

Join Plan Commissions

Monday, February 29, 2016

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1 The City of Onalaska's Plan Commission, Village of Holmen's Plan Commission, and the Town
2 of Onalaska's Plan Commission are holding a joint meeting for the purpose of discussing a
3 proposed general boundary agreement. The establishment of boundary agreements is pursuant to
4 Wis. Stats. 66.0301. Among the purposes of a general boundary agreement is the establishment
5 of long-term boundaries between the municipalities in order to reduce annexation disputes and to
6 minimize fragmentation and irregular boundaries.

7
8 Item 3 on the agenda was addressed first.

9 10 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

11 12 **Item 3 – Joint Presentation by the City, Village and Town with overview of proposed** 13 **general boundary agreement for the City of Onalaska, Village of Holmen and Town of** 14 **Onalaska (Proposed general boundary agreement available on the City of Onalaska** 15 **website)**

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17 Village of Holmen Administrator Scott Heinig and City of Onalaska Interim Land Use and
18 Development Director Katie Aspenson introduced themselves. Scott said agreements such as
19 this one between the three municipalities are “very, very rare” and that “for two or three
20 communities to ever come together, like we’ve come together tonight, and consensus to build
21 partnership on growth and developments and how we move forward together as a region is a
22 really special opportunity, and that’s what we have here tonight.”

23
24 Katie said the boundary agreement document notes a few policies within it in terms of
25 relationships between the City of Onalaska, Village of Holmen and Town of Onalaska. Katie
26 said the document strives to create a policy of strong communication and respect between all the
27 jurisdictions, and also to ensure that everyone is treated equally when issues arise between the
28 communities. Katie said the general purpose of the agreement is to establish areas within the
29 Town of Onalaska where annexations are acceptable. The Town of Onalaska also will withdraw
30 its pending request before the Wisconsin Department of Administration to incorporate as a
31 village. The agreement also will establish a framework for which a potential future
32 incorporation effort could occur if it is wanted by the public. It also establishes a foundation for
33 further collaboration between the three communities.

34
35 Scott stressed that this proposed agreement does not transfer property from one community to
36 another, meaning a property located in the Town of Onalaska is not being annexed either into the
37 City of Onalaska or the Village of Holmen. Scott said the agreement only outlines the
38 procedures that the three communities will follow regarding annexation, utility extensions, and if
39 a potential incorporation were to ever occur. Scott showed those in attendance a map of the
40 current boundaries – the purple-shaded areas represent the Town of Onalaska; the blue-shaded
41 areas represent the City of Onalaska; and the yellow-shaded areas represent the Village of
42 Holmen. Scott referred to the two red lines (western and eastern) on the map and said the area

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43 between the two lines has been classified as the “central corridor.” Any property located within
44 the central corridor, unless it has been highlighted by another color, may be annexed both by the
45 City of Onalaska and the Village of Holmen in any legal manner under State of Wisconsin law.
46 Scott said that in most cases this will entail a private property owner or a group of property
47 owners petitioning for annexation. Scott described the areas shown in dark purple as “sensitive
48 areas.” These are areas that already are predominately developed, and Scott said the agreement
49 states that these areas may only be annexed by unanimous petition. To be specific, all the
50 property owners that would be part of the annexation would have to support the petition for
51 annexation. Scott said the agreement also states that if need be, an island could be created in
52 these areas because the area is complex and running utilities to an area can be challenging if an
53 area is not necessarily adjacent to a property owner seeking annexation.

54
55 Scott referred to a blue section on the map and said the agreement states this area will not be
56 annexed because Town of Onalaska officials believe a rural development pattern out from the
57 existing Village of Holmen boundary was more appropriate for its identity. Scott said the
58 agreement states that even though this area is located within the central corridor, annexation will
59 not occur there until at least 65 percent shaded in pink is developed. Scott noted that the Sun
60 Valley subdivision is excluded from the central corridor and is an island that the Village of
61 Holmen has agreed not to annex. Scott referred to the area shaded in green and said that if the
62 Town of Onalaska were to ever petition for incorporation, it would agree not to incorporate the
63 eastern side of the town. However, the agreement states that Town of Onalaska could pursue
64 incorporation of the “sensitive areas” on the map as part of incorporating west of the central
65 corridor. Scott said 65 percent of the voters in this area would first need to support the
66 possibility of incorporation through a referendum. Scott said this is the only instance in which
67 the Town of Onalaska would support and finance the possibility of an incorporation moving
68 forward. The area shaded in green then would become part of the central corridor. Scott
69 referred to an area outlined in green and said annexation may occur only by unanimous petition.
70 Scott said the agreement states no annexation will occur either to the west or the east of the
71 central corridor for 10 years. Scott noted that there are Town of Onalaska islands located within
72 the central corridor and said the three communities have agreed that individuals either can
73 choose annexation or remain in the Town of Onalaska.

74
75 Katie said the agreement states that utilities such as water and sewer may be extended into the
76 roads network (public rights-of-ways), per State of Wisconsin Statutes. Katie addressed the rules
77 for potential incorporation, noting that the Town of Onalaska would not support annexation
78 within the central corridor, except for potentially the sensitive area. Katie also said the Town of
79 Onalaska may only support a petition west of the central corridor, commonly known as Brice
80 Prairie, and also in the sensitive areas if there is an advisory referendum that attains 65 percent.
81 Katie said that if a referendum fails to reach 65 percent, the Town of Onalaska agrees not to
82 either finance or support annexation.

