



Grant Town Hall

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Town Website:
townofgrantportageco.com

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715-421-9200

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715-423-3891

**Emergency Services 911
Ambulance**

United Emergency Medical
Services **715-423-7777**

Fire Departments

Grand Rapids **715-424-1815**
Plainfield **715-335-4253**

Severe Weather Alerts
Portage Co. Community Alert
Register: www.co.portage.wi.us
or call Sheriff's Dept:
715-326-1400

Summer 2022

The Town has been engaged in two major bridge projects this summer. Some of you may noticed the upgrades (or at least the "bridge out" signs)! We realize that the road construction or maintenance we do is never enough and that "your" road or roads may not be getting done to the extent you might hope. But some of the improvements we can achieve are drastic changes, for the better. In the "Roads" article on page 2 I outline the work that is currently underway, road grants submitted or received, and our hopes for major funds to extend work in our future.

You many have also noticed that our monthly board meetings have not been on our usual Wednesdays, but sometimes a Monday or a Thursday. Town officers have had employment or personal commitments that have had us jumping around a bit. So, be sure to check our website or postings at the Town hall or Transfer Station for the date/times of our meetings. Then, join us in person or via ZOOM. As always, feel free to call me with your questions or concerns.

In this newsletter you'll find articles about roads, T. Grant Plan Commission, well-water sampling opportunities, proper mailbox installation, wild parsnip and more. Thank you for your interest in the Town of Grant.

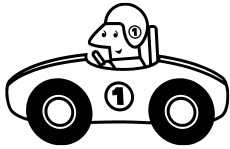
Sharon

→ **Monthly Board Meetings** ←
(See above)

Transfer Station Hours

| | <u>Wednesday</u> | <u>Saturday</u> |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|
| Jun – Aug | 11am – 7pm | 9am – 5pm |
| Sep - Oct | 11am – 5pm | 9am – 5pm |
| Nov - Mar | 11am – 4pm | 9am – 4pm |
| Apr - May | 11am – 5pm | 9am – 5pm |

Newsletter compiled and edited by Sharon Schwab



Roads, roads, roads...

By Sharon Schwab

Last time I wrote about the WisDOT Town Road Improvement (TRI) - Discretionary (D) and TRI Supplemental (S) grant programs. These are awards typically exceeding \$100,000 per project, and funded 50% and 90%, respectively. Submitted projects are first prioritized by the Portage County Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) committee, and then sent to Madison to compete against all projects statewide. This winter I submitted applications for: Buena Vista Road (CTH F – 130th); 90th Street (CTH W – Griffith); and Elm Street (90th – 100th). The LRIP committee ranked Buena Vista Road first (citing safety concerns due to recurring flooding), 90th Street fourth and Elm Street seventh among the seven Portage County projects. Last month we learned that Buena Vista Road has been chosen to receive a TRI-S award; up to 90% of project costs (both design and reconstruction) with a cap of \$221,386.00. This section of road has been of concern by the Town, County, and WDNR since 2011. Its reconstruction will benefit residents, recreationalists, and agricultural producers who use this road frequently. Reconstruction is likely to include tree removal, thorough excavation of underlying organic material, culvert installation(s), whole road sand lift followed by road base. It is my hope that design will occur in 2022 with a bid let in winter, followed by 2023 summer reconstruction.

In addition to the grant applications above three others were submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Surface Water grant program. These \$50,000 grants can assist municipalities install bridges or culverts affecting waterways that have particular conservation value to fish and other wildlife habitat. Applications were made for: 110th Street over Four Mile Creek; and both bridges on 95th and 100th Streets over Buena Vista Creek. This is the first time the T. Grant has applied for Surface Water grants and although we did not receive any this year we will try again.

