

May, 2014

www.riverfallstown.com



Town of River Falls Annual Spring Newsletter

2014 Open Book /Board of Review

Inside Information:

- New State Election Laws
- Recycling Center Information
- Unlicensed Vehicles
- 2014 Road Work
- Burn Permits
- Town Website
- Contact Information
- Property Revaluation Project
- Noxious Weed Information
- Fireworks Permits
- Pipeline Safety Information
- Animal Control
- Parks & Recreation Updates
- Large Gathering Permits

Town residents are advised that the 2014 Open Book and Board of Review dates have been scheduled. The Open Book will be held on Friday, May 2nd at the River Falls Town Hall, W9015 770th Ave. from 2:00-4:00 P.M. (as previously advertised in the River Falls Journal and on the town website). The Board of Review has been scheduled for Wednesday, June 4th from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M., also at the River Falls Town Hall. Residents that have concerns or questions regarding their property tax assessments are asked to meet with the

assessor during the Open Book time. Appointments are not required, but they take priority over "walk-ins." If you are unable to make the Open Book session and still need to talk with the assessor please call Associated Appraisal at 1-800-721-4157. If property assessment issues are not resolved through the Open Book process town residents have the option of appealing their assessment before the Board of Review. A written or oral objection is required to be filed by the property owner 48 hours prior to the Board of Review in order to be

scheduled for an appeal before the board. Objection forms will be available at the Open Book and also from the Town Clerk, Ruth Stern at 715-425-7373 or e-mail: clerk@riverfallstown.com.

Only town residents whose assessment values have been adjusted from last year's figures will receive notification in the mail prior to the Open Book session.

Later this year and into 2015 the town will begin undertaking a property revaluation project. More information on this project can be found on page five of this newsletter.

Recent Changes in Town Offices

The Town of River Falls would like to thank outgoing Town Board Supervisor, Tom Sitz, for his nine years of service as a town board member. Tom came on the board in the spring of 2005 after residents of the Town of River Falls voted to increase the town board size from three to five members. Taking Tom's place on the town board will be Joe Mahoney. Joe has run a business in our community (Jack and the Green Sprouts) for many years. He has also served several years as a

member of the Town of River Falls Planning Commission. The town planning commission has recently been working on issues such as frac sand mining, the tower ordinance, code book updates, and business licensing. Moving to the town board will allow Joe to utilize his previous town experience as well as move into other areas of town government.

Also leaving the Town of River Falls this spring is Town Building Inspector, Dean Albert. Dean was

hired as the town's first building inspector in 2002 when state law required that local municipalities implement building inspection standards. The town board would like to thank Dean Albert for his twelve years of service to the Town of River Falls!

Taking Dean's place will be Todd Dolan of All Croix Inspection Service located in Hudson. Todd has previous experience in working with several other local towns in our area. His office can be reached at 1-715-377-2152 or on the internet at www.allcroix.com.

TOWN FIREWORKS PERMITS

With summer activities on the way it is important to remember that a permit is required from the Town Board Chair (Diana Smith) for shooting off larger fireworks. Smaller items such as sparklers, caps, toy snakes, etc. are exempted by state law. A reputable fireworks dealer will be able to direct you on whether or not a local permit is required. Please plan ahead and request your permit early so that you are ready at the time you need the permit. The permit is good for one event only. You need a new permit for every event you plan.

TOWN CONTACT LIST

Diana Smith, Chair

715-425-5478

LeRoy Kusilek, Supervisor I

715-425-6185

Siri Smith, Supervisor II

715-425-1339

Joe Mahoney, Supervisor III

715-425-0220

Brad Mogen, Supervisor IV

1-651-303-9028

Ruth Stern, Clerk

715-425-7373

Rita Kozak, Treasurer

715-425-8554

Town Shop

715-425-9901

Jerome Rodewald, Zoning

Administrator, Cemetery

Contact

715-425-0228

Michele DeLong-Reiter

Recycling Administrator

715-425-1477

All Croix Building

Inspections

1-715-377-2152

Associated Appraisal

Consultants, Inc. (Assessing)

1-800-721-4157

LeRoy Kusilek, Animal

Control

715-425-6185

Town Website:

www.riverfallstow.com

NEW STATE ELECTION REGULATIONS

2014 is another big election year with two elections already behind us and two bigger ones yet to come. With bigger election years oftentimes come revised state laws governing how those elections will take place. Perhaps the biggest recent law changes that will affect individual voters are those that deal with the voter registration process and with in-person absentee balloting procedures.

