

Town of Eaton Annual Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Christel and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

The following officials and personnel were present: Chairman Rick Christel, Supervisor #1 Joe Riesterer, Supervisor #2 Lewis Schema, Treasurer Pam Schneider, Clerk Carleen Harel, Deputy Clerk Callie Behnke, Road Supervisor Craig Zipperer, Recycling Center Employees Randy Knier and John Thompson. There were 15 electors in attendance.

The board would like to thank the Land Use Committee members: Steve Schwoerer, Nic Schoenberger, Mark Litz, Rene Jelinek and Matthew Kaufmann and the election poll workers.

The 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes were read by Clerk Harel and Dean Benvenuto made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction of 1 storage container being purchased and correcting the name of the St Nazianz fire chief from Mark to Mike. A second was received from Charlie Geiser with said changes, 15 voted in favor by voice, 0 opposed, motion carried.

REPORTS

St. Nazianz Emergency Medical Responders EMS, Chief Lori Krueger reported:

169 calls in 2025 (9.6% increase), 194 patients treated (26.7% increase). They responded to 106 medical calls, 42 trauma calls, 16 fire assists, 3 medical pendant alarms, 1 iPhone crash detection and 1 weather call. There are 7 members on the roster and 24/7/365 coverage was maintained. The most common calls were falls, sick people, abdominal pain, breathing issues, cardiac related, altered mental status, vehicle accidents. Notable incidents: 3 overdoses, 1 amputation, 2 PNBs and a silo collapse entrapment. A LED message board was purchased and the Fish boil fundraiser served 1700 plates. They received a \$11,000 FAP Grant and it was used to purchase 2 dual band portable radios, SAMSON straps, 2 AEDs, jump kit and they are getting a \$22,000 new grant for 2026.

Fire Department Report – St. Nazianz Volunteer Fire Rescue, Chief Mike Kaufmann reported:

86 total calls in 2025 including EMS assists and mutual aid calls. The breakdown of calls was 58 for fire, 28 EMS assist, 20 department assists. Types of calls included structure fires, alarms, CO alarms, grass fires, car fires, power lines, false alarms, crash detection, a silo collapse with entrapment, public service, lift assists, smell of smoke, truck vs child, rubbish burning and 3 landing zone. They currently have 23 active firefighters and 2 cadets. They average 9 responders per call. Recruitment efforts are ongoing; it is not that they are in bad shape but trying to be proactive in keeping numbers up to be able to provide top quality service to the community. He also expressed concern about radio programming issues.

Valders Ambulance Update, Dylan Hammel reported:

30 medical calls in Eaton; falls were the top call type. They currently have six full-time, 13 part-time and one volunteer. A third ambulance was placed in service in March. A new ambulance has been ordered for 2028 delivery, cost \$276,000 (Ordering early saved approx. \$60,000). Their EMS replacement fund balance is \$69,784. The dispatch center is experiencing radio system issues. The Village is forming a committee for intergovernmental fire & EMS agreements for fire suppression and with the creation of Wisconsin Senate Bill 181, it will require one for EMS as well.

Legislative Updates emergency medical services (EMS)

Wisconsin Act 36 (2027): strengthens EMS services by increasing Medicaid reimbursement for treat/no-transport calls from \$69 → \$175.

Wisconsin Senate Bill 181 (2025) signed into law April 8, 2026, Wisconsin Act 235 creates a new exception to local property tax levy limits for regional emergency medical services (EMS). The rules to apply for the levy limit include there are a few, but the two big ones are as follows: total of 8 municipalities covered or 232 square miles of coverage. Valders has 10 and 270 square miles of coverage, and it must go to referendum every five years, voted by each municipality. To qualify, a regional EMS district must obtain voter approval through a specific referendum process.

County Supervisor Report, Dylan Hammel reported:

The county has a new County Executive, Tyler Martel, and 8 new board members. There will be many open committee positions to fill. With the new younger board, there will be a lot of movement going on the next two years. They will be voting on a data center moratorium and they will also be voting on resigning the 5-year manure management for CAFO farmers as this is no longer needed and the DNR already has eliminated it. There was a surplus of ~\$2M for 2025 but a ~\$3M deficit is predicted for 2027. They did pass getting body cams for sheriff department. They also got new tasers and squad cams. This will help with court cases significantly. He also brought to light the numerous dispatching issues they are dealing with now. He also mentioned that Tyler is more than willing to work with the townships moving forward.