Since 2008, the T. Grant has received TRI-D awards for: Deer Road (100-110th), Lake Road (CTH U – 85th), Mill Road (100th Street-CTH F), and bridges on 95th and 100th Streets over Buena Vista Creek. Construction on the last started this summer and is now complete. Project design was done by Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc., oversight by Quest Civil Engineers, LLC, construction by Janke General Contractors, Inc., and surfacing by American Asphalt. If you haven't seen these bridge projects yet, please take a look. And bring your fishing pole – Buena Vista Creek is a lovely trout stream!

Washington Street (CTH U – 90th St), a severely damaged and deteriorated road section, was reconstructed this season for \$181,026. Thanks are extended to Quest and American Asphalt for completing this project. Because Elm Street was not among those selected for either a TRI-D or TRI-S grant by WisDOT the Town Board will need to consider this project from our own public works general budget. This project will likely include basic design, ditch cuts, additional road base and shaping following by hard surfacing. Like Buena Vista Road it would be ideal to have this one reconstructed in 2023. The other project noted above was 90th Street which did not receive WisDOT funding this grant cycle. But, there was another option for this project...Municipalities state-wide were encouraged to apply for large grants under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), due in early June. I expanded 90th Street project to 3.1 miles (Mill – Griffith) as this is the second most trafficked section in the Town (first being Lake Road (CTH U – 90th)). My estimate for a project of this scale came in at \$2,902,000. Like TRI-S grants BIL would cover 90% of design and construction costs and would be led by WisDOT. Fingers crossed on this one! We will know selection results for BIL later this year.

You may have noticed that mowing occurred later this season. A few reasons: state-wide “No Mow May” promotions, sensitivity to insect/pollinator declines, high fuel costs, and reduction to once/year rather than twice/year mowing in lower trafficked areas. Thank you for your understanding.

Portage County WATER Project **(Well Owner Assistance for Treatment and Economic Recovery)**

April 2022, Portage County set aside 2.3 million dollars of **American Rescue Plan Act - State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA-SLFRF)** for projects to improve access to and provide safe drinking water for Portage County residents. The projects are specifically for testing to identify nitrate-nitrogen concentrations in wells and treatment activities and remediation strategies for wells with nitrate-nitrogen concentrations that exceed the state drinking water standard.

The funds are broken up into two separate programs. One program is designed to serve County residents who obtain their drinking water from a private residential well and the other is designed to serve drinking water sources that are categorized as transient non-community drinking water sources by the Wisconsin DNR.

To learn more about these programs you can visit:

<https://www.co.portage.wi.us/departments/planning-zoning/water-resources/portage-county-water-well-owner-assistance-for-treatment-and-economic-recovery-project>

Private Residential Well User

The private residential well program is open to any Portage County resident that uses a potable private well for drinking water. This program is available to residents that own the property served by a private well and those who rent or lease property served by a private well with the written preapproval of the property owner. Such well users are eligible to receive a free lab-certified water test. Those well users who have water quality results that exceed the nitrate-nitrogen drinking water standard of 10 mg/L may be eligible to receive up to \$1,500.00 in reimbursement to offset the cost of purchasing/installing a reverse osmosis treatment system. Well users must complete all the required steps below in order to qualify for the water test and/or potential reimbursement.

1) Private well users must register to receive a lab certified water test kit by completing the [Water Test Registration Form](#) or registering at:

<https://www.co.portage.wi.us/departments/planning-zoning/water-resources/portage-county-water-well-owner-assistance-for-treatment-and-economic-recovery-project/water-test-registration-form>

If well users do not feel comfortable registering online, they may contact Jen McNelly and Lindsay Benaszkeski at the information below and they can provide assistance with alternative registration.

