

Town turns its attention to long-neglected roads

Written by MARK JAEGER

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Following years of tight budgets, board approves list of maintenance work

Town of Saukville officials have taken heat in recent years for neglecting needed road repairs because of budget constraints.

They took steps to address that shortcoming at the last Town Board meeting.

Supervisors approved a list of paving projects after visiting trouble spots during their annual road tour.

Shortly before the board approved the roster of projects, Highview Road resident Ed Miller renewed what he termed as his ongoing campaign to get corrective paving work done on his road.

"I've been coming here for five years. Every year, I have to cleanup the washouts on the road in front of my house," Miller said.

Town officials conceded that the road needs attention, and approved spending \$5,600 to address the paving flaws.

Board members were less enthusiastic about having to spend an estimated \$13,000 to resurface a 600-foot section of River Park Road that was reportedly damaged by heavy farming equipment.

Ultimately, Town Chairman Barb Jobs said the town would seek reimbursement for the cost from the contractor who hauled the heaving equipment on the road.

Jobs said the town can't afford to put off making road repairs while the issues of legal responsibility are resolved.

"We have the names and addresses of the people responsible. I think we have to do the work now, and pursue payment from the hauler," she said.

"What else are we going to do? It is all in pieces. It is terrible."

In all, the town approved approximately \$56,000 in road projects with the Ozaukee County Highway Department.

The board also approved \$43,000 worth of crack sealing, a process that involves cleaning surface cracks with compressed air and then filling the gap with a rubberized sealant. Asphalt chips are then blown onto the sealant.

Crack sealing is planned on Hawthorne Drive, West Center Road from Highway I to Highway O, West Center Road from Lakeland Road to Highway I, Blue Goose Road, Willow Road and Woodview Road.

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The financial reality that the town is finally able to give its town's roads some needed attention was not lost on Jobs.

"We haven't been able to do this for awhile," she said. "We are able to do this because we are getting out of the financial hole by pinching pennies for years."

Jobs said she hopes critics of the town's frugal road spending take note.

"To say we don't do anything with our roads is just not correct," she said.

Town officials did choose to hold off on spending its Town Road Improvement Program money from the state on Blueberry Road, after learning reconstruction of the road would cost significantly more than the \$13,000 in outside funding.

Officials are now considering whether the matching funds should be used on the reconstruction of Hickory Road.