

VILLAGE OF MCFARLAND

Joint Village Board and Town of Dunn Board Minutes

Thursday, June 12, 2025 - 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Village President Brassington called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm in the Community Room of the McFarland Municipal Center as a joint meeting between the McFarland Village Board and Town Board for the Town of Dunn.

2. ROLL CALL.

Village Board members present: Village Trustee Kathy Annen, Village Trustee Ken Boyd, Village President Stephanie Brassington, Village Trustee Luke Fessler, Village Trustee Alisa Leamy, Village Trustee Miguel Peña, Village Trustee Lowell J. Prill.

Village Board members not present: None.

Village Staff present: Administrator Matt Schuenke and Community/Economic Development Director Andrew Bremer.

Town Board members present: Chair Greb, Supervisor Hodgson, and Supervisor Gausman.

Town Board members not present: None.

Town Staff present: Clerk/Treasurer-Business Manager Cathy Hasslinger and Deputy Clerk/Office Manager Erik Greenfield.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Minutes of the April 29, 2025 Joint Town of Dunn Board and Village of McFarland Board meeting.

Motion by President Brassington, second by Trustee Prill, for the Village Board to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2025 Joint Town of Dunn Board and Village of McFarland Board meeting. Motion carries 7 - 0 - 0 by acclamation.

Motion by Supervisor Hodgson, second by Supervisor Gausman, for the Town Board to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2025 Joint Town of Dunn Board and Village of McFarland Board meeting. Motion carries 3 - 0 - 0 by acclamation.

4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES.

a. This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the Village Board for items that are not on the agenda. Please remember this is a hybrid meeting conducted in person and through the Zoom online meeting platform. Meeting attendees wishing to address the Board about items not on the agenda may do so at this time. Zoom attendees should type their name and address in the Question and Answer feature within the Zoom online meeting platform at this time. Members of the public who are present in person and wish to address the Board should fill out a public comment form and turn into the meeting chairperson. When you are called upon to speak, state your name, address, and provide your comments to the Board for their consideration. Please adhere to the 3-minute time limit. Additionally, you may send your public comments to

village.clerk@mcfarland.wi.us to be included as part of the meeting.

Members of the public may also speak during their selected agenda item as they designate on the public comment form or in the Question and Answer feature on Zoom.

1. Wayne Rayfield (2879 Exchange Street) expressed his opposition to potential annexation under the boundary agreement. He said he was inspired by a field trip to Calvin DeWitt's property when he was a child and that is ultimately why he moved his family to the Town of Dunn. He said he had concerns with projects that could destroy natural areas.

2. Roger Zoch (3961 Ruth Court) wondered if there would be any restrictions on development for land that could be annexed in his area by Babcock Park.

3. Jim St. Vincent (2889 Bible Camp Road), who serves on the boards of the Yahara Lakes Association and the Clean Lakes Alliance, implored board members to take care of the watershed.

4. Calvin DeWitt (2508 Lalor Road) expressed opposition to an extension of the agreement, calling it one-sided in favor of the Village. He said the agreement was not consistent with the Town's comprehensive plan, the Lower Mud Lake protection plan, Dane County parks and open space plan, and the Town as an Agricultural Enterprise Area.

5. Jane Licht (2964 County Highway AB) has lived in the Town for 52 years and is concerned about preserving the wetlands in the annexable area. She said she believes the Town has done a great job of preserving them but the Village has not.

6. Kent Miller (2883 Exchange Street) registered in opposition.

7. John Rothschild (5140 Wild Rye Court) registered in opposition.

8. Tim Bartholow (2887 Exchange Street) thanked the boards for the extraordinary planning they do. He said many residents on Exchange Street have become more aware of issues around the Highway 51 expansion and potential annexation and want to be active participants in those decisions. He said there are ways to be sensitive to the environment while also promoting businesses potentially moving in that would serve the community well.

9. In response to a question from Stuart Albrow about Ed Minihan, Cathy Hasslinger said that Ed was Town of Dunn Chair for 42 years and helped negotiate the 2005 agreement. She said he would be proud of the work we're doing today.

