



LIBERTY GROVE ROCKS

FROM THE FRONT LINES

Voter identification is currently the law in Wisconsin. When you come in to vote, either absentee or in person, you will be required to show either your Wisconsin driver's license or your Wisconsin ID card. Either one will have your picture and your current address on it. If the information on the card does not match the voter registration list you will be asked to make the correction before you can vote. This can be done at the Town Hall before or the day of the election.

Recycling Day-Another Success

The Liberty Grove/Sister Bay paper shredding and recycling day was another success. 57 Liberty Grove residents and 33 Sister Bay residents participated in the fall event. It is a great time to clean the house of unwanted appliances, computer components and sensitive documents. Be sure to watch the town and village web sites for possible dates in 2016.



Trying to hold down the mil rate

Informational meetings were held on Sept. 22nd, one at 1:00pm and one at 7:00pm. The Board and Finance committee have worked hard to hold the line but some things became apparent in their discussions. For so long the Town has held the mil rate as low as possible trying to keep the overall mil rate to a number everyone would be happy with. The overall mil rate includes taxes from other taxing bodies that the Town has no control over. In trying to keep our mil rate low we have neglected many aspects of what makes Liberty Grove so special. In keeping with decisions made in 2014 we are continuing to pave or chip seal the miles of roads suggested for a municipality with over 105 miles of roads to care for. It is now our parks that need serious attention. In order to accomplish this we must continue on our current path. HOWEVER, the factor we cannot control is the equalized value. Our equalized value dropped this year approximately \$20,000,000.00. Yes, that is millions. A drop in the equalized value affects the assessed value which directly affects the mil rate. If our assessed value had not changed our mil rate would have gone from \$2.0348 to \$2.0415, an increase of .0067 or \$1.34 on a home valued at \$200,000.00. Instead we anticipate a mil rate of \$2.084 or an increase of \$9.80 on \$200,000.00 of value. A change in the equalized value, which the Wisconsin Dept. of Revenue controls, does have an impact on everyone's taxes.

Featured Organization: Door County Coastal Byways

Check out their web site at www.doorcountycoastalbyway.org.

Open burning in Liberty Grove

With fall clean up here please be reminded that open burning requires a permit. Permits may be obtained at the Sister Bay/Liberty Grove fire station in Sister Bay. If no one is present please go to Jungwirth's Ace Hardware in Sister Bay. They are able to issue permits as well.

Internet Tower on Mink River Rd

Some of you may have noticed a tower in our quarry on Mink River Rd and Waters End Rd. This is an internet tower with service coming from Door County Broadband. No cell phones, no television service, just internet service. This geographical area was one that was discovered to have very limited reliable internet service available. DC Broadband is willing to work with the town to establish other towers and improve internet connectivity where the town is underserved but at a recent county board meeting a much stricter permitting process was voted on and will now keep this from happening. The town will keep pressing forward and explore other avenues which would allow DC Broadband to continue moving in a forward direction. It can no longer be ignored. The internet is the way of our future.

Local elections in 2016

There will be 2 Supervisor positions open in 2016. If you are interested in running for those spots please follow this timeline:

- Candidacy papers circulated as of Dec 1, 2015.
- Candidacy papers turned into town office by 5:00pm on Jan. 6, 2016 with at least 20 signatures from town electors.

Candidacy papers can be found at

www.gab.wi.gov/forms and include GAB-1, GAB-162 and GAB-169. Election day is on April 7, 2016.

Requests for absentee ballots also have to be done each year unless you have filed a permanent absentee request. Absentee ballot requests can be found on our web site. Download one, fill it in, sign it and snail mail it along with a copy of your photo ID to 11161 Old Stage Rd, Sister Bay, WI 54234.

Dates to keep in mind:

October 9th –Flu shots at hall from 11am to noon
October 13th -Budget hearing and vote on levy at 7pm
October 15th -Service club meets at hall at 6:30pm
October 16 to 18th –Fall Festival in Sister Bay
October 19th -Historical Society meets at hall 6pm.
October 21st -Town Board meeting at 7pm.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

Liberty Grove has seven standing committees in addition to the Plan Commission. The Town is also represented on the Sister Bay/Liberty Grove Fire Board and Library Board, Utility District #1 and the Sister Bay Utilities Committee. In addition we have representation on the Coastal Byways and Tourism Zone Commission. Agendas and minutes for the various committees are posted on the Town Web Site.