For More Information Contact:

Jen McNelly
Portage County Water Resource Specialist
715-346-1334
· mcnellyj@co.portage.wi.us

Lindsay Benaszkeski
Portage County Environmental Health Sanitarian
715-345-5771
benaszkeskil@co.portage.wi.us

PLAN COMMISSION UPDATE

By Kathy Lee, Secretary

The Plan Commission is considered the “Town Planning Agency” according to Wisconsin Statute 236.02(13). The commission in the Town of Grant includes five voting members including four commissioners and a chairperson. Appointments are staggered for three-year terms. Current members are Chairperson Ron Becker; Commissioners Nathan Wolosek, Thomas Reitter, Diana Luecht, and Sharon Schwab. Kathleen Lee is the group’s secretary. Zoning Administrator Marty Rutz attends many meetings providing needed insight. The major activities of commission are developing the town’s comprehensive plan, making recommendations to the Town Board regarding zoning issues (including the zoning ordinance) and reviewing conditional use permit applications.

For many years, the Plan Commission has been working on revisions to the town’s zoning ordinance. Several years ago, they thought their work was almost completed. Then, Wisconsin enacted legislation that impacted conditional use permits (CUP). Wisconsin Act 67 created a statutory framework that local governments must follow in passing CUP ordinances and granting or denying CUPs. As the Plan Commission worked to incorporate ideas from Act 67 into the zoning ordinance, COVID-19 hit and many meetings were canceled. The commission is once again meeting on a regular basis and good progress is being made.

Act 67 requires that approval or denial of a conditional use application be supported by substantial evidence. The Act defines substantial evidence as *“facts and information, other than merely personal preferences or speculation, directly pertaining to the requirements and conditions an applicant must meet to obtain a conditional use permit and that reasonable persons would accept in support of a conclusion.”* In other words, the town may not simply use personal preference or opinion to support a decision. Facts must be used to support a decision. The evidence needs to relate to the ordinance. An application must also be supported by substantial evidence. The applicant must demonstrate with substantial evidence that the desired permitted use will meet all provisions of the ordinance or conditions attached to the permit.

When a citizen is requesting a conditional use permit, they are asked to provide detailed information. They need a well thought out plan. That plan should be provided when the application is submitted. It should include things like; but not limited to; the size and location of a building, county or state licenses obtained (if applicable), noise/fumes/dust control, schematics and screening of the site (as appropriate). All questions on the application should be fully addressed. If you are interested in a CUP, contact the Zoning Administrator, Marty Rutz (715.421.9200) for guidance.

When a citizen desires a topic or application to be placed on the agenda of the Plan Commission, they are asked to make that request minimally seven days prior to a scheduled meeting. (Meeting dates can be found on the town website.) If that request is a CUP application, all supporting paperwork needs arrive seven days in advance.

NEW!

- Domestic Fowl Ordinance – got chickens, geese or turkeys in a residential zoning district? Be sure to fill out an application to let us know.
- Complaint Form – got a gripe? This form is intended to help us track contacts with complainants to assure they are being recognized, provide a trail for actions taken (or not), help us to reach a resolution, and serve as a record to an achieved resolution of the complaint.

You can find these and many other helpful items on our website: townofgrantportageco.com

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

In our last newsletter Treasurer Greg Hakala told you about the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) from which the Town will receive a ~\$206,000 total. The federal rules suggest few limits on what municipalities can spend the money on. Several ideas have been submitted by Town residents: upgrades to Transfer Station (asphaltic driveway, electric hook-up to compactor(s) & new employee shed; AEDs for Town hall and vehicles; employee raises (all part-time employees currently make \$15.00/hour); small public works utility truck with gate & lift (to run errands, pick up litter, etc.); and solar array on town garage roof. Do you have idea? If so, contact Greg and let him know. We have a few years to identify worthy projects and spend the funds. Your ideas are important to our decisions.

RECENT THEFTS AND DUMPING INCIDENTS...

