the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

3. Appoint Committee Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary

The Committee unanimously agreed to the following appointments:

Chair: Tom Roque
Vice Chair: Davide Staudacher
Secretary: Darrell Hornick

4. Primer on Open Meetings Law – Quorum, Walking Quorum, Public Records, etc.

Susan Badtke provided an overview of Wisconsin's open Meetings Law, which is meant to enable the public to have "the fullest and most complete information regarding the affairs of government as is compatible with the conduct of government business." Meetings of the Committee need to be held in places reasonably accessible to the public and open to the public, unless otherwise expressly provided by law.

5. What is a Comprehensive Plan and the Plan Committee's Role?

Susan Badtke provided an overview of Comprehensive Planning, which is working together to have a conversation as a community on existing conditions, what is important, creating a vision and then developing a guide for future growth and local decision making. Wisconsin Statute

identified 9 elements to be included in a Comprehensive Plan, but the Town could add additional elements (sustainability, etc.) if it desires.

Badtke also shared information on the Town's adopted Public Participation Procedures, as adopted by the Town Board, for the Comprehensive Plan process. Public participation activities include open meetings, a community opinion survey, public hearing with open house prior to adoption of the plan, and public noticing of meetings and hearings compliant with State Statute.

Badtke provided an overview of the role of the Planning Committee in this process, including attending meetings, providing information and direction on the plan, reviewing materials and providing input, promoting the planning effort, and promoting the community survey.

6. Project scope, planning process, and key milestones

Badtke provided an overview of the project scope and process, which is scheduled to include 7 Plan Committee meetings along with the public hearing/adoption meeting. The entire planning process is anticipated to take 11-12 months.

7. Discuss demographic, housing, economic, and land use trends

Badtke shared data on the Town's permanent resident population from 1980 through 2022 with the State's population projections out to 2040. The Committee agreed that the population data seems to be representative of the Town, with the population seeing a slight decline from 2010 to 2020 but overall remaining relatively stable.

It was pointed out that while this is the resident population, the population increases significantly during the summer months to 10,000-12,000 people.

There was also a brief discussion on land use trends throughout the Village. Badtke will follow up with details as to how the lake parcels are assessed.

8. Issues and opportunities exercise

Each committee member was asked to identify 1-2 issues and 1-2 opportunities for the Town.

Identified issues:

- Public safety & need for more EMT/Ambulances: Fire and EMT services for the Town are part of a multi-jurisdictional service (8 communities for fire service and 9 communities for EMT service). Town of Lake Holcombe ranks #1 (Town of Birch Creek #2) out of all of the communities for emergency service calls. This is likely due to increased population during the summer and high traffic volumes on the lake.
- Increased population on the lake during the busy season/summer: causes challenges from a telecommunications and infrastructure standpoint.

- Communication – need cell access to all: It was explained that while cell phone access is fine for the population during fall/winter months, it becomes nonexistent during the busy summer months. Uncle Salty’s had to call 911 six times when it had a fire as the cell phone connection was poor and kept dropping the call.
- Infrastructure to accommodate tourism: road maintenance and telecommunications could be improved, both of which are impacted by the increased tourist population (side by side on roads, etc.). While Ntera has installed fiber optic to portions of the Town, not all areas are served and could be expanded. Cell tower coverage and capacity are a huge issue for the Town during the busy season.

Identified opportunities:

- Economic development: The small businesses thrive from the tourists during the busy season.
- Conservation – the Town has many agricultural & forest lands, and the Flowage, in which it can conserve.
- Public safety: there is an opportunity for the Town to pre-plan major incidents so that they are prepared if/when an incident occurs.
- Establish guidelines for land uses that don’t negatively affect neighbors.
- Increase the appeal of the town to the elderly: as the population ages, the Town should look at opportunities to provide service for the elderly.
- Expand business opportunities in the town.
- Expand utilities (cell, fiber optic, road service, etc.).

Additional issues/areas to address, provided by the Town in the community questionnaire, include:

- Aging population –demands on services provided for health, broadband, recreation.
- Water quality
- Housing
- Public Schools
- Changing environment’s effects
- Outward migration of young people not returning
- Higher home values are causing displacement of younger families with lower incomes being able to afford to live in the area.

9. Discuss comprehensive planning public opinion survey

Susan Badtke provided a draft survey noting that this is simply a starting point for the Committee.

- a. **Potential questions** – Susan Badtke provided a draft survey with several questions. The Committee will review the draft survey and provide any suggested changes.
 - b. **Distribution method** – the Committee desires to mail the survey to as many property owners and residents as possible. The Town will explore options for printing and mailing.
 - c. **Promotion** – WCWRPC will prepare a flyer and press release for use by the Town. Committee members will also help promote the survey.
 - d. **Process for reviewing draft** – the Committee will meet on Monday, March 27, 2023, to review the draft survey and compile their list of desired changes.
10. **Review “homework” and next steps:**
- a. **Community “Homework”**
 - i. **Existing Land Use Map review**
 - ii. **Provide additional pictures, graphics, maps, studies, plans, etc.**

Susan Badtke walked the Committee through their ‘homework’ which includes:

- Reviewing and providing revisions to the draft public opinion survey
- Review existing land use map for any errors
- Provide any photos or images that members would like to see incorporated in the Plan

11. Next Committee meeting date

The Committee scheduled their next meeting for June 19, 2023 from 7 – 9 p.m.

12. Adjourn

Motion by Hornick, second by Cigan, to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes approved by Planning Committee on July 24, 2023.