

Citizens for Education in Town Governance

Lac du Flambeau

Planning

January 10, 2024

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Lac du Flambeau Planning

INTRODUCTION

January 10, 2024. At a town board meeting on January 10, 2023, Supervisor Hanson encouraged the board to move ahead on long-term planning. There has been no follow-up discussion by the board since then ([Agenda](#), [Audio i](#), [Audio ii](#), [Minutes](#)). The minutes of the meeting include the following statement (italics added).

Supervisor Hanson urges the Board to commit to a long-term financial plan. He suggests UW Extension may have resources.

April 17 and 18, 2023. The town board discussed long-term planning at a special board meeting on April 17, 2023 ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#)), and at the annual meeting of electors the following day, April 18, 2023 ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Draft Minutes](#)).

The April 17 meeting was devoted specifically to establishing a twelve-month planning calendar as a restart to planning while at the April 18 meeting, electors and board members reinforced the need to work together as well as look ahead.

Previously, near the end of 2021 to March 2022, the town board initiated an undefined approach to establish a strategic plan for the town, including holding forums to solicit public input on the future of the town. A statement of the board's intent was mailed with tax notices.

See the chronology below for details.

CHRONOLOGY

September 1, 2021. Minutes of the September 1, 2021, town board meeting include the following statement. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#))

Strategic Planning Committee Formation: Supervisor Cobb asked for this to be on the agenda. Supervisor Cobb stated she would like to meet as a board first to see where we are going. Discussion could lead into forming a committee to see how we can proceed. Supervisor Hanson stated he would like to have some training on strategic planning. Supervisor Cobb stated Brian Gauthier could come to our next meeting to explain just what strategic planning is. Chairman Gaulke will have this placed on our next agenda.

October 6, 2021. Minutes of the October 6, 2021, town board meeting include the following statement. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#)).

Strategic Planning: Supervisor Cobb wanted this on the agenda to discuss setting up a meeting to discuss strategic planning. She was not able to attend today but would try to call in. No call was received. Supervisor Hanson stated the handout Supervisor Cobb presented stated the training was for September 13th and 14th. Our next regular board meeting would not be until September 15, 2021. We are waiting to hear from Supervisor Cobb and perhaps we will have to set up a Special Meeting to discuss this agenda item.

October 20, 2021. Minutes of the October 20, 2021, town board meeting include the following statement. Click for a copy of the [Steps of Strategic Planning](#) noted in the minutes. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#)).

Strategic Planning: Brian Gauthier was planning to give us a presentation on strategic planning today but was unable to attend. He had given Supervisor Cobb a printout of Steps of Strategic Planning to pass to the board members and electors. Mr. Gaulke stated we will revisit this issue at our next town board meeting.

November 3, 2021. Minutes of the November 3, 2021, town board meeting include the following statement ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#)). Click to see [letters](#) noted in the minutes that were submitted to Mr. Gauthier.

Strategic Planning: Brian Gauthier was planning to give us a presentation on strategic planning today but it is hard for him to come to evening meetings. He has given the board meeting option dates and Tuesday November, 23, 2021 at 8:30 was the date chosen. He would like letters sent to him stating a scenario that if you were away from Lac du Flambeau for 20 years and came back what improvements you have seen and what ideas you would like to see happen in the next 5-10 years. He would like this information by the November 23rd meeting. We will schedule a Special Town Board Meeting for that date.

Following the November 3, 2021. After the November 3 meeting, the town's website briefly included a request for the public to submit suggestions to Supervisor Cobb regarding strategic planning. Click here for [documents submitted](#).

November 23, 2021. At a special meeting on November 23, 2021, the board directed the deputy clerk to update data about the town and decided to hold "forums" so the public can comment on the future of the town. In addition, the board authorized mailing a statement with tax bills to inform the community about the intent to establish a plan and to encourage community input. Minutes of the special meeting on November 23, 2021, include the following statement. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#))

Chairman Gaulke explained the purpose of this meeting today is looking into what Strategic Planning is all about.
Supervisor Cobb has a printout which she wanted to share.

A DREAM WRITTEN DOWN WITH A DATE BECOMES A GOAL
A GOAL BROKEN DOWN INTO STEPS BECOMES A PLAN
A PLAN BACKED BY ACTION BECOMES REALITY.