83
84 Scott reiterated that the area shaded in green becomes part of the expanded central corridor if

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85 there is 65 percent approval for a petition for incorporation. Scott also reiterated that the
86 agreement is a 10-year agreement, and that all three communities may proceed together in five-
87 year increments thereafter unless a community removes itself in the future after the five-year
88 term.

89

Item 1 – Election of Chairperson for the Joint Plan Commission meeting

90

91 City of Onalaska Mayor Joe Chilsen sought nominations for Chairperson.

92

93 Motion by Craig Breitsprecher, second by City of Onalaska Second District Alderperson Jim
94 Bialecki, to nominate Village of Holmen President Nancy Proctor as Chairperson.

95

96 Mayor Chilsen was nominated.

97

98 Mayor Chilsen declined the nomination.

99

100 Motion by _____, second by _____, to nominate Town of Onalaska Chairperson Rolly Bogert
101 as Chairperson.

102

103 Nancy was named Chairperson by a 10-4 vote.

104

Item 2 – Call to Order and Roll Call

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106 The following individuals were in attendance: City of Onalaska Clerk Cari Burmaster, City of
107 Onalaska Plan Commission member Paul Gleason, City of Onalaska Plan Commission member
108 Skip Temte, City of Onalaska Plan Commission member Craig Breitsprecher, Town of Onalaska
109 Deputy Clerk Mary Rinehart, Town of Onalaska Supervisor Frank Fogel, Town of Onalaska
110 Plan Commission member Gerald Monti, Town of Onalaska Chairperson Rolly Bogert, Town of
111 Onalaska Plan Commission member Doug Shefelbine, Village of Holmen Attorney Brian
112 Weber, Village of Holmen Administrator Scott Heinig, City of Onalaska Interim Land Use and
113 Development Director Katie Aspenson, City of Onalaska Engineer and Plan Commission
114 member Jarrod Holter, City of Onalaska Plan Commission member Andrea Benco, City of
115 Onalaska Second District Alderperson and Plan Commission member Jim Bialecki, Village of
116 Holmen Trustee and Plan Commission member Richard Anderson, Village of Holmen Trustee
117 and Plan Commission member Dawn Kulcinski, Village of Holmen Plan Commission member
118 Rod Stanek, Village of Holmen Plan Commission member Ron Sacia, City of Onalaska Mayor
119 and Plan Commission member Joe Chilsen, Village of Holmen President and Plan Commission
120 member Nancy Proctor, City of Onalaska Attorney Sean O’Flaherty, Town of Onalaska Attorney
121 Greg Stacker.

122

Item 4 – Public Hearing: approximately 6:00 p.m. or immediately following Item 3 on the agenda: Pertaining to a General Boundary Agreement between the City of Onalaska,

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127 **Village of Holmen and Town of Onalaska (Limited to 3 minutes per individual. Input will**
128 **be taken, but this is not a discussion/answer period)**

129

130 Motion by Andrea Benco, second by Dawn Kulcinski, to begin the public hearing.

131

132 On voice vote, motion carried.

133

134 **Patrick Barlow**

135 **907 Dana Lane**

136 **Village of Holmen**

137

138 “I’m just very happy as a village resident that this is moving forward. It gives a clear plan to the
139 municipalities to work together. I always think it’s better to negotiate than to litigate issues.
140 Also, as a [La Crosse] County Board Supervisor for District 22 representing parts of the Village
141 of Holmen and one part of the Town of Holland, I’m very happy that this agreement can take
142 place. It might serve as a model for other municipalities within the county as well as the entire
143 state. Thank you for all the good effort and all the hard work. I hope that this helps this area and
144 the region of the state, and the county for sure, to grow in a productive and a peaceful manner.
145 Thank you.”

146

147 **Ed Rohmeyer**

148 **W7218 Remus Road**

149 **Town of Onalaska**

150

151 Ed noted that he has resided adjacent to the sewer plant for more than 20 years and said there
152 have been changes in the cleaning methods at the plant. Ed said sewage is being spread on the
153 roads before it is sprayed on the fields. Ed said he believed this would be a short-term solution
154 because the sewage would be transported to the City of La Crosse. However, Ed said he has
155 since learned that this will not happen and asked that a better solution be devised because there is
156 a foul odor present.

157

158 **Francis Brown**

159 **N5889 State Trunk Highway 35**

160

161 “I got a copy of [the agreement] and I read it all over, and I still don’t know what it’s all about
162 [because] it’s so complicated in reading. In the second place, I don’t see any reason that
163 somebody who lives near the Village [of Holmen] or the City [of Onalaska] who wants to annex
164 and get water and sewer ... The Town [of Onalaska] is getting all kinds of housing out in the
165 hills. We’re not losing valuation. I think we have to watch about taking people’s wishes about
166 what they want to do. I sure didn’t understand this thing.”

167

168 Nancy called for anyone else wishing to provide input.

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170 Motion by Dawn Kulcinski, second by Rich Anderson, to close the public hearing.

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172 On voice vote, motion carried.

173

174 **Adjournment**

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176 Motion by Ald. Bialecki, second by Andrea Benco, to adjourn.

177

178 On voice vote, motion carried.

179

180

181 Recorded by:

182

183 Kirk Bey