In relation to new voters or voters that have moved and need to be registered in a different municipality, it is now a requirement that proof of residency be submitted prior to voting for the first time in that municipality. Previously voters could vote "provisionally" which meant they could register and vote on Election Day without proof of residency, however their vote would not be counted until the proper proof could be provided to the town clerk up until the Friday after the election. The documents that the state currently recognizes as being acceptable proof of residency are posted on the Wisconsin Government Accountability Website.

The second major election change is in regards to in-person absentee voting. The time period for in-person absentee voting is now limited by state law between the hours of 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., on the Mondays through Fridays for the two week time period prior to an election. Weekends and holidays are excluded. Town of

River Falls voters are asked to contact the Town Clerk directly to vote via in-person absentee balloting since there is not an office at the Town Hall.

Voters are encouraged to request their absentee ballots as early as possible before an election. This is because absentee ballots can be requested through the mail prior to the in-person absentee voting time frame (usually up to a month ahead of the actual election). A written request is a requirement for an absentee ballot to be released. Other voter registration and absentee voting rules apply if you are a military or a permanent overseas voters. These can be found on the Wisconsin Government Accountability Website at <http://gab.wi.gov>.

The elections that remain in 2014 are: Tuesday, August 12th – Fall Primary; and Tuesday, November 4th – Fall General Election. Polling hours statewide are 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

SUMMARY OF STATE ELECTION LAW CHANGES

Proof of Residency is required at the time a new voter registration form is completed.

In-person absentee voting is limited to 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., Monday-Friday for two weeks prior to the election date. (Ballots can still be requested and mailed out up to a month ahead of the election). Written requests for absentee ballots are still required.

2014 NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS:

Brian Copp, Parks & Recreation Committee Chair; Jerome Rodewald, Zoning Administrator & Cemetery Committee Chair; Michele DeLong-Reiter, Recycling Administrator; Ruth Stern, Town Clerk; Roy Lund, Ad Hoc Committee Chair

Please continue to send newsletter address corrections or additions to: clerk@riverfallstow.com.

BUSINESS LICENSING

New businesses in the Town of River Falls are required to obtain a permit from the Town of River Falls. Please contact Jerome Rodewald, Zoning Administrator, 715-425-0228 for more information. The town would like to welcome new businesses that have recently "set up shop" in our community:

Catharine Noel, N8340 850th St. Commercial Kitchen & Learning Center

Ronald Reeverts (The Wood Shed) – N6612 Hwy. 65 – custom cabinet/wood products

Jeff & Lyn Knowlen – N7204 810th St., airbnb accomodations

Johnson Quality Plumbing – N8128 Hwy. 65

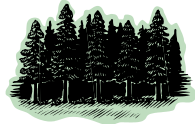
The town wishes you success with your business ventures!

Town Parks & Recreation News

The Town of River Falls has four parks that are ready and waiting for local residents to get out and walk or jog their trails. Each has a unique setting with changing views as the seasons change. All parks are conveniently located within 15 minutes from the River Falls High School. Three of the parks are on the south end of town and one on the west side of town. One of the parks that is ready for you right now is Halverson, located at the round-about at Highway 65 and Cemetery Road. The second is South Ridge, located a short distance from Cemetery Rd and 975th/Centennial Rd. The third is Rocky Branch with access at the end of Devon Lane and down the access road. The fourth is Hillwood and can be found

1/8 of a mile down Hillwood Drive/880th Street off County Rd M as you're heading out of town to the west. Exact directions and specific details on each park can be found on the town website.

Besides members of the Parks and Recreation Committee, these parks have been maintained by the River Falls Lions Club, River Falls Masons, Master Gardeners, local residents who want to see these parks flourish in their natural state and the Town of River Falls Maintenance Department. Don't let their efforts go unrewarded. Get out and visit our parks soon. Work is being done in 2014 to get two more parks ready for your use.



Pipeline Safety Information

Spring, summer and fall are the seasons of outdoor construction and yard improvements. Before you dig be sure you know if there are any utility lines located on your property. In the case of a gas pipeline this information can become a matter of life and death. According to the Koch Pipeline Company your sense of sight, sound and smell may help you recognize the signs of a pipeline leak.

