

Town of Rock Elm

Elmwood, Pierce County, Wisconsin

MINUTES

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

Meeting called to order at 8:00 p.m. by Chairman Tim Bates.

Others present: Matt Holcomb, Supervisor; Chris Thibado, Supervisor; Dave Bechel, Patrolman; Dawn Churchill, Clerk; Pam Reitz, Treasurer; and 7 residents and 2 non-residents.

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Matt Holcomb, second by Chris Thibado, motion carried.

Minutes from previous meeting

Minutes from Town Board meeting, February 10, 2026, were read.

Motion to approve minutes made by Chris Thibado, second by Matt Holcomb, motion carried.

Financial Report

Dawn gave the financial report. Balance at the end of the year before bills are paid was \$124,967.94. This month's bills to pay total \$2,391.49. Discussion on including autopayments and paychecks on summary of bills to pay, even though these payments have already occurred. This will be corrected going forward.

Motion to approve payment of bills made by Chris Thibado, second by Matt Holcomb, motion carried.

Audit of Levy Limit Worksheet

There was a State audit of the Levy Limit Worksheet; requested documentation was submitted and satisfactory.

Refuse site billing to El Paso

There was income of \$2,984 and expenses totaled \$6099.10 for the refuse site. The difference of these is \$3,115.10; El Paso to be billed for half the difference, which is \$1,557.55.

Motion to bill El Paso \$1,557.55 for their half of the refuse site cost made by Matt Holcomb, second by Chris Thibado, motion carried.

Presentation by Mark Garlick, Assessor

Mark Garlick introduced Clay Dziekan who will be assisting with revaluations in Rock Elm; these will begin the end of March and continue in April. Mark presented information on where Rock Elm is as far as assessment values; we are at 65.81% of total value. With the increase of total assessed value to 100%, this should bring down the mill rates.

Open Book and Board of Review dates to be set

Since there will be a revaluation done, we won't have the new assessment roll in April; this won't be available until after August 15, 2026. Discussed tentative Open Book set for October 22, 2026, and Board of Review tentative date of October 29, 2026; these would be subject to change.

Motion to table this until next month made by Chris Thibado, second by Matt Holcomb, motion carried.

CDBG – Contract with Cedar Corp

Discussion on cost to the town for continuing with Cedar Corp to administer ongoing necessary paperwork. It is unknown exactly what the cost will be; it will vary month to month. All remaining funds in this CDBG account are required to be returned to the State, so any costs will come out of the general fund. Rock Elm will be reimbursed \$250 when a loan is paid off. Members asked for a spreadsheet of outstanding loans and Dawn will get this information.

Motion made to table to next month after requested information is obtained and reviewed made by Chris Thibado, second by Matt Holcomb, motion carried.

Possible upgrade of tractor and brush mower, update

Lengthy discussion on comparison of the Case model 150 from Johnson Tractor and the John Deere model 6M140. The financing option mentioned last month is no longer available through John Deere. With the purchase of either tractor we could trade in our current tractor or try to sell it outright for a better price. The cost of the Case tractor with attachments, extended warranty, and trade in would be \$130,307.68. The cost of the John Deere tractor with attachments, extended warranty, and trade in would be \$114,000.

Discussed John Deere FC15R Rotary Cutter from Tractor Central. The Board feels this would be a good mower. The cost of this after trade in of our current mower would be \$18,166.39.

More discussion on purchase of a tractor. Chris indicated he wanted more time to think about it, as the economy is bad, people don't have extra money and yet we want to spend this amount; he is not in support of this. Matt reminded us that the grader is paid off and we should be on a five-year rotation to keep equipment up to date. Tim felt that in the past Rock Elm has gone without new equipment and feels this is needed; we need reliable equipment. Purchase of a tractor was in the budget this year.

Motion made by Matt Holcomb to purchase the John Deere 6M140 tractor with Berlon bucket and extended warranty with a purchase price of \$114,000 and to list the current tractor on the Surplus Auction to see if we can get more than trade in value; if not, then trade it in. Tim Bates second. Matt Holcomb and Tim Bates in favor, Chris Thibado opposed. Motion carried.