10. Steve Greb (Dunn Town Chair) said he had big shoes to fill when he took over as chair. He thanked the committee that worked on the new agreement and said this had been a good opportunity to learn about each other's communities. He said the collective vision put before them is the right thing to do with a chance for orderly development and planning for the future, and he looked forward to advancing this agreement.

11. Stephanie Brassington (McFarland Village President) thanked Andrew Bremer and Cathy Hasslinger for their work on the agreement. She also thanked members of both boards, including newly elected Village Board members who had to get up to speed quickly on this agreement.

5. BUSINESS.

a. *Discussion regarding a Cooperative Plan between the Town of Dunn and Village of McFarland.*

Matt Schuenke (McFarland Village Administrator) said they had been working for three years on a new agreement. He said having an agreement would help provide guidance on a reasonable growth plan. He said despite different visions between the municipalities, "we both have similar standards for things that protect our wetlands and stormwater. We follow the same county rules in doing so and exercise similar judgment in conservation efforts, where applicable."

Andrew Bremer (McFarland Community & Economic Development Director) said the boards met in January to approve an authorization resolution, made presentations in April with a public meeting and public hearing, and hosted additional individual board meetings in May and June. He said many provisions of the agreement follow guidelines from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). He said they will send all documentation to DOA, which has 90 days to approve the agreement. He said the draft agreement was updated from 30 years to 20 years to match the current agreement. Potential annexation in the Future Highway 51 Growth Area will be permitted after 10 years (shortened from 12), at which point residents would be able to petition for annexation to the Village if they chose to do so. He said the agreement reflects consideration for compactness and existing comprehensive plans. He said it includes the sale of a parcel on Sleepy Hollow Road from the Town to the Village, with the parcel to be added to the Village parks system and to prohibit the launch of motorized boats. He said the Eastern Expansion Area identified in the agreement is consistent with the Village's 2023 and 2008 plans and that the Town is restricted from purchasing conservation easements in that area. He emphasized that no properties anywhere are annexed into village as of now with this agreement and that any future annexations would be required to follow applicable state statutes. He said the state will allow the creation of town islands in the boundary agreement; if parcels are town islands once the agreement expires, they will be required to annex into the Village. He also noted some areas where the Village could add sidewalks or paths and that they are currently adding a trail from the Yahara River Bridge to Exchange Street.

Cathy Hasslinger (Dunn Town Clerk) responded to questions raised during the comment period. As for what would be developed in the Highway 51 Growth Area, that will be determined in the future by the Village comprehensive planning process, she said a property owner who owns numerous parcels in the area may have vision for those parcels but that is not yet known.

Andrew Bremer said another comprehensive plan update is coming the next two years, and they would likely budget for a more detailed neighborhood plan between 2027 and 2035. He said residents would be allowed to participate in the process and help shape

the plan.

Ken Boyd (McFarland Trustee) said, "I'd like to commend the Town of Dunn for their commitment to the preservation of this area's natural and cultural assets. The Village of McFarland is no less committed to the protection and preservation of those areas. It is our slogan, as you see behind us, we are naturally connected. We actually have done well to protect these assets, and it is not in our nature to do otherwise." Relating to the Town's Purchase of Development Rights program, he said he didn't understand buying up farmland to protect it from development while allowing farmers to dump chemicals and destroy the groundwater. He questioned whether a few homes there would be any worse.

Miguel Peña (McFarland Trustee) said, "Thank you for everyone that is here and the letter that we have received from the different groups in support of ensuring that we take in conservation, the preservation of the water, the ecological, and also a lot of the Indian mounds that we have in the area. So as we mentioned before, we do not have a plan of what that would be, but I can mention we do take that in conservation and it's part of McFarland to keep green spaces and preserve, as well. I'm sure we will do our due diligence to ensure that we plan accordingly – that's why we have plenty of time – and that we would do our best to preserve those wetlands."

Luke Fessler (McFarland Trustee) thanked the Town of Dunn and said the boundary agreement allows them to understand how to grow with each other. He said we can hopefully keep housing prices down while also providing high-quality services, parks, and business opportunities.

