

November 2021

TOWN OF UNION NEWSLETTER

Hello Town of Union Neighbors,

The Town of Union has had a full year! Our Park Commission has worked hard to create improvements in the Town of Union Conservancy Park, and music festivals Country Jam and Blue Ox were successful which boosted revenue for our Town of Union Hotels. Station 3 (Union) Fire Department recruitment welcomed four new applicants. Thank you, Firefighters and EMS, for your dedication to service.

Effective Jan 1, 2022; the new permitting authority for building permits will be Eau Claire County. Please visit co.eau-claire.wi.us for information or call (715) 839-2944. Building Inspector Fred Dahlke's email: fred.dahlke@co.eau-claire.wi.us.

Thank You Al Balsiger for your 10 + years of service in the Town of Union. Enjoy your retirement!

Jennifer Meyer
Town of Union Chair

TAX COLLECTION DATES

Mailed tax payments are encouraged. Include a stamped envelope for a returned receipt. If making your payment in person, please enter from the East ramp door. Staging will be in the Hall, tax payments will be collected in the office and exiting is through the North parking lot door. Dog license applications are available at the Town Hall.

December's Tax Collection will be at the Union Town Hall 1506 Town Hall Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54703

December: 20th, 22nd, 27th, 29th 5:30–8:30 PM • January: 17th, 19th, 24th, 26th, 5:30–8:30 PM • January: 22nd, 29th 9:00–1:00 AM

REMINDER: The Town of Union Treasurer's hours differ from the Clerk's hours. To contact the Town of Union Treasurer, email John McLaughlin @ townofuniontreasurer@yahoo.com or leave a message with the Town Clerk at (715) 874-6123.

DOG LICENSING

Town of Union Ordinance 2.1-3.0125 LICENSE, FEES; REQUIRED:
A. No person shall own, harbor, or keep any dog over the age of five months, within the Town, without first obtaining a license from the Town.

Applications will be included in your property tax bill or at the Town Hall. 2022 license fees will remain the same:

- Neutered male or spayed female - \$21.00 per dog
- Un-neutered male or un-spayed female - \$31.00 per dog
- Multiple dog Licenses (up to 12 dogs) - \$288.00
- Additional Dogs \$24 per dog

TOWN ROAD UPDATES

With the help of the Local Road Improvement Project (LRIP) grants, Chayne Dr. received a complete reconstruct and Xiong Blvd. received a pavement replacement.

County Highway T Corridor Project is an intergovernmental project that has stakeholders from Chippewa County, Eau Claire County, City of Eau Claire, Town of Union, and Town of Wheaton. The project is the platting and mapping of the corridor from CTH X (Chippewa CTY) to State HWY 312 (Eau Claire CTY). The stakeholder group continue their discussions with project design and will plan to host an additional public input meeting before mapping completion. The proposed four lane is a much-needed upgrade to support safe truck traffic as industry grows.

ELECTED TOWN OFFICIALS

Chairperson
Jennifer Meyer (715)456-5903

Supervisor
Jeff Bechard (715)828-0586

Supervisor
Paul Travis (715)456-0564

Supervisor
Jeff Whyte (715)497-2558

Supervisor
Mona Mathews (715)577-3908

Appointed Treasurer
John McLaughlin (715)874-6123

Appointed Clerk
Beverly Christopherson (715)874-6123

Driverway Permits
Chris Turner (715)839-2944

Building Permits
Eau Claire County (715)829-3737

Town Constable
Russ Johnson (715)839-9991

County Supervisor
Colleen Bates (715)835-9813

CLERKS HOURS

Tues & Thurs 5:30 – 9pm
1st & 3rd Sat 8am – 12pm
townofunion@wvt.net
www.townofunionec.com

PARK COMMISSION MEMBERS

Fred Belay, Jennifer Meyer, Sara Titera, Kathy Alf, Tom Roach, Barb Kleist & Dean Kallenbach

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jennifer Meyer, Judy Bechard, Ruth Burr

PARK COMMISSION

The northeast bank in Sherman Creek Park, which abuts Sherman Elementary School parking lot, had some serious erosion issues. Since this section of land is owned by both the City and Town of Union, Eau Claire County Highway Department Commissioner, Jon Johnson, was contacted to provide a solution to the erosion control. Within 3 weeks the washed-out bank was restored, and riprap was put in place. This expense was covered by the ECASD as the storm water flow was routed to Sherman Creek Park and not to the City Sewer. A reminder that the undeveloped paths, not designated trails, along this area are closed and should no longer be used.