The Town of Grant has experienced a rash of thefts and dumping incidents in recent months. Earlier this year the trailer used to haul aluminum cans was stolen. The thieves cut the bolt at the Transfer Station gate and drove off with the trailer. This was a significant loss to the Town and resulted in an insurance claim and the purchase of a newer trailer. Beginning this summer, we have had street signs, stop signs, and posts either pushed over or stolen. Trucks and ATVs have disrupted intersections with deep circles from tires, especially just after the unsurfaced road was graded. Recently someone dumped a large amount of household garbage along Griffith Avenue. Another defecated in our Transfer Station port-a-potty and then distributed the feces inside and outside the unit. All these kinds of vandalisms cost town residents employee time and your taxpayer money. Please, if you know something about any of these incidents, call the non-emergency number of the Portage County Sheriff Department at 715-346-1400. Thank you – we need your help.

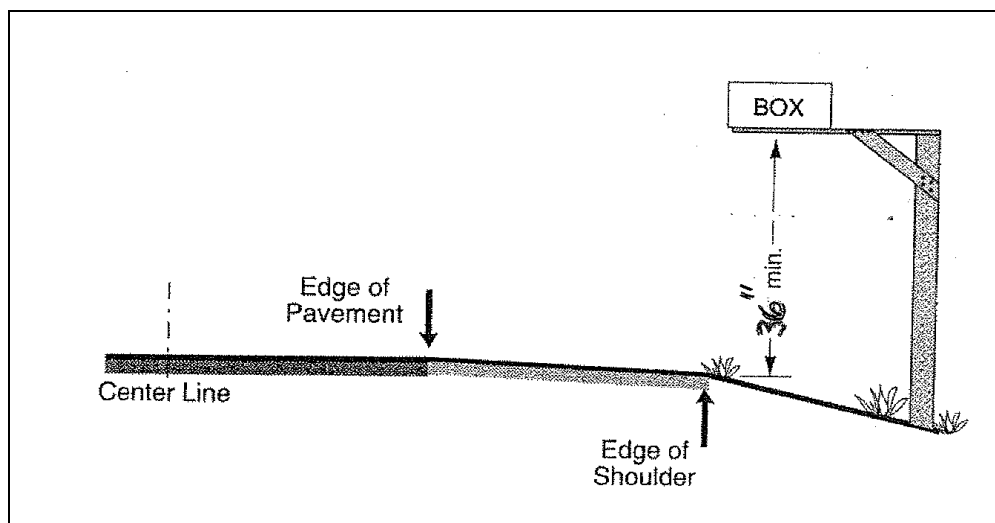
Mailbox Installation

Place your mailbox according to the diagram shown below. There are two key aspects of the installation:

1. Face of mailbox is directly over the edge of shoulder
2. 36" minimum height and not too much higher

If the face is aligned over the edge of shoulder gravel this allows us to clear snow and bench it back from the main traveled roadway and shoulders. This also allows our mail carrier to keep at least one set of tires on a surface that provides traction. In the case of an unsurfaced roadway, this edge is defined as where the gravel, granite, or soil meets the grass line. To allow our mail carriers to reach into the back of your mailbox without having to exit the vehicle, the height of the mailbox should be 36" or slightly higher.

Your cooperation with these installation details would be greatly appreciated by the US Postal Service and the Town Board. Thank you!





Have you seen this plant? Wild parsnip is an invasive species that has become naturalized in our area. It can colonize disturbed areas, fields and lawns. If touched it can cause painful, localized burning and blistering of the skin. Wild parsnip can grow up to 5' tall and has hollow, grooved stems that are hairless. Leaves resemble large celery leaves. They are yellow green, coarsely toothed and compound, with 3-5 leaflets. Small, yellow flowers are clustered together in a flat-topped array approximately 3-8" across. Flowering usually occurs during the second year of growth, starting in May or June and lasting for 1-2 months. Seeds are flat, brown, and slightly winged to facilitate wind dispersal in the fall.

If you believe you have found wild parsnip: 1) Take a picture of the entire plant and close-ups of the leaf, flower and/or seed; 2) Note the location (intersecting roads, landmarks or GPS coordinates); 3) Report the infestation to Portage Co. Planning & Zoning Department at 715-346-1334.

Town of Grant
9011 County Road WW
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

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