ASSESSOR: No representation. Chairman Christel explained the Open Book and Board of Review process.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS

2025 Financial Report

Chairman Christel presented the financial report to the public, specifically explaining the Niles Road project, ambulance service contract, the discontinuation of some dead-end roads, shop maintenance, building permits issued, outstanding loans and grants and the set aside accounts.

Estimated cost for Niles Road project: \$1,003,896.20. A short-term loan for the Niles Rd project, \$583,243.70, was paid off January 31, 2026. Loan repayment was \$603,281.72

Ambulance Service Fees are \$38/person for 2026 and \$40/person for 2027.

Outstanding Loans & Grants: Truck Loan: Two payments remain of \$23,702.98, with the final payment due 3/15/2028. LRIP Grant: \$33,125.46 awarded for use in 2027 on Carstens Lake Road and Hwy 151.

Financial Set-Aside Accounts: Road Maintenance Fund \$175,378.61, Pick-Up Truck Fund \$20,000.00, Road Equipment Fund \$40,000.00, Dog Fund \$1,025.56

The town will discontinue maintaining: Gerhart Lane, Schwoerer Lane, and Nichlaus Lane. These dead-end roads were given back to the landowners.

Shop Maintenance: One overhead door replaced; cables, tracks, rollers & operators were inspected & serviced.

Total building permits issued in 2025: \$2,881,121 for estimated project costs.

Road Report

The following projects were completed for 2025:

- Glen Flora Road – Double chip seal and wedging, 1 mile from Newton Road south to Townline Road. Cost: \$57,946.00.
- Greendale Road – Single 3/8" chip seal with wedging from Hwy 151 to Carstens Lake Road. Cost: \$34,301.00.
- Carstens Lake Road – Single 3/8" chip seal, no wedging, from Niles Road to Hickory Hills Road. Cost: \$50,703.00.

Projects under consideration for 2026 include:

- West Quarry Road – Wedge overlay where needed; chip seal following year
- Carstens Lake Road – Wedge & chip seal between Greendale and Niles
- Lax Chapel Road – Chip seal between Schnell and Townline
- Steinthal Road – Chip seal between Steinthal and Hwy 67
- Rissmann Lane – Wedge patch & chip seal
- Town Line Road – Crack fill from Lax Chapel to Steinthal
- Newton Road – Wedge overlay in areas from Lax Chapel to Glen Flora
- Hickory Hills Road – Crack fill from Hwy 151 to Duchow Road
- Baer Road – Crack fill from County Rd A to Niles Road
- Duchow Road – Budgeting for pulverizing & paving from Cty Rd W to Hickory Hills Rd
- Greendale Road – Chip seal from County Rd C to Church
- Lax Chapel – Crack fill from County Rd C to Newton

Recycling Center Report

- New concrete pad
- Cut up + bundle your cardboard.
- Bundle magazines + paper with twine.
- Glass – all colors in one bin.
- Wednesday night hours begin May 15th.

NEW BUSINESS

Open Book scheduled for May 8, 2026 via phone from 12-5pm and Board of Review scheduled for May 27, 2026 from 6-8pm; residents should receive notice by mail.

Compensation for Elected Board members: Chairman Christel did some research and brought to the attention of the electors that the board wages are low compared to other towns. Chairman Christel proposed to the electors to increase wages of Supervisors one and two to \$3500 annually each plus increase the per diem to \$60 and that the chairperson wage increases to \$5000 annually plus \$60 per diem and the Treasurer wages increase to \$7500 annually plus \$60 per diem. Mark Litz made a motion to accept Chairman Christel's proposal, Dean Benvenuto second the motion, 15 voted in favor by voice, 0 opposed, motion carried.

2027 Annual meeting set for April 20, 2027 at 7pm motion was made by Tom Murphy, second by Mark Litz, 15 voted in favor by voice, 0 opposed, motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Vivian Wentdorf expressed concern about the number of dead deer carcasses on the roads and asked what can be done to dispose of them. Chairman Christel informed the electors that this is not a service that the town provides and that the DNR states to let the course of nature happen. Vivian also expressed concern for properties that are in disarray, Chairman Christel explained that even though the town has an ordinance for this, it is hard to enforce as we have no means to legally enforce it.

Charlie Geiser made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 pm, second by Dave Kleinhans, 15 voted in favor by voice, 0 opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Carleen Harel, Clerk