

**Town of Barnes Tourism Committee meeting
Monday, September 28, 2015 8:30 am.
Barnes Town Office, Barnes, WI**

Members present: Barb Romstad, Julie Bohl, Carol LeBreck, Melissa Scully, PJ Foat, Dana Hodowanic, Tom Krob

Also present: Bruce Hanson, Susan Pagnucci

Not present: Mike Tremblay

8:31 am Chair Julie Bohl called the meeting to order

1. Verification of public notice/quorum established

Julie verified public notice had been posted per state statutes. Julie conducted a roll call of the members present to establish a quorum; quorum established.

2. Agenda and August 24, 2015 minutes approval

PJ made a motion to approve the agenda as posted and also the minutes from the August 24, 2015 meeting, Melissa second; motion carried.

3. TC committee member resignation

Barb Romstad read her letter of resignation and asked that it be recorded in the minutes:

To the Town of Barnes Tourism Committee and Town of Barnes Board:

When I enthusiastically joined the TOB Tourism Committee it was with the belief that it was apolitical, an atmosphere in which positive energy would be generated and sustained. It was not a venue for discussing divisive issues; such discussions invariably result in debate. Nor was it a venue to lobby for policy change.

A TOB committee member is not elected; the citizens of the TOB do not have the opportunity to select the members based on their political views. Therefore it is imperative that committee members serve without bias and refrain from promoting their personal political agendas through committee action. The committee members serve our community best if they do not solicit input on divisive issues with the intent of including them on the agenda. It is not helpful if a committee member cites his or her position on the Tourism Committee when such topics are debated in local circles; doing so infers that the Tourism Committee will consider taking a position on such matters.

The recent decision by TOB Board Members, Tom Krob and Julie Bohl, to include the discussion of the water-ski ordinance within the Tourism Committee has set a precedent; the Tourism Committee has become a political venue. Some property owners in the Barnes area have also voiced strong positions about the DNR management of the deer herd, the DNR's inaction on the declining walleye population, the strictness of Bayfield County zoning, ATV's on town roads, boat inspections at the landings, and the TOB fireworks ordinance among numerous other things that, in their view, are wrong. The inclusion of the water-ski ordinance (which was obscurely listed as "Boating and Water Safety) on the August 24, 2015 TOB Tourism Committee agenda has licensed its members to request that these and similar issues and topics be included on the agenda for discussion/debate. Cleverly presented, every one of them could be construed as *hurting tourism*.

Including discussion/debate of divisive issues on the Committee's agenda carries a great risk. Local volunteers that are vital to the implementation of Tourism Committee projects will be far less willing to support the efforts of a committee that appears to *take a stand* with which they do not agree. I, personally, am unwilling to serve on the committee as it has "re-defined" itself, its mission and approach to its work within the community. As a result, I hereby resign my position on the committee effective at the end of this term, September 30, 2015.

Barbara Romstad

Tom Krob thanked Barb for her past contributions. Julie asked the group to give some thought to a person who could be added to the Committee. PJ can decide if the election of a new Secretary/Treasurer should be on the October agenda.

4. Vatten Paddlar Race Coordinator

Julie told the group that Barb had previously indicated she may serve as Race Coordinator as a non-committee member. Barb told the group that in recent days she has rethought that concept and it would be best if the Race Coordinator was a member of the Tourism Committee. She said she kept excellent records and would be willing to assist the new coordinator in getting started. There was some confusion as to whether the race would continue to be a TOB event; since the TOB board did approve it as a town event for 2016 it appears that will be its official status. Julie thought it would be best to table the Race Coordinator discussion. Barb will check the website account for the Vatten Paddlar to see if she can move the ownership to the town, she purchased the domain name and paid for the website last year and is the current *owner*; transferring the ownership needs to be done by November 1, the date of the site renewal.

5. TOB Facebook Page

Melissa had not had a chance to put together an outline of the content she would propose for an official TOB Facebook page. Tom did not feel an official outline was necessary; Facebook pages are pretty easy. PJ made a motion that the Tourism Committee recommend to the Town Board that Melissa should create a Facebook page for the TOB, Melissa second; motion carried.

6. Halloween Festivities

Julie communicated some information from Mike Tremblay about the Halloween party that is held every year at Cedar Lodge. Cedar Lodge and Arch put the event on and need volunteers to help at this year's party which is scheduled for October 24th. Anyone interested in helping or knowing of someone interested in helping was advised to contact Colleen at Cedar Lodge. Melissa Driscoll will once again be organizing "Trick or Trunk" at the Town Park on October 30. Julie encouraged everyone to get the word out; we had lots of folks participate last year but not too many kids.

7. Tomahawk Park

PJ told the group he had stopped at Tomahawk Park on Labor Day and asked the people who were there (6 individuals) what they would like to see improved at the park. All indicated that a larger sand beach would be nice. The group agreed it would be something to look into. Susan Pagnucci, representing the Park and Recreation Committee talked about possibly updating some of the playground equipment. Barb talked briefly about the project of updating signage for the park trails and possibly expanding the trail system. She will work with the Park and Recreation Committee as a non-committee member on that project. Tom talked about upgrading the pump at the park and also possibly erecting an additional shelter on the trail.

8. TOB Website

Mike Tremblay was not present at the meeting but had reported to Julie about the website progress. He communicated that it is on his “to do” list, he just has not gotten to it. The hardest part is the design of the site, once that is done we should be able to make progress. Tom talked about having a conversation with Gene Miller, the designer of the existing site. Melissa suggested that everyone should come with some specific recommendations for the site and perhaps it can be the focus of the group at the next meeting, the primary agenda item. She recommended that each member visit numerous municipal websites and select one or two that hold appeal and the group might consider emulating. The group can review those sites at the next meeting; Melissa will bring her laptop for that purpose.

9. TOB Trail System/ Lake Road Project

Tom discussed the 2.1 mile Lake Road project from Hwy N to the Lake Rd bridge. It is scheduled to be reconstructed and resurfaced and 50% of the funding will come from the state of WI. That funding will include 11' driving lanes and 2' shoulders as currently planned. With 1' foot of the 2' shoulder being blacktopped. The original plan was to have 4' shoulders on each side of which 3' would be blacktopped to make the road safer for walkers, bikers, joggers, etc. Tom asked for input from the group as to whether they felt and additional 2' of blacktop on both sides would be highly desirable. The TOB would have to pay for that additional footage of surfacing. Some discussion followed. The other option would be to try to get a separate trail away from the road. This would take considerable effort and an easement from each property owner that the trail crossed. Carol made a motion to have the Tourism Committee express support to the Town Board for the additional paved shoulder width on Lake Road from BAHA to the bridge, Dana second; motion carried.

10. Community Garden

Bill Pence approached Tom Krob and told him that the Barnes Community Church was interested in possibly making a donation to the town for a community project; the idea of a community garden had been raised several times. Dana shared her ideas and concepts for a community garden as did Susan who felt it would be very well received. Bruce will do a concept map for future discussion. Tom suggested that Bill may be interested in coming and speaking to the group.

11. Other Business

- Bruce asked Barb if she had updated the Wisconsin Indianhead Magazine ad. She responded that she would get it done and submitted by the end of the day.

12. Next Meeting Date October 26, 2015, 8:30 am – Barnes Town Office

13. Motion to adjourn

PJ made a motion to adjourn, Dana second; adjourned.

The September 28, 2015 meeting of the TOB Tourism Committee adjourned at 10:15 am.