Brian Gauthier will be giving us information on strategic planning ideas. Some points he brought to the board is a plan is not a 3 ring binder item, it should be a breathing document.

Strategic can be removed from the title and called a community plan. What we need to do to keep our community in balance.

Brian asked what our mandates: Chairman Gaulke responded:

elections
fire and ambulance service
library
sanitation
road maintenance and safety
Broadband issues

Letters have been received from about 20 residents stating they do not see the need for strategic planning.

Suggestions were made to perhaps update our Comprehensive Plan, send out surveys to the community, hold Special Town Board meetings for input similar to what we are having today, workgroups to bring back information to the Town Board.

The deputy clerk will look at the comprehensive plan and see what could be updated. She did mention that per ordinance there is a process in which this can be done by the zoning dept.

Motion by Supervisor Hanson seconded by Supervisor Cobb to see if the clerk could get an informational notice put into the tax bills and letter that will be going out shortly to inform the electors and tax payers that they should watch for upcoming forums. Motion carried.

January 12, 2022. On January 12, 2021 the town chair stated that the town's zoning administrator, Sue Ackland, will leave the position in a few months. After brief discussion,

the board approved a motion to advertise for a full-time replacement. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#)).

January 20, 2022. *Citizens for Education in Town Governance* (CETG) submitted a [letter](#) to the board encouraging the board to determine what is best for the town regarding the administration of zoning **before** filling the position.

February 2, 2022. Following discussion of the letter at the town board meeting on February 2, 2022, the board opted to proceed with filling the position. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#))

February 17, 2022. At a town board workshop on February 17, 2022, the board identified several projects that it believes may qualify for ARPA grant funds. These include repairing a roof leak at the town hall, establishing a shelter to temporarily house stray dogs, repairing roads, installing technology in the town hall to enhance the communication of town business, and paying for trucks that have been ordered. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#))

February 23, 2022. *Citizens for Education in Town Governance* submitted a [letter](#) to the town board encouraging the board to add the priorities it identified on February 17 "to the board's strategic planning process so they will be considered in the future regardless of ARPA funding."

March 2, 2022. At a board meeting on March 2, 2022, the town chair responded to a letter submitted by *Citizens for Education in Town Governance* asking when the board will hold the community forums it announced in January. The town chair's response was *in the future*. ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#))

March 6, 2022. The town board received a [letter \(dated March 6, 2022\)](#) from Jim Sommerfeldt recommending the board use ARPA funds to hire a consultant specializing on fire departments and future planning.

March 23, 2022. The board scheduled another workshop for March 23, 2022 to continue discussing how to spend ARPA funds ([Agenda](#)), but the workshop was cancelled due to inclement weather.

BACKGROUND

Initially, the Lac du Flambeau Town Board approved [Comprehensive Plan Ordinance 08-01](#) on December 17, 2008, including a commitment to review the plan every five years and update it no less than every ten years (Page 80 of the plan).

To learn about the original public hearing, see "[LdF town supervisors approve Comprehensive Plan for town development](#)" in the December 26, 2008, edition of the Lakeland Times.

Town of Lac du Flambeau Comprehensive Plan

Adopted
December 2008



Prepared by:
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The [Wisconsin Department of Administration website](#) includes much information on comprehensive planning.

Sometimes called the "Smart Growth" initiative, [Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Program](#) was created in 1999 to codify what a comprehensive plan in Wisconsin must contain. Local governments at the time were already authorized to create land use and economic development plans, but many local governments did not exercise their authority to plan or often set their plans aside once completed. Moreover, ensuing development often bore little relation to the plan that was adopted. "Smart Growth" was created to resolve such issue ([Wisconsin Briefs: Legislative Reference Bureau](#)).

For information on how the law was subsequently weakened, see "[Wisconsin Weakens Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Law](#)" (Axley, May 27, 2010).

October 17, 2017. The Town Board held a budget workshop on October 17, 2017 to review a draft budget for 2018 ([Agenda](#), [Audio Recording](#), [Minutes](#)). During the workshop, the town clerk acknowledged a [letter](#) from the [North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission](#) stating how the commission could help the town meet its legal requirement to update its comprehensive plan and what such assistance will cost.

November 16, 2017. At the town's hearing for the 2018 budget on November 16, 2017, the town clerk indicated the 2018 budget does not include funds for updating the comprehensive plan ([Agenda](#), [Audio Recording](#), Minutes Pending).

