

# **CHAPTER 8**

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **Introduction**

In many rural communities, it is difficult and expensive to provide services to residents. Intergovernmental cooperation and coordination with neighboring governments and agencies can help improve service coverage, reduce potential costs, share expertise, and increase understanding between communities. Cooperation can be developed over time.

### **Survey Results**

Residents often are not aware of cooperative agreements their communities make. In the 2004 Town of Barnes Community Survey, almost 60% of all respondents indicated they had no opinion when asked about the working relationship between the Town of Barnes and the Drummond School District, Bayfield County, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, and neighboring towns.

### **Existing Agreements**

The Town of Barnes has several formal and informal cooperative agreements with neighboring governments and agencies. The agreements are listed below:

- ✓ The Town has adopted Bayfield County Zoning and relies on the County for information on zoning changes, variances, and enforcement.
- ✓ The Town Constable works with Bayfield County. The County dispatches 911 calls. Bayfield County and the State Patrol will assist in calls when requested.
- ✓ The Town of Barnes EMS Department has mutual aid agreements with the Bayfield/Ashland EMS Association and Gold Cross from Douglas County. The department also has contracts with the Town of Highland in Douglas County for services.
- ✓ The Barnes Fire Department has mutual aide agreements with Bayfield County and Highland Township in Douglas County.
- ✓ Barnes/Eau Claire Lakes Property Owners Association works to protect the Eau Claire Chain of Lakes and includes Town of Barnes and Town of Gordon (Douglas County) residents.
- ✓ Bayfield County Emergency Management works with communities to coordinate intercepts for ambulance service, medical helicopter service, local emergency planning, and 9-1-1 system.

## **Conflict Resolution**

When conflicts arise, it is important to address them in a manner that produces mutual understanding of the issues and creates an atmosphere under which the conflicts can be resolved successfully. The Town should hold joint meetings with neighboring governments and agencies to resolve future conflicts.

## **Future Areas for Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Existing and future intergovernmental cooperation can make a difference in implementing the Town's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Many issues, such as natural resource protection, extend beyond political borders. Listed below are potential areas for cooperation the Town of Barnes may wish to pursue:

- ✓ Work with the WDNR and other environmentally-focused agencies, neighboring towns, and groups on natural resource, lake, watershed, and invasive species management.
- ✓ Coordinate with Bayfield County if developing local ordinances.
- ✓ Continue to explore ways to improve police, fire, and emergency services.
- ✓ Work with Bayfield County and neighboring towns when considering walking, biking, or other trail systems.
- ✓ Work with the Drummond School District on long range planning.
- ✓ Work with the Drummond School District on service learning projects.
- ✓ Work with the surrounding Towns and Counties to develop ordinances that protect the areas natural resources.
- ✓ Coordinate with the State Historical Society and the Barnes Area Historical Association when developing the Town's historical museum and cultural sites.
- ✓ Work with developers, Bayfield County Housing Authority, and Habitat for Humanity to create affordable housing strategies.
- ✓ Continue to use Bayfield County UW-Extension and Northwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission as an information resource.
- ✓ Work with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism and Bayfield County Tourism to promote the Town of Barnes.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies, Programs, and Actions**

**Goal 1:** Establish mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with neighboring towns and government agencies.

### **Objectives**

1. Work with government agencies on resource management and protection.
2. Provide adequate and reliable police, fire, and emergency services for area residents.
3. Reduce costs for services to taxpayers.

**Policies, Programs, and Actions**

1. Coordinate with the WDNR on natural resource management and protection issues.
2. Provide copies of the Town of Barnes Comprehensive Land Use Plan to surrounding governments, Bayfield County, and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission.
3. Work to resolve potential conflicts through joint meetings.
4. Establish Joint Committees to focus on specific/common issues.
5. Actively promote cooperation to achieve goals and objectives set forth in Comprehensive land use Plan and maximize human and financial resources.