



# 2023 Annual Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting is a unique tradition that takes place on the 3rd Tuesday of April every year. Unlike a regular Town Board meeting, the Annual meeting is a grassroots event that often involves motions and voting by Town residents.

Agenda for the evening:

- Call to Order
- Approval of the minutes from the April 2022 Annual Meeting
- Financial Review
- Motion to recommend the purchase of parcel 0608-284-8055-0 by the Town for \$50 for the purposes of transferring the ownership of the parcel to the Town from the County
- Discussion and Potential Action on matters of interest to town residents (discussions are subject to a motion and a second by a town resident)
- Adjournment

## **Vision Statement and Guiding Principles**

Created through two strategic planning sessions held by the Town Board, staff, committees, and commissions on November 11, 2017 and February 17, 2018, the following Vision Statement and Guiding Principles were created.

### **Town of Verona Vision Statement**

***To maintain the Town as an independent, financially sustainable, safe, and healthy rural community.***

### **Guiding principles**

1. Create a welcoming and inclusive community
2. Provide efficient services
3. Be fiscally responsible
4. Anticipate and plan for growth
5. Protect and enhance cultural and natural resources
6. Maintain open and transparent government
7. Coordinate and collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions/key partners

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Mark Geller  
Chair

Tom Mathies  
1<sup>st</sup> Supervisor

Dave Lonsdorf  
2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisor

Mike Duerst  
3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisor

Deb Paul  
4<sup>th</sup> Supervisor

**TOWN STAFF**

Sarah Gaskell  
Planner/Administrator

Teresa Withee  
Clerk/Treasurer

Chris Barnes  
Public Works Director

Mark Judd  
Road Patrolman

John Crook  
Building Inspector

Marilyn Rybowskiak  
Office Manager

Nick Laird  
Assessor

**CONTACT INFO:**

7669 County HWY PD  
Verona, WI 53593  
608-845-7187  
Open 8AM-2PM  
Monday - Friday

**SIGN UP FOR THE  
TOWN INFO EMAIL LIST AT:**

[www.town.verona.wi.us](http://www.town.verona.wi.us)

The Town has several commission and committees that help further the work of the Town. Thanks to the following people for dedicating their time to our community. Membership is current as of 4/14/23.

Plan Commission

Mark Geller, Chair  
Lori Lukens  
Sarah Slack  
Tom Mathies  
Haley Saalsaa-Miller

Public Works

Mike Duerst, Chair  
Brett Lindell  
Manfred Enberg  
John Senseman  
Russ Swiggum

Natural and Recreational Areas

Bill Keen, Chair  
Dave Lonsdorf  
Jo Tucker  
Rosemary Bodolay  
Kirk Feller

Financial Sustainability

Tom Mathies, Chair  
Laura Dreger  
John Senseman  
Doug Wolf

Ordinance

Tom Mathies, Chair  
Meredith Stier  
Bob Rego

EMS

Terry Schnapp  
Sue Luginbuhl

Senior Services

Deb Paul



There are any number of ways to volunteer with the Town from serving on committees to helping with elections. For more information, please contact the Town Hall at 608-845-7187.

## **Town Meetings**

Revised by Philip J. Freeburg, J.D., and  
David Hinds, Professor Emeritus, UW Extension. February 2018

### **Introduction**

The town meeting is a meeting of the electors of a town to exercise powers directly. It descends from meetings in the earliest settlements in New England and distinguishes towns from other Wisconsin governments. Unlike towns, village, city, county, and state governments act solely through elected representatives. In Wisconsin, town electors may exercise their unique powers via an annual town meeting, or at special town meetings called for specific purposes.

Towns may exercise only those powers granted by Wisconsin Statutes. Specific powers of a meeting of a town's electors can be found in Section 60.10 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This fact sheet will review law regarding both the annual town meeting and special town meetings. Suggestions for how to conduct town meetings for various actions, such as setting the town levy, are also included. Remember the town meeting is a meeting of a town's electors—that is, the people—and is not a meeting of the town board. While town board members attend the town meeting, it is not a meeting of the governing body, and is thus not covered under the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law.

