

TOWN OF ARCADIA

**Trempealeau County
W26051 State Road 95
Arcadia Wisconsin 54612**



Phone and Fax (608) 323-3470 ■ Email: townofarcadia@trivest.net

Ronald Tuschner, Chairman (608) 323-3035
Ivan Pronschinske, Supervisor No. 2 (608) 323-7675

Michael Wineski, Supervisor No. 1 (608) 323-2333
Nancy Rohn, Town Treasurer (608) 323-7063

Town of Arcadia
2014 Annual Meeting
Tuesday, April 15, 2014

The April 15, 2014 annual town meeting was called to order by Chairman, Ronald Tuschner at 7:30 p.m. All Board members were present: Chairman Ronald Tuschner and Supervisors Michael Wineski and Ivan Pronschinske. Also present were the attached list of residents.

The minutes of the 2013 annual town meeting were read by Clerk Beth Killian. A motion was made by Ronald Grulkowski and seconded by Kerry Suchla to approve the 2013 annual town meeting minutes. The motion was carried with the voice vote.

The next item was to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing on the Comprehensive Development Plan. The Clerk has notes on that. Ronald Tuschner asked if anyone wanted to hear the notes. After the third call, he passed over that item.

The minutes of the 2014 Public Hearing on the Town of Arcadia budget were read by Clerk Beth Killian. A motion was made by Mike Wineski and seconded by Kerry Suchla to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2013 Public Hearing on the 2014 Town of Arcadia budget. The motion was carried with a voice vote.

A discussion was held to postpone the Public Hearing on the 2015 Town of Arcadia Budget and Special Town Meeting to approve the 2015 Town of Arcadia Tax Levy until such time that the budget has been completed. A motion was made by Darlene Rossa and seconded by Richard Klonecki to postpone. Henry Schultz asked for clarification of postponement from what date to what date. Ronald Tuschner explained that this is done normally in the month of November. The budget process begins in September/October. The motion was carried with a voice vote.

A discussion was held about setting the date for next year's annual town meeting. By State Statute the annual meeting is to be held on the third Tuesday in April. A motion was made by Dennis Rossa and seconded by Mike Chitko to set the date for the 2015 Town of Arcadia annual meeting for Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. The motion was carried with a voice vote.

A motion was made by Kerry Suchla and seconded by Ron Grulkowski to authorize the Town of Arcadia board to appoint a Town Weed Commissioner. The motion was carried with a voice vote.

A motion was made by Julie Forsythe and seconded by Elva Helwig to name the State Bank of Arcadia as the official depository of all Town of Arcadia monies. The motion was carried with a voice vote.

Ron Tuschner, Chairman, gave the residents in attendance five to ten minutes to review the 2013 Statement of Taxes and the Annual Report. A short recess was taken until 7:50 p.m. A motion was made by Ron Grulkowski and seconded by Richard Klonecki to approve the 2013 Statement of Taxes and the Annual Report. Darlene Rossa asked about the Clerk's expenses. The Clerk explained that this is mileage to meetings, registration for convention and district meetings. It was clarified that the meetings were for training and the Wisconsin Municipal Clerks Convention in Milwaukee. Henry Schultz asked for the difference between general property tax revenue and tax collections. Ronald Tuschner explained that the tax collections is the money collected within the Township and disbursed to the school districts and vocational schools. We only retain a portion thereof. The new vocational school in La Crosse took a hike due to the new building. In General Property Taxes, a certain amount goes to the County and a certain stays with the Town of Arcadia. Nancy Rohn stated that this is personal property taxes. Ivan Pronschinske stated that the Town of Arcadia only retains 9.75 cents per dollar. Ronald Tuschner stated that we act as a collection agency. The motion was carried with a voice vote.