February 7, 2018. At the Town Board meeting on February 7, 2018, the Town Board approved a motion accepting the services of an intern affiliated with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, [Center for Land Use Education](#), to help update the comprehensive plan. ([Agenda](#), [Audio Recording](#), [Minutes](#)). The minutes of the meeting include the following statement, italics added.

Mr. Giese approached the board to see if he would be able to do a 300 hour internship program thru the town. He explained this is the last step he needs to complete his degree. His major is Land Use Planning. The board felt it was a great opportunity to help with updating of the zoning ordinance and also work on the comprehensive plan that needs updating. Motion by Mr. Mayer seconded by Mr. Hanson to accept Gustav Giese's internship proposal. Motion carried.

November 20, 2018. When responding to a question raised about the revisions at a budget hearing for the 2019 town budget on November 20, 2018, town officials stated that revisions to the town's Comprehensive Plan are still being made but will be completed soon. ([Agenda](#), [Audio Recording](#), Minutes Pending)

January 23, 2019. On January 23, 2019, the Lac du Flambeau Zoning Committee and the Lac du Flambeau Town Board met jointly and held public hearing ([Public Notice](#)) on proposed [Amendment 19-01](#) and update to the [Lac du Flambeau Comprehensive Plan](#). Three maps related to the amendment, identified here as [Map 1](#), [Map 2](#), and [Map 3](#), were noted at the meeting.

Following discussion and public comment, the Zoning Committee approved the Comprehensive Plan Amendment and adopted resolution 19-01 recommending approval of the amendment by the Town Board (Agenda, Audio, Minutes).

Immediately after the public hearing, the Town Board held a regular meeting at which it waived a First Reading of Ordinance 19-01, an ordinance to adopt an amendment and update to the town's comprehensive plan (Agenda, Audio, Minutes).

February 6, 2019. With a split vote, on February 6, 2019, the town board waived the Second Reading of Ordinance 19-01 and adopted an amendment and update to the town's Comprehensive Plan. Matt Gaulke and Chris Mayer voted yes, while Bob Hanson voted *no* ([Agenda](#), [Audio](#), [Minutes](#)). Mr. Hanson's vote is explained in part by a [letter](#) he submitted to the town chair on January 21, 2019.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE & GOALS

The [Lac du Flambeau Comprehensive Plan](#) was created to help the town board implement a variety of goals, objectives, and policies related to citizens' concerns about growth, development

and preservation of the community as well as aid in making future land use decisions. (Plan, Page 3).

The goals in the original plan are listed below. None of them were changed or eliminated as a result of the public hearing and approval of Amendment 19-01 on January 23, 2019, nor were new goals added.

Housing Goals (Plan, Page 13)

1. Provide an adequate supply of land for housing that is affordable to Town residents of all income levels.
2. Restrict residential development in unsuitable areas.

Transportation Goals (Plan, Page 18)

1. Provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety to meet the needs of all citizens, including disabled citizens.
2. Support and maintain a safe and efficient Town road system.

Natural, Cultural, And Agricultural Resources' Goals (Plan, Page 36)

1. Preserve and protect the unique natural resources of the Town that are key elements of the "Northwoods" character, which includes wetlands, groundwater, and forests.
2. Protect economically productive forestry areas.
3. Preserve, protect, and enhance shorelands in the Town.
4. Protect important historical and archeological sites

Economic Development Goals (Plan, Page 55)

1. Promote the expansion and stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities.
2. Support residential development that maintains a "Northwoods" community character.

Land Use Goals (Plan, Page 73)

1. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
2. Promote the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services.
3. Encourage land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.
4. Promote and regulate development to preserve the "Northwoods" character of the Town.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal (Plan, Page 75)

Cooperate with all levels of government on issues of mutual concern, including natural resource protection, transportation, land use, utilities, education, and human services.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Comprehensive Planning](#), (Wisconsin Department of Administration)

[Frequently Asked Questions about Comprehensive Planning & Smart Growth](#) (University of Wisconsin Extension Local Government Center)

[Wisconsin's New Comprehensive Planning & Smart Growth Law \(Summary\)](#) (University of Wisconsin Extension Local Government Center)

[Maps & Attachments](#) to Lac du Flambeau's Comprehensive Plan

[Summary of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Requirements](#) (September 17, 2007, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission)