

Town of Black Earth
Minutes of Town Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 4, 2025

1. Meeting call to Order. Town Chair Tom Turk called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Supervisors Joann Bennett, Barb Parrell, Treasurer Brenda Kahl, and Clerk Stephanie Zwettler were present. Also in attendance: Jason Handel, Steve Parrell, Terry Frey, Peter Wood, Dan Meier, Mark Hazelbaker, and Kathleen Lucey.
2. Proof of Posting. An affidavit of posting was provided.
3. Approval of the Agenda. Barb Parrell moved and Joann Bennett seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried. 3-0
4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings – January 7, January 9, and January 24, 2025. Joann Bennett moved and Tom Turk seconded the motion to approve the minutes from January 7, January 9, and January 24, 2025, as presented. Barb Parrell abstained. Motion carried. 2-0
5. Comments by Town residents – non-agenda items. Terry Frey presented a petition for speed limit reduction on Fesenfeld Road citing blind spots, speed, and multiple driveways. Attorney Mark Hazelbaker discussed the guidelines for changing speed limits and suggested implementing a speed board from law enforcement. The Town Board agreed to place the topic on the next agenda for further discussion and possible action.
6. Financial Report.
 - a. Money Market: \$914,390.47 Checking: \$35,313.85
 - b. Approval of checks written. Joann Bennett moved and Barb Parrell seconded the motion to approve written checks numbered 12524-12543, including direct deposit paychecks. Motion carried. 3-0
7. Town Chairman’s Report. Tom Turk reported that he was informed of a potential merger between District One EMS and the Black Earth and Mazomanie fire departments prompted by revenue losses from the nursing home closure. The EMS and Fire boards will have additional discussions during future meetings.
8. Patrolman’s Report. Town Patrolman Jason Handel reported that Olson Toon safely took down the tree on Fesenfeld Road. He wished to recognize Mike and Kia Pena for their assistance with the preparation and cleanup. The Town Clerk will prepare a thank-you card for their help.
9. Solar Energy Licensing Ordinance – update on legal review. Attorney Mark Hazelbaker discussed changes to the solar energy industry, the authority of the Public Service Commission, and the enforcement of local government ordinances. Atty. Hazelbaker presented the board with a written review of the town’s proposed draft ordinance, including recommendations for amendments to the ordinance and the Town Comprehensive Plan.

10. Reeve Rd bridge. Dan Meier from Lynch & Associates presented a Level of Effort worksheet, project schedule, and a second quote for geotechnical services. WisDOT will prepare the State Municipal Agreement (SMA) for signatures upon review and acceptance of these documents. Dan Meier indicated that a survey and wetland delineation will be done this summer; the project is scheduled for 2029.
11. Reeve Rd at Morton Park—culvert and road repair. The Town Board reviewed and discussed an estimate from Boehnen Excavating for ditch work, slope repair, and culvert installations. A bid notice will be prepared for posting and publication this spring.
12. Noise disturbance—Fesenfeld Road. Local law enforcement informed the town board of noise complaints they received regarding a farm operation on Fesenfeld Road and solicited assistance. Town Chair Tom Turk will contact the property owner.
13. Broadband internet service – Brightspeed BEAD letter of support. Town Board members reviewed a letter from Brightspeed (formally Century Link) requesting support in their application for Wisconsin’s BEAD (Broadband Equity Access Deployment) grant program. The company’s coverage includes part of the Town of Black Earth, and the grant would help expand fiber broadband to these areas. Joann Bennett moved and Barb Parrell seconded a motion to sign and submit Brightspeed’s BEAD letter of support. Motion carried. 3-0
14. EMS Board Report. Town Chair Tom Turk reported that the current interim director of District One EMS will step down. The search for a new director will be discussed at future meetings.
15. Fire Board Report. The next meeting is March 6, 2025.
16. Discussion of future agenda items. Speed limit on Fesenfeld Road, solar ordinance amendments, Reeve Road bridge, Reeve Road repair work at Morton Park.
17. Adjourn. Joann Bennett moved and Barb Parrell seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Zwettler, Town Clerk