Other Business:

A motion was made by Darlene Rossa and seconded by Chad Rossa to combine the town clerk and the treasurer into one position, so we could have someone here full time, and turn around and also make it a hired position instead of an elected position. Darlene Rossa's rational is that we pay our Town Clerk and our Treasurer a good wage between the two of them. If we create one job, save 1/2 of the expenses, turn around and save almost \$5,000.00 when it came down to it. This has to be a position instead of being elected. It needs to be a hired position, so when things don't work out right, at least we can do something about it. This way when it is an elected position and a person isn't qualified or whatever, then we have no option. With the salary that we are paying out, we can hire one person to do a good job and have somebody here 5 days a week and get all the work done instead of having somebody a few days a week. Henry Schultz stated that he understands the rational for having a hired position, but he is not making any insinuations or criticisms of anyone in office, but under that kind of a structure or arrangement, the clerk/treasurer position is no longer an independent position that can hold other officers accountable or we residents accountable because they are dependent upon whoever hires them. I think it is wise to have checks and balances at every level of government, including the local level and here at the Town. And that person is not

dependent upon someone that maybe they need to answer to or hold accountable every now and then. You have to have a certain independence with that person's position depends on being hired by the person that they need to be held accountable to. Jamie Rossa asked: aren't they able to speak like everybody else even though they are a hired position, they still have supervisors and us to answer to. If they have concerns about stuff, it's like any place there is an open door policy where they are still free to speak even though they are a hired employee. H. Schultz responded with: they might feel their job is at risk if they started to ask questions. Elva Helwig said she would like everyone to be aware of that when you do have a hired treasurer/clerk position, the municipality has to hire an auditor in order to audit the books, because you have one person receiving the funds and paying the funds. She gave the example of the previous clerk/treasurer that was assisting us and because she was a clerk/treasurer, every year that township had to pay an auditor to audit the books. You could have a clerk position hired and a treasurer also as an elected official, you would have the checks and balances, because you have 2 different people. The clerk does receipts of monies coming in, but everything is deposited by the treasurer. This is something for you to think about. J. Rossa asked who does the audit now. E. Helwig stated that this is done through the State. She explained the financial CT report that must be completed and stated that in the last 2 years it has been at least a 10 hour project. You have to report everything to the State and it has to balance. I. Pronschinske stated that we had an audit a couple of years ago, but that was the only one he was aware of. R. Tuschner agreed that it was the only audit completed. He stated that with the audit annually, even with the individual that E. Helwig was talking about, she liked the audit, because they knew the computerized programs and they not only audited, but were a teacher to tell them where and how they could do better; maybe where there were new or better ways to do things and/or fill out. A lot of the reporting is done back to the State and Federal Government. J. Rossa asked if that would be part of the expense training. R. Tuschner stated that the auditor would be part of the training process, because if he sees the clerk or clerk/treasurer combination, however it is, doing something that would be inappropriate or doing something right, but not done in the best or most expedient way; he can turn around and tell her that. It is a learning experience yes, but also an experience. As a board member, it covers us as a board to know that there is no hanky panky going on. He stated that he does not mean that the wrong way, so don't take that the wrong way. It is a financial audit; it would give the board and the people that much security too. Shanna White asked what the cost of an audit would be. R. Tuschner responded that the last one was \$1,400.00. M. Wineski stated that that was not the same audit; that one was just on how to do things; it didn't check the books; it was just on procedure; this one would probably cost around \$5,000.00. Julie Forsythe stated that that one happened when she was still in office. She thought it was \$3,000.00. I. Pronschinske thought it was \$2,500.00. A resident stated that we would still save money doing that. Darlene Rossa stated that it isn't a matter of saving money, but creating somebody here. You can't get your paperwork done expediently enough in 2 or 3 days. You need somebody here 5 days a week. There is so much new stuff coming in all the time, unless you guys figure that we don't. You are the people that know. J. Rossa stated that a hired