Sight – Seeing a pool of liquid, a white cloud or fog, discolored vegetation, flames or vapors, oily sheen or water bubbling near a pipeline without obvious reasons.

Sound – Hearing a hissing, roaring or bubbling sounds from the ground or water near a pipeline.

Smell – Smelling a strange or unusual smell, such as a strong petroleum odor or “rotten eggs” near a pipeline.

The Koch Pipeline 24 hour emergency phone number is 1-800-688-7594



TOWN REVALUATION PROJECT

Starting later this year the town will begin undertaking a comprehensive revaluation of all properties (buildings and land) located in the town. This project is required to bring assessed values in line with current market values. The last time a comprehensive revaluation was undertaken was seven years ago. The project will also bring all of the assessment records, drawings and photographs into a digitized format. State law requires this to be done by the year 2015. The project requires a large expenditure of town funds of \$43,000. The town board has made provisions to set aside the necessary funding over three years to spread the cost out over time. Town residents may start to notice the presence of Associated Appraisal vehicles and staff in our town more often during the next year as they go about their revaluation work. Associated Appraisal staff will be driving red fleet vehicles and displaying license plates saying “Apraz##”. Each staff member will wear a photo id badge on their jacket and carry a letter of introduction from the Town of River Falls.

TOWN BURN PERMITS

Town burn permits are available at the Town Recycling Center on Saturdays (and also Wednesday evenings during the spring, summer and fall), or from a town employee or elected official by appointment. More information is included in the Recycling section of this newsletter.

INVASIVE SPECIES RULE

The invasive species rule (Wis. Adm. Code Ch. NR40) makes it illegal to possess, transport, transfer, or introduce certain invasive species in Wisconsin without a permit. Everyone is responsible to comply with these regulations. What you need to do as an individual, business, or organization may vary depending on your type of work and activities. The regulated species list and the details of the rule are available on the Wisconsin DNR website at www.dnr.wi.gov/invasives/classification. You can also report a sighting of an invasive species at invasive.species@wi.gov or call 608-267-5066.



ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal control complaints (specifically barking dogs and dogs running at large) continue to be the number one complaint that River Falls Town Board members receive each year. Town ordinances are in place requiring dogs to be under control and not be a nuisance to your neighbors. These ordinances can be viewed on the town website. Licensing is required for all dogs five months of age or older. The dog licensing form can also be found on the town website.

TOWN OF RIVER FALLS
W8378 760th Ave.
River Falls, WI 54022

TOWN WEBSITE

www.riverfallstown.com

Please be sure to check out the town website for current information on a variety of subjects. The website contains contact information, election results, meeting notices, minutes, departmental information, town newsletters, town history and a variety of other topics. The Town Code portion of the website remains under reconstruction.

Unlicensed/Abandoned Vehicles

The River Falls Town Board receives several complaints each year regarding unlicensed vehicles sitting on private property. River Falls Town Code (Section 10.07) allows for up to two unlicensed vehicles on a property within public view. Three or more unlicensed vehicles on the same premises in public view is considered evidence of a junk or salvage

yard and would require a salvage yard license.

Vehicles such as these that are left for more than seven days are considered to be in violation of Town Code and can be removed from the property at the owner's expense. The Town Board plans to begin addressing

legitimate complaints. During 2014 town residents with more than two unlicensed vehicles sitting on their property in public view will receive information detailing the town regulations on unlicensed/abandoned vehicles. They will be asked to take steps to rectify the situation by addressing the complaints that have been received by the town board from the public.

2014 Road Work

Please remember that the right-of-way on a town road is 66 feet consisting of 33 feet from the center line on each side of a town road. County and state roads have different standards. Right-of-way area is needed to properly maintain the road, road shoulder, and to provide for clear and safe visibility along town roads. Residents are asked not to plant trees, shrubs, or gardens or put parking spaces in the right-of-way areas.

The Town of River Falls has 60 miles of road to maintain each year. The board is currently working on developing a list of road work for 2014 based on the needs that are documented on the annual road tour. The biggest issue that the board deals with each year is the limited amount of funding to pave and renovate existing roads.

There are always more needs than funds available, and continually increasing road construction costs make the decisions even more difficult. It now costs over \$100,000 to pave one mile of town road. Fifteen years ago this cost was approximately \$35,000/mile.