Motion made by Matt Holcomb to purchase the John Deere FC15R Rotary Cutter at a purchase price of \$18,166.39 with the option to put the current mower on auction. Second by Tim Bates. Matt Holcomb and Tim Bates in favor, Chris Thibado opposed. Motion carried.

Poll Worker needed

Susan Thompson nominated for elections poll worker.

Motion to approve Susan Thompson as a poll worker made by Chris Thibado, second by Matt Holcomb, motion carried.

It was noted that pay for poll workers is \$12 per hour with a meal paid for also. Discussed other possible people for alternate workers.

Town Ordinances

Mention that solar farms are becoming a big issue, as are data centers. Non-productive discussion.

Highway report

Presented by Dave Bechel, Patrolman

- Has been dealing with snow and ice
- Been cutting brush
- We had Pierce County Highway bring in their boom mower and cut back some roads and hills
 - 190th St. and 490th Ave., "Skunk Hollow"
 - Hills on 630th Ave., Cole Hill, 50th St. and 70th St.
 - Part of 60th St., part of 170th St., and cleaned up the dump road that was overgrown.
- On 02/23/25, Tim and Dave traveled to the Town of Dunn to look at and drive their John Deere tractor equivalent to the one we're looking at from Tractor Central.
- On 03/09/25, Tim and Dave traveled to Arcadia to look at and drive a Case tractor equivalent to the one at Johnson Tractor.
- Installed road restrictions on 03/05/2026
- Serviced the pickup
- Dave will be looking into making repairs to the hot box patch machine.

Waste Management road bans

Rock Elm allows Waste Management to travel on a posted road for the purpose of conducting business. This will be relayed to Waste Management, as they requested something in writing.

LRIP project

Due to unknown confusion about the designation of the 570th Ave. road project being an LRIP project, the project was not bid out by the County and therefore will not qualify for reimbursement. However, the money will not be lost if another project is completed by the end of 2026. Discussion about finishing out 570th Ave. to the county line or to do 560th St.

Motion made by Tim Bates to hire Pierce County to do the asphalt for the 570th Ave. LRIP road project. Request that Pierce County put out bids for the asphalt. Second by Chris Thibado. Motion carried.

Box Culvert

Discussed option for culverts. The 2 singles side by side cost \$163,000 and the double cell cost is \$158,000. Both options would end up costing approximately the same after installation. A road would need to be built for residents and Celect would need to move wires.

Motion made by Chris Thibado to move forward with the box culvert on 430th, second by Matt Holcomb. Motion carried.

Tim requested that we reach out to get rock bids and report back next month.

Discussed disposal of cement culverts that are at the shop. There is the option to use them as fill.

Motion made by Matt Holcomb to hire Pierce County to smash and load used culvert pipes from shop, second by Chris Thibado, motion carried.

Public Input

Tim reported that he was asked to join a committee of eleven others via Zoom to discuss how to handle roads and how things happen on the roads.

Dawn reported on the Wisconsin Towns Association meeting she attended. She completed training for Board of Review. Also reported that the Town Law Fix Bill now allows towns to move from an elected clerk or treasurer to an appointed clerk via elector vote at a town elector meeting, a referendum is no longer required. The change would become effective at the end of the current term or when vacated. There is an Innovation Grant available to towns to combine EMS services. Due to decrease in available revenue for roads in the future, WTA is requesting that town adopt a resolution supporting a comprehensive and sustainable transportation funding solution. This will be brought back at the next board meeting.

A CAFO committee member commented that members did nine months of work on the ordinance and another three months on reviews. In the end it was 24 months working on this in total. If this comes up again, don't take so much time.

A resident was concerned that there were not enough questions asked during the last meeting before the vote, voiced concern over "conventional ag" taking over, that the board needs to get a handle on what the CAFO is going to do to Rock Elm, that board members should think about the people they represent and should be worried about being voted out in the next election, and that "democracy dies in darkness."

Tim stated that he is always looking at the budget and was elected to do what is right for the residents of Rock Elm.

A resident stated that all checks that are written should be presented to the board. Dawn clarified that they are.

An article written by Dairy Business Association was handed out to the board for review.

Correspondence

Reviewed.

Set date and time for next monthly board meeting

The next meeting will be April 21st immediately following the Annual Meeting which starts at 7:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn made by Matt Holcomb, second by Chris Thibado, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Dawn Churchill, Clerk