position is accountable for their job and if they are not doing it correctly, you have that leverage. R. Tuschner stated that he means nothing negative. We have been through the other side. We know what problems we had. If you are on the board and you find out how many nights you sit here and days to get things done. He hopes we never get there again. Ellie Klonecki stated that there are checks and balances in place. E. Helwig stated, yes. S. Rossa stated that there are policies and procedures that are in place for the person to follow for the Clerk and Treasurer. E. Helwig explained that there are policies and procedures set by the State for what the Clerk and Treasurer are responsible. S. Rossa asked if we made the motion to hire the position, will the position be managed by the Board. R. Tuschner stated, yes. Nancy Rohn stated that you are responsible to your employers, but we also need someone that is responsible to the public. E. Helwig wanted to give everyone something to think about: the duties of the clerk is a very large responsibility; there are major reports that need to be turned in on time, otherwise townships are fined or funds are reduced from the financial side. It is not something, being that I was appointed, that there was a book I could go to tell me this is how to do it. You try to find out from other people and ask for assistance. Because of the situation in the past, Beth, Nancy, and I had to get into this slowly and set up procedures and instructions in case there is a new person coming in; there are some instructions for them to follow. It is not easy. If you choose to hire a person, you will have to pay them at least the minimum wage. J. Rossa followed up E. Helwig's comment that there is a ton of stuff that needs to be done, so maybe we need someone 5 days a week. Everyone wants things done right, if you are rushing it, there are a lot of chances you don't get it right. E. Helwig stated that we are doing the best we can. She went on to explain that when there are reports to be worked on, we are working late; many nights if you drive by it's 11:30 or midnight, and we are still here. R. Tuschner commented that at several meetings this last year, people asked us to give them written responses to questions; and I'll be the first one to tell you that I don't believe that any of those have been done. It is simply because we don't have the time to do it. We don't have time to do our own reports that are required. If you remember our last meeting we had 3 meeting minutes that were back in from February, that we could first approve. It takes time, ladies and gentlemen; it takes time if you want accuracy. As an example, those minutes are things that we keep in our archives. It's important. I. Pronschinske stated that if you go on the internet, that takes time. Again R. Tuschner stated that it is very time consuming, more than any of the 3 of us ever thought it was when we got on the board. E. Klonecki stated that there are certain limits that you need to set for yourself if it has to be in on time. If you are sitting with 3 meetings that are still not on time; they have to be done. R. Tuschner stated that they are done now. E. Klonecki stated that there are no excuses; if you can't do it, you have to do it. R. Tuschner stated that this is part of what he is trying to get to you with technology nowadays, you have a right to know what is going here on in a timely fashion; if it is coming to a meeting or via the internet or by phone call or whatever. We are unable to provide that the way people expect it to be provided now days. E. Klonecki asked what it is going to take to provide it. R. Tuschner stated we need someone here full time. I. Pronschinske stated that when he came on the board, the minutes were one page, now we