While final action/decisions on governmental action rest with the Town Board it is at the committee level that most of the work is done. All Supervisors serve on various committees in addition to representatives from the community. Committee members are presented by the Town Chairman and approved by the Town Board. The Town Chair appoints the Plan Commission chairperson and the various committees select their chairperson. Committee meetings are open to the public.

Approval of the agenda at both board and committees serves the purpose of members agreeing to discuss items on the posted agenda. An item may not be added at the time of the meeting since it has not been appropriately posted. Board agendas are set by the Chair and Clerk. Committee agendas are set by the committee chair. In both instances requests for an agenda item may come from committee members and the public. The Board may also ask or refer to a committee an item for discussion/action. Committees make recommendations to the board in the form of motions.

SBLG Fire Board: Over 75 Years of Intergovernmental Cooperation

In 2008, an intergovernmental agreement between the Town of Liberty Grove and the Village of Sister Bay established the Sister Bay & Liberty Grove Fire Board and Fire Department.

However, despite its new name, the SBLG Fire Board and Fire Department dates back to the 1930s. It was during the Great Depression that the Town and Village began its cooperation by purchasing fire-fighting equipment in a 50/50 split. A joint Fire Department was established shortly thereafter, along with a Fire Commission to govern the operation of the Fire Department.

Today, as it was since its inception decades ago, the Fire Board consists of elected representatives of each municipality—two from the Village and three from the Town. Currently, Scott Baker and Pat Duffy represent the Village on the Fire Board, and Lou Covotsos, Nancy Goss, and Hugh Mulliken represent the Town. Members of the Fire Board are selected by the Village President and Town Board Chair, respectively.

The Town's larger number of representatives on the Fire Board reflects the proportion of funding for the Fire Department by the respective municipalities: two-thirds of the annual operating expenses for the Fire Department come from the Town and one-third from the Village. This two-thirds/one-third ratio reflects the much greater geographic area of the Town as compared to the Village, the fact that the population of the Town is twice as large as that of the Village, and, most consistently over the decades, the fact that the Town averages approximately two-thirds of the total fire and emergency calls annually.

To sum up the essence of the Fire Board—it is the governing body of the SBLG Fire Department. The representatives of the municipalities meet approximately once a month to oversee the operation of the Fire Department, including the formulation of policies, rules, and regulations affecting the Department, budgets, and the approval of expenditures and capital purchases, the latter being merely a recommendation to the respective municipal boards, which have the final say in all such purchases.

With overall authority of the Fire Chief and members of the Fire Department, the Fire Board technically appoints the Chief, who is, in turn, voted on by the members of the Department every two years. The Board pays great deference to the vote of the members of the Fire Department in its choice of Chief.

With Fire Chief, Chris Hecht, in the position since 2001, the Fire Board has had the good fortune of being able to rely on a person of outstanding talents and integrity. Disputes between the two municipalities over Fire Department matters rarely occur, and if they do occur, are quickly amicably resolved owing in large part to the leadership afforded the Board by Chief Hecht. The Department's two Assistant Chiefs are Michael Goldstone and Todd Voeks. Assisting the Fire Board is Clerk/Treasurer Bill Randall, who ably handles the Board's meeting agendas, minutes, and pays all the bills, among a host of other matters.

All meetings of the Fire Board are open to the public, and the Board extends an invitation to everyone to attend, even if only to observe a true success story of intergovernmental cooperation in operation.

Procedure at the Budget hearing

It begins with the hearing at which time the citizens of the town will hear what other citizens have to say about the proposed budget. Once everyone has given all their input the hearing will be closed and a Special Town meeting will be called to order. First the qualified electors will vote on the Public Works budget for 2016. Then they will vote on the total levy for 2016. Then that meeting is adjourned. Following that meeting a Special Town Board meeting will be called to order and the Board will vote to approve the 2016 budget.