### **Powers of the Town Meeting**

The powers that may be exercised by the people at a town meeting, and that are binding on the town, are enumerated in Wis. Stat. § 60.10. Three categories of town meeting action are authorized:

1. The town meeting may exercise powers directly under Wis. Stat. § 60.10(1)
2. The town meeting may grant the town board authority to act on some things (which the board may decide not to do) under Wis. Stat. § 60.10(2)
3. The town meeting may authorize the appropriation of funds for specific purposes under Wis. Stat. § 60.10(3)

The town meeting may act on only those subjects that Wisconsin Statutes specifically grant it the power to do so. Actions on other matters have no legal effect at all, and thus are advisory only.

### **Direct Powers**

A town's electors may exercise certain granted powers directly at a town meeting, such as:

- Levy taxes to be spent by the town. The meeting may either levy a dollar amount—say \$50,000, or set a tax rate—say one mill, or a dollar per thousand, on the taxable property in the town. This is the most important power of the town meeting.
- Fix compensation for town offices.
- Combine certain town offices, such as clerk with treasurer or clerk with assessor, or make some town offices part-time.
- Establish or abolish the office of constable.
- Establish election of town board members by means of numbered seats.
- Increase the size of the town board, if the town's population is 2,500 or more, and provide for the appointment of the office of town clerk, treasurer or combined clerk-treasurer.

### **Grant of Authority**

Electors at the town meeting may also vote to give certain grants of authority to the town board. Grants of authority may be "general and continuing," or be of limited scope, or for a specific time. Wis. Stat. § 60.10(2), lists eleven areas where a town meeting may grant authority to the town board. Some examples are:

- Delegate to the town board the authority to levy the property tax to be used for town purposes.
- Exercise village powers for increased regulatory authority.
- Purchase land for town purposes; purchase, lease, or construct buildings; and dispose of town real property.
- Authorize the town to exercise zoning authority in counties with a zoning code using village powers.

The town board, as a legislative body, may decide not to do what the town meeting has authorized, or to do it in a manner different from what the people at the meeting had in mind. However, the board cannot exceed the authority granted to them. No recourse is provided if the town board does not spend the money as the meeting wished, but electors may withdraw a grant of authority if the town board does not do what was intended. The people may also choose to replace town board members at the next election.

### **Authorize to Appropriate Money**

The town meeting may authorize the board to appropriate money for certain specific purposes, such as conservation of natural resources by the town or a nonprofit organization, and for civic functions listed in § 60.23(6), or a rural numbering system.

DRAFT MINUTES of the TOWN OF VERONA

**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Town of Verona Town Hall, 7669 County Highway PD, Verona

The 2022 Annual Town Meeting was held on Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at the Town Hall, 7669 County Highway PD. Notice for the meeting was provided via the town website as well as posted in the Town Hall.

Board Members present: Chair Mark Geller, Supervisors Tom Mathies, Mike Duerst and Deb Paul

Board Members absent: Dave Lonsdorf

Staff present: Planner/Administrator Sarah Gaskell, Public Works Director Chris Barnes, Clerk/Treasurer Teresa Withee, Office Manager Marilyn Rybowskiak and Road Patrolman Mark Judd

Others: See sign in sheet

1. Chair Mark Geller called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He gave an overview of the purpose and tradition of the annual town meeting. He presented the year in review and the 2021 financials and reported that the town remains debt free. Chair Geller recognized staff, board members, committees and commissions for their hard work throughout the year and reviewed the 2022 town board work plan.
2. Motion by Mike Duerst to approve the minutes from the 2021 annual town meeting, second by Deb Paul. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
3. Motion by Tom Mathies to approve November 15, 2022 for the 2023 Levy approval, second by Mike Duerst. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
4. Discussion and Possible Action on matters of interest to town residents:
  - a. Deb Paul stated she spoke with a number of residents during her campaign and their biggest concerns were the availability of high-speed internet and the speed limit on old PB by Wesner Drive. Chair Geller stated that there is a possibility of using ARPA funds to address high speed internet and the town can continue to reach out to the county regarding the speed limit.
  - b. Mike Duerst stated he has served under several town chairs, but he feels that Chair Geller is one of the best he has ever worked with. Motion by Mike Duerst to increase the Board Chair salary by \$500 per year, second by Deb Paul. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
  - c. John Senseman acknowledged Doug Maxwell's many contributions to the town over the years he served on the board and various committees. Chair Geller echoed his sentiment and said he will be missed.
5. Motion by Deb Paul to adjourn the 2022 Annual Meeting, second by John Senseman. Motion carried by unanimous vote; meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Prepared by: Teresa Withee, Clerk/Treasurer