have 3, 4, 5, or 6 pages, because every word is was on the recorder is written. E. Klonecki stated that that is transcription. R. Tuschner again stated that it takes time. J. Rossa stated that she works more in the technology world, and is it in the best interests of the Town to have somebody who is more technically advanced, being that things are changing so fast. She then spoke of her college experience years ago, and the stuff that they have out now, she can't run it. Would it be a time saver; are there other things out there that we should be looking at as far as getting this stuff done. There are things out there that can record your voice on the computer and it can update for you. R. Tuschner spoke about the recorder that he just purchased for the Town. It has the capabilities to go off the recorder and to go on the computer verbatim. He spoke of the additional costs for the necessary hook-ups to do it. It is there, and we need to be there. Some people rely on it, because they don't have time to come to meetings, and they want to know what is going on. S. Rossa asked how long it takes before this will come up. I. Pronschinske stated that it will be on the fall election. M. Wineski stated it will take effect next April. R. Tuschner explained the state statutes. The annual meeting has the authority to combine the position by a vote, up or down. If they combine those positions, they have the choice of elected and/or appointed. If they stay with elected, it stays exactly the way it is. If they want appointed, then it would be put on the ballot in November. That is why we need to talk about it today. We need that long of a period of time so that people can be notified before the election, the normal procedures, the class 1, 2, and 3 notices in the paper. This is the time to do it. If we don't do it until the next annual meeting, we will go into the next 2 year cycle. Someone asked if the board would set the wage. R. Tuschner stated the board will be the one, if appointed, setting the wage. Another question was asked about health insurance and something else. R. Tuschner stated that that would be up to the Town Board to negotiate that with the person that they feel is competent/capable to do the job/is qualified. Dick Schank asked about the number of hours Beth, Elva, and Nancy work. B. Killian stated that there are no benefits for the clerk, no health insurance, retirement begins after you have been in office a full year, and the only thing the clerk gets is that salary. I. Pronschinske stated that after 1 year 10% of their wages. E. Helwig stated that the salary for the clerk is \$1,315 divided by 4 weeks equals \$328.75 for 40 hours. That comes up to \$8.22 per hour. D. Schank asked if that included Nancy. E. Helwig stated no, this is just the clerk. She then explained that is an average of a 40 hour work week. She continued explaining how the clerk hours were averaged. A 12 month average came to 39.4 hours per week. She then explained that she is the deputy, and we divide the salary in half. D. Schank asked Nancy how many hours she has. N. Rohn stated that at tax time she is up until midnight most nights, but now when it is not tax time; she only has the monthly reports to complete. Hour wise it is hard to figure out. She referenced the back sheet and explained if you just look at wages and by adding the clerk and treasurer would be \$25,000. Normal full time work is 2,080 hours. This would make \$11.50 per hour, no benefits; realistically, in today's environment and how much money it takes to survive, it would be extremely hard pressed to find a full time person who will come in here for \$11.50 per hour roughly, with no benefits, no insurance, and you have to take taxes off of that. She stated that she honestly did not care if they went with a full time person; she got

it. Your take home pay would be around \$8.50 to \$9.00 per hour. She stated, in her opinion, that she didn't know who could survive on that, if you were a single person. She can see where you will have to pay more than that. If you could see these 2 ladies, how much work this clerk's job is, and how many hours they put in. I wouldn't want to do it, because I want to have a life. It is easy to sit back here in the audience and say we should do this or do that. If you would just spend a week with these ladies, see some of the things they have to do, and see how much time it takes and if they don't put in the time. Someone asked why it takes so much time to do the minutes, a person that came to one of the meetings and had a statement about something, and they didn't put it in there; that person pays attention. They want the people out there to know that this was recorded, and they get mad. I have witnessed it. Maybe it does take a long time to do the minutes, but there is a reason they do that. She invited people to come in and watch what they do. She has seen them work until midnight trying to get things done. Yes, I get it, someone should be here full time, but to find that person who is going to take on this job, good luck. E. Helwig stated that she is Beth's deputy, and that means when she is gone on vacation or on an emergency, an elected clerk has to appoint a deputy clerk in case you are gone, there is always a clerk. The Town was at an advantage, because she didn't have to train me to be the clerk. It was easy to do. It is up to the clerk to determine what she pays her deputy. The salary that I get is from the money that Beth gets; it is not in addition; it comes out of the clerk's salary. N. Rohn stated that if you get a hired person what Elva just said does not ring true. You don't have to have a deputy. If you would decide one day that you were fed up and walked out the door, there is nobody here to step up to the plate to take your place. This is another thing to think about. M. Wineski stated that you don't need a deputy now; and that is what our last clerk did, for the record. Just because she is elected, she doesn't have to have a deputy clerk. J. Rossa stated that if you structured it to have a back up person, when you did the hiring position, it's just like any job, if someone is gone you have someone cover for them. If that was in the original plan, we should be safe. The main thing is that everyone is having a hard time getting everything done whether it is the people doing the job or the Town's people trying to get their stuff done for them. That is what we are trying to take care of here. Apparently there is not enough time. The people need more access to the people that are doing the job, and people that are doing the job, maybe we should look at finding more efficient ways of doing things how other people do. That is what we should be looking at. Dennis Rossa stated that if we bought a machine that would cut our time in half right there. Both Dennis and Darlene Rossa stated that we need a full time person. Dennis Rossa stated that if we have to pay more, we have to pay for it. J. Rossa talked about purchasing items on Amazon versus WalMart to get what you want, because consumers want it right now. She continued with her example. We need more access. R. Tuschner stated that this board has always wanted, and are getting closer to it, when we make any financial decisions, an example, what did Norway Valley cost last year to repair the road or what did that tractor cost to repair or truck cost to repair. The girls are getting close to finalizing that, but all we should have to do is go to the computer, punch it in, be up-to-date on a monthly basis on individual costs. That is what you need to make a good financial judgment on any