Quinten Anger has an Eagle Scout project to widen and place wood chips on two trails in Sherman Creek Park. This project will get under way in early November with Town helping with some expenses. Thank you, Quinten, for your time and service to your project to better Sherman Creek Park. The Park Commission and the Town of Union would also like to thank the Pleasant Hill Go-Getters 4-H Club, for their annual dedication to keep Sherman Creek Park looking beautiful. Every spring and fall the club works to clean up, plant, rake, mow, trim and leaf blow. Keep up the great work. ☺

The new pavilion at the Conservancy is nearly finished and security cameras are being installed to protect our investment in the park. Internet is expected to be installed as well and we are hopeful that these projects are completed sometime this Fall. We had a successful field day in October for invasive and native species. Two groups were formed; one headed by educator

Chris Gaetzke of the Lower Chippewa Invasive Partnership (LCIP) to search and destroy Buckthorn and the second group lead by educator Sara Norman of Landmark Conservation to identify Native Species in our Forest. We had signs made to identify 15 species of trees and placed in our Forest by Park Commissioners Tom and Fred. Sara and her group only found two errors in our identification, and these are flagged with red ribbons tied to the signposts of the Quaking Aspen and the Boxelder. Sara noted that the Quaking Aspen was a Bigtooth Aspen and we have yet to determine what the Boxelder is.

The Park Commission received contributions for the Conservancy from Silvermine Farm and Gloria Bloom in memory of park advocate Jim Bloom and Park Commissioner Marie Vornholt; and from Linda Zabrowski, in memory of her husband Chuck. Memorials will be placed in the Conservancy in memory of these three persons, all of whom were active over the past few years in the development of the Conservancy. A plaque will be placed in the new pavilion and some benches in memory of these individuals. The Town of Union Park Commission is developing a policy for memorials within our Parks. The Park Commission welcomes Dean Kallenbach to the board and looks forward to future events including a winter snowshoe hike, and a spring hike focusing on edible plants and mushrooms. We look forward to a Pavilion dedication celebrating the 150th (1872) Anniversary of the Town of Union!

Visit the Town of Union website to stay updated with current events and further information: townofunionec.com

WINTER SNOW PLOWING REMINDERS

The Town of Union contracts annually with Eau Claire County Highway Department to maintain snow removal on Town of Union roads. Plowing for the Township follows the same rules as the County system: Snow removal after 2 or more inches of accumulation; standard business hours are 4:00am–6:00pm, Monday – Thursday. During non-standard business hours, with 2" or more accumulation, EC CTY HWY DEPT will ensure all roadways are open and passable; snow clean up and pushing back will resume Monday – Thursday from 6:00am – 4:00pm. Overtime is charged to the Town during non-standard business hours.

- In the event of a snow emergency NO PARKING on the road for 48 hours.
- Violators will be ticketed by the Eau Claire County Sheriff's Department.
- Vehicles that present an obstruction or are parked in the road right of way and are not removed, will be towed.
- The snow you remove must remain on your property. Depositing snow back onto the roadway or across the road when plowing your driveway or parking lot is not only unsafe - it is illegal.
- Garbage and recycling receptacles and bins are only allowed at the edge of your yard or driveway on your collection day and need to be recessed a minimum of ten feet from the edge of the blacktop road. They are never allowed on the shoulder of the road, across the road from your residence or in a cul-de-sac.
- For safety reasons, if your receptacles or bins are an obstacle during plowing operations, EC CTY HWY DEPT. will not exit their truck to move them.

ATV ROUTE

At the October 12, 2021, Town meeting, the Town of Union Board moved to approve (4 aye/1 nay) a contiguous ATV/UTV route on Elk Creek Road North to County Line Road West.

The ATV/UTV route contingencies are to establish a continuous connecting route from the existing Buena Vista/1010th St. to Elk Creek Rd. The Club will apply to Eau Claire County Highway Department for CTH E access. If denied approval, the club asked for time to work with property owners for access through their personal properties to connect to Elk Creek Road.

Muddy Creek Riders have one year to propose to The Town of Union Board a connective route from Buena Vista/1010th St to the Elk Creek Rd Route. The route is not open now and will not open until the Town Board hears back from the Muddy Creek Riders and their route progression.

TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT HISTORY

Township Fire Department, Inc. (TFD) was organized on January 14, 1955, as a Wisconsin Corporation under Chapter 181 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. It is a corporation without stock and not for profit. TFD was one of the first fire departments within the state of Wisconsin that focused on regionalizing local fire/rescue services by combining five Townships into one department. This successful combining and sharing of emergency services resources has been used as a model for others.

TFD serves the rural Townships of: Brunswick, Pleasant Valley, Seymour, Union, and Washington; Township Fire Department's primary response area includes eight miles of the Chippewa River, 8.9 miles of the Eau Claire River, Lake Altoona, Big Falls County Park, numerous water-filled gravel pits and several other streams and ponds.

TFD functions as a volunteer / paid on call rural fire department with a roster of 116 active members (firefighters, first responders or combination). TFD responds to all fires, rescues, and medical emergencies within our primary service area and is often called upon to respond to incidents in neighboring areas under numerous mutual and automatic aid agreements. TFD also responds to all water rescue calls and provides a dive team for the entirety of Eau Claire County except for the City of Eau Claire. Diving in the very low visibility and often moving water found in our area can be very hazardous and divers can only dive for a certain amount of time before becoming tired or exceeding their recommended time limits. With Station donations from Union, Seymour and Brunswick, TFD was able to purchase a Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicle (ROV) or underwater drone. As the TFD dive team practices their skill building techniques, the ability to search for victims with SONAR mounted to the ROV will allow us to keep divers out of the water (and safer) until the victim is found. This will expedite the search/rescue/recovery, extend the feasible search time, and decrease the risk to divers. Requests for the ROV will also come from surrounding communities and the ability to add SONAR to our ROV to quickly start a search and find victims without using divers will increase overall responder safety while expediting the search and rescue/recovery.

In Eau Claire County, there are only two dive teams: Eau Claire Fire Dept and Township Fire Dept. Other smaller communities in the County have purchased boats and other water rescue equipment, but none have underwater search/rescue/recovery capabilities. As such, TFD's Dive Team responds to all water related calls in the County and this ROV-mounted SONAR will be one of the pieces of equipment available. Therefore, this equipment would not only benefit TFD and its primary response area but the whole County and beyond. Those wishing to support TFD for additional sonar equipment can send their donations to: Township Fire Department, 4601 East Hamilton Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701. Thank you.

BURNING PERMITS

Available only online at townshipfire.org.

ELK CREEK LAKE PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT

The Elk Creek Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District has received a \$50,000 DNR Surface Water Restoration Grant for the purpose of repairing and protecting a large ravine that drains to Elk Creek Lake. Elk Creek is a class I trout stream above the lake and drains to the Lower Chippewa River. Erosion on both sides and the bottom of the ravine are contributing large amounts of sediment containing phosphorus and other nutrients to Elk Creek Lake, impairing the trout stream when it leaves the lake. Sediment is filling in the beach and boat launch and is deposited in the park and parking area after major storm events. Dunn County Land and Water Conservation has designed the project and will supervise construction.

We have already raised over \$30,000 of required matching funding through donations of Eau Claire and Dunn Counties and Town of Union and Town of Spring Brook, along with local farming organizations, community groups and landowners. But due to increased construction costs we are now about \$5,000 short of funds needed to complete the project.

You can help! Send your tax-deductible donations to Elk Creek Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District at PO Box 1963, Eau Claire, 54702. Or each \$20 donation can give one entry into a drawing for an autographed 2020 Green Bay Packer football! (Please indicate if you would like to be entered into the drawing. Drawing takes place, November 26th.) T-shirts are available for purchase at Tangled Up in Hue, Downtown Eau Claire or at shop. tangledupinhue.com. Your generous donation will help protect Elk Creek Lake for years to come!

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. For more information, contact Secretary, Janet Christenson at (715)797-4745.

BROADBAND

The Town of Union is exploring partnering with local internet provider West Wisconsin Telcom 24/7 to provide greater coverage to the unserved and underserved portions of the Town of Union. Eau Claire County has established a Broadband survey which tests your internet speed and collects the data to help create accurate maps for providers. If you have any internet at your home, please visit <https://broadband-internet-survey-ecounty.hub.arcgis.com/> to provide your data. It is extremely important for residents in our underserved areas to participate in the survey. You must use your home internet provider, not your cell phone provider when participating.

In addition...If you are underserved or unserved, please share your story with West Wisconsin Telcom 24/7 at <https://www.net/fiber> to further help them bring fiber to your neighborhood. All information gathered helps as they apply for Broadband Grants.