

Town Hall committee may start over

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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Dissatisfied with options offered, members will take another look at community's needs, wish list

The Belgium Town Hall Committee told the Town Board Monday that it isn't enamored with either building that has been offered for a new hall.

The committee will meet at 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 22, to figure out the next step in its quest for new a headquarters.

"We have addressed these two buildings (St. Mary's Lake Church parish center and the Village of Belgium's current offices) only because they became available," Supr. Jim Bichler, chairman of the committee, said.

"We're not sure either one of them fits our needs. We're going to discuss our needs and wants at the meeting."

The meeting will be in the Town Hall, 814 Main St., Belgium. The structure was built in 1894 for \$560 and has undergone few changes. There is no running water and it is not handicapped-accessible. Residents vote in the Belgium Fire Department meeting room.

Divine Savior Parish, which wants to divide the 10 acres it owns at St. Mary's Chapel in Lake Church, offered to sell its handicapped-accessible parish hall, but the building would need considerable renovation to provide offices and a large room for meetings and voting, the committee learned.

The Village of Belgium, which expects to move next spring into a new hall in the New Luxembourg village square near the Luxembourg American Cultural Center, wants to lease its present office space at 195 Commerce St. to the town to offset its costs to maintain that portion of the building, which also houses the fire department.

The village currently uses 22% of the building, while the Belgium Fire Department, which is jointly financed by the village and town, uses 78%. The town would pay its share of operating expenses in addition to its share of the fire department's budget, which is currently 60%.

The village has offered a 5-/12-year lease that can be renewed in five-year increments. Town officials have said they want a long-term lease, preferably 20 years.

The proposed lease has been referred to the Town Attorney Michael Herbrand for review.

The following issues were also discussed at the Town Board meeting.

- Town Treasurer Janet Coeur, who was re-elected in April, told the board she will quit if supervisors can find a qualified person to replace her. The board will discuss finding a replacement at its Aug. 5 meeting and may consider changing the position from an elected

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official to an appointed post.

Anyone interested in the job can contact Coeur at 285-0727 or Town Clerk Ginger Murphy at 285-3326 or send an e-mail to townofbelgium@frontier.com.

- A resident on Homestead Drive who lives near a boat launch ramp and parking lot at the end of Highway D told officials Monday that the area is becoming an unsightly dumping ground.

“In the three years I’ve lived there, it has gotten worse,” Dave Shaw said. “There are a lot of items just tossed out. Some are personal hygiene items. Dirty diapers were put in a mailbox.”

Shaw said he suspects there could be drug trafficking in the parking lot and he’s contacted the Ozaukee County Sheriff’s Department.

“I know some of this is a law enforcement issue, but can you as a town do something?” he asked. “I’m not trying to make this a crime of the century, but it seems to be escalating. Once the area starts looking like a dump yard, it will get worse.”

No-littering signs and trash barrel would help, he said.

Supr. Bill Janeshek, who works for the county highway department, said he will check the situation, noting it’s a county road and parking lot. The county could erect a sign that states the penalty for littering, he said.

“There used to be a burning barrel there. When it was full, a resident would burn it,” Janeshek said. “But it went from being small trash to becoming like a dumpster, and we eliminated that.”

The parking lot abuts the north end of Harrington Beach State Park and provides lake access to the beach and park, but the DNR doesn’t monitor the lot and is not responsible for keeping it clean, Janeshek said.

The issue will be discussed at the August meeting.