decision. You need that data, and you need it now. If a truck or tractor goes down, you don't wait a month, you do it now. Andy Schultz stated that everyone talks about cost and time, but you are going to get what you pay for. How much are you willing to spend. We are sitting around hashing this out, but the bottom line is how much will this cost us, to get the work done. J. Rossa stated that it depends on the person, if you hire somebody and they can't get it done, you have the option of hiring someone else. You don't have to suffer with this until the election comes again. Until you get the right person in place, you have that option if its a hired position. At that point you will worry how much you will pay them. You get hired on a job and they pay you a salary, then you prove yourself, at that time you re-discuss your wage. Where are you willing to start at the time. Are we going to pay them \$40,000 per year. A. Schultz stated that that was what he was asking; what they are starting at. R. Tuschner stated that the board has not discussed that specifically. They have discussed road crew, \$15, \$16, \$17 per hour. We have to be compatible. If secretarial work is compatible with that wage at Ashley, Nelson Muffler, GNP, or whoever, you know where you will have to be. If you can't get quality, and I'm not being negative to anybody, but that is why we need someone here that we know can do it; it's not that our people don't know how to do it, but they don't have the time. We worry about the time to get our work done. He gave an example of how he would prioritize projects in his operation. If he would need to hire someone, he would pay them what they want, if they are going to do the job the way he wants it done. D. Rossa stated that we need to move into the 21st century. She spoke about a clerk 25 years ago, the clerk put in 2 or 3 days; the paperwork and everything has changed. We have never increased the position or changed the position in order to handle what is coming down the peak. H. Schultz asked how one person will be able to handle it if the people doing it now are already spending well in excess of 40 hours per week. E. Helwig stated that in that 40 hours we are putting it in a different time frame. It averages out to 40 hours per week. R. Tuschner stated that the thing to remember if we got someone in here full time; the only interruptions they should have is periodically from our men, some walk ins, or answering the telephone; but they can stay on task most generally. When you are on task and interrupted sometimes it takes me awhile to get back to where I was before. If you can stay on task, that in itself is efficiency. H. Schultz stated that he didn't see how that was different than the situation is now. R. Tuschner stated that if someone is there 40 hours a week, and they are there from 8 to 10 in the morning and no one interrupts them; they will be able to get 2-2 1/2 hours of work done versus where someone continually interrupts them and they only get 1-1 1/2 hours. E. Helwig spoke about billing, the process, and the time of 4-5 hours for one person to complete it. Dennis Rossa stated a solution: full time, if they need additional help at a certain time, go get it. Someone asked what technology was available to help. E. Helwig stated that this is even using the technology, moving into the 21st century; the Town has grown; things are changing; we have a lot more issues that the Town has to deal with. Discussion continued on technology and a new computer. J. Rossa stated that she is scheduled to work 40 hours a week, but works overtime all the time. If this is a concern that the pay and the hourly wage, maybe the option would be to put them on salary. They would get the same pay if