Kathy Annen (McFarland Trustee) Kathy said, "There were some opportunities in the (Town of Dunn) brochure that were mentioned about working on grant funding to expand natural areas. I would just encourage the Town of Dunn people, if you have expertise in that area and you could help us with that, I'm sure we would appreciate that."

Lowell Prill (McFarland Trustee) said we need to move forward into future with this agreement.

Alisa Leamy (McFarland Trustee) said, "I moved to McFarland because of its proximity to lakes, parks, bike paths, all of the things that connect us naturally. And that is very important to me, to keep the wetlands and the environment as close to as is currently but also allowing the Village to grow as we need to."

In response to a Trustee's question, Cathy Hasslinger said when the Town does a conservation easement, it's because the land has scored well and it has to follow certain practices and face inspection every year by the land trust and the Town. She said the grant programs mentioned previously are Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grants and that, if the Village could tap into those, they will become stewards of land the Town has protected for a long time.

Rosalind Gausman (Town Supervisor) responded to a comment from Tammy Rayfield

asking for the agreement to be changed so that it would not include her neighborhood in the US HWY 51 growth area. She explained that the people in growth areas are in control of what happens and must have a majority in agreement before they can be annexed. She said that the interests of the property owners on exchange street are protected.

Jeff Hodgson (Town Supervisor) said we are fortunate to live in a unique area of Dane County. He said diversity is good and that it's OK for municipalities to have different visions. He said he serves on the Oregon Area Fire EMS Commission and they work together with several different municipalities, that it's "we," not "us vs. them."

- b. Discussion and action on Village Board Resolution 2025-13, a resolution ratifying and approving a purchase agreement for parcel 061010289711 located on Sleepy Hollow Road, McFarland, WI. (Village Board action only)

Motion by Trustee Fessler, second by Trustee Peña, to approve Village Board Resolution 2025-13, a resolution ratifying and approving a purchase agreement for parcel 061010289711 located on Sleepy Hollow Road, McFarland, WI. Motion carries 7 - 0 - 0 by acclamation.

- c. Discussion and action on Town Board Resolution 2025-08, a resolution ratifying and approving a purchase agreement for parcel 061010289711 located on Sleepy Hollow Road, McFarland, WI. (Town Board action only)

Hasslinger stated that the Town Electors adopted the resolution as part of the Town's Annual Meeting held in April of 2025. The Parks Commission for the Town also approved the sale.

Motion by Supervisor Gausman, second by Supervisor Hodgson, to approve Town Board Resolution 2025-08, a resolution ratifying and approving a purchase agreement for parcel 061010289711 located on Sleepy Hollow Road, McFarland, WI. Motion carries 3 - 0 - 0 by acclamation.

- d. Discussion and action on Town Board Resolution 2025-09, a resolution approving a Cooperative Plan between the Town of Dunn and Village of McFarland. (Town Board action only)

Motion by Supervisor Hodgson, second by Supervisor Gausman, to approve Town Board Resolution 2025-09, a resolution approving a Cooperative Plan between the Town of Dunn and Village of McFarland. Motion carries 3 - 0 - 0 by acclamation.

- e. Discussion and action on Village Board Resolution 2025-14, a resolution approving a Cooperative Plan between the Town of Dunn and Village of McFarland. (Village Board action only)

Motion by Trustee Fessler, second by President Brassington, to approve Village Board Resolution 2025-14, a resolution approving a Cooperative Plan between the Town of Dunn and Village of McFarland. Motion carries 7 - 0 - 0 by acclamation.

6. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE.

- a. To be determined.

No future joint meetings were scheduled at this time.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion by President Brassington, second by Trustee Annen, to adjourn the Village Board at 8:13 pm.

Motion by Supervisor Gausman, second by Supervisor Hodgson to adjourn the Town Board at 8:14 pm.

Pursuant to law, written notice of this meeting was given to the public and posted on the public bulletin board in accordance with Open Meetings Law.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew G. Schuenke
Village Administrator