they work 40 hours a week or 50 hours a week. S. Rossa asked if we could move to vote. R. Tuschner did not want to cut anyone off. E. Klonecki asked what kind of computer system we have. B. Killian stated we have Windows XP and no one knows the age of the computer. We are looking into updating. I. Pronschinske talked about the changes, computer purchased 8 years ago, the amount of information on it, the previous clerk getting hurt, Elva coming in and starting from zero, another clerk coming in to help her, and a lot of challenges for the last 3-4 years. We are trying to get up to speed. Jeff Bawek asked if you would consider hiring the clerk and keeping the treasurer on, at least for one election period; to see what is needed as far as workload. The treasurer's workload seems to come at a certain time of the year, and it's a lot; it may be overwhelming for the clerk to get both jobs done. Keep the treasurer on for one term after you hire someone for the clerk. It's something to think about. Duane Suchla stated that it seems they are putting in an awful lot of hours for a handful of employees. He spoke about his operation, his daughter doing an excellent job hands on, every slip, everything you talked about, and doesn't put in anytime close to those kind of hours. It seems as if something is out of hand, and I don't know why. E. Helwig invited the residents to come in anytime to observe. D. Suchla stated that that would be the same as you coming in to watch my daughter. Someone spoke about it being a technology issue; we need someone coming out of college or someone who just got the up-to-date information in their head. Kerry Suchla called for the vote. A motion was made by Darlene Rossa and seconded by Chad Rossa to combine the clerk and treasurer as one position and have it be a hired position. R. Tuschner asked if everyone understood the motion. Mike Chitko asked for clarification; that we are voting on eliminating the elected positions and replacing with a hired position. D. Rossa clarified it will be on the ballot, to combine the clerk and treasurer and have them a hired position. Make it one position and hire it. R. Tuschner stated to remember: in this motion, at this meeting we can combine the positions, it is over and done with, but if it is to be an appointed position, it will go on the ballot in November of 2014 for the people to vote yea or nay on it being elected or being appointed. So you remember that. The first part, the combining is done at tonight's meeting, either yes or no. But whether it is elected or hired will be made known to the board after the election in November of 2014, because it will be a ballot or a referendum. I. Pronschinske stated that you are voting here to combine the position. Then if you decide that, this fall it will be on the ballot in November to either be appointed or elected. D. Rossa asked if she could specify it to be a full time position; if the two are combined, it will be for a full time position, not a part-time, a full time position. R. Tuschner stated, that is understood. He then asked if this will be by a simple yea or nay voice vote before we take the vote on the motion. How many want a vote by acclamation; how many of you want to vote by ballot. By acclamation, voice vote, say yea. Loud yea. How many want to vote by a ballot vote. No response. R. Tuschner announced that it would be by a voice vote. Discussion is done. We will call for the vote. All those in favor of the motion please signify by saying aye. Loud aye. Opposed. A few aye and nay. The motion is carried.

Any Other Business:

H. Schultz asked a question about the 2 step process that was just outlined. We could have a situation. Now we know it will be a combined position, but we would still have a vote in November that makes it, that continues to keep it an elected position. R. Tuschner stated to keep it an elected position or an appointed position. You still have that option. The reason for that option is we are under 2,500 population, by statutes. He asked for any other discussion. D. Schank asked if we decide to go for the elected position, that would be elected the following spring. R. Tuschner stated that that individual would be elected in the April 2015 election, the January caucus; if it is appointed then whoever is on the board would hire that individual in 2015. This stays in effect through the term of everyone that is in office right now. I. Pronschinske stated that all of our terms are up next April 15th. R. Tuschner again asked if there was any other business to be conducted at this meeting. A motion for adjournment is in order.

A motion was made by Darlene Rossa and seconded by Ron Grulkowski to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Killian
Town of Arcadia Clerk