



# THE LAKELAND TIMES



## FOOTBALL STARTS

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## Zoning committee revokes Bangstad permit

By Richard Moore  
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

On a 3-0 vote Wednesday, the Oneida Planning and Development Committee revoked the administrative review permit for the Minocqua Brewing Company. Committee chairman Scott Holewinski and committee members Mike Timmons and Bob Almekinder voted to revoke the permit; supervisors Mike Roach and Tommy Ryden were absent.

With a large crowd on hand — most supporting Bangstad but multiple people also opposing — Bangstad repeatedly called the ARP a "poisonous" agreement not issued in good faith, and he said he had to commit some violations to stay in business, while he considered others, such as serving customers on his stoop, as not really violations, referring to it as a "grey area."

For its part, the committee pointed to Bangstad's repeated violations of the permit conditions, and supervisors also pointed to his repeated refusal to follow through with commitments they said he made over the past 18 months.

Supervisors also observed that, if he did not like the permit conditions, he could have appealed to the county Board of Adjustment but did not do so.

At press time, Bangstad's application for a conditional use permit was still being deliberated.

A complete story will appear in Tuesday's paper.

Richard Moore is the author of "Dark State" and may be reached at richardd3d.substack.com.

## St. Germain board likely to ask electors for tax increase

By Fred Williston  
SPECIAL TO THE LAKELAND TIMES

During a town board meeting on July 27, supervisors in St. Germain discussed the agenda for the town's electors' meeting this November. In all likelihood, the board will ask resident voters for their permission to raise the property-tax levy once again.

Wisconsin state statute only allows municipalities to increase their levies in small percentages without voter approval. In the case of St. Germain, that permissible increase would only amount to a few thousand dollars.

Municipalities with populations of more than 3,000 people accept or reject

major levy increases by referendum. Their smaller counterparts — like St. Germain — have the issue decided by resolution and a vote of the town's electors.

Last year, electors decided by a vote of 70 to 44 to allow an increase of \$200,000 for the specific purpose of road maintenance.

This year, the town may need to ask for more.

During last week's meeting, supervisors discussed a growing list of needs which can't currently be met by the town's budget.

Chairman Tom Christensen told the board "We don't need to decide tonight

what all is going to be on it, but we do need to have some discussion, and are we going to have anything other than the normal things to approve the levy. ... The question is: are we going to bring up any other items for discussion with the electors?"

He suggested money should be raised for department of public works equipment, including a new plow truck, as well as extra money for a road-replacement program.

"We know that we're in the process of talking with the different suppliers about a replacement for our plow-

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TREVOR GREENE/LAKELAND TIMES

## AFTERNOON AFTER LOON SETUP

Bonnie and Tony Smith unload their equipment in preparation for the Aug. 3 After Loon Delight Craft Show at Torpy Park on Wednesday, Aug. 2, in Minocqua.

## Vilas County closer to a full board again

Governing body has had three vacancies since May

By Brian Jopek  
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

For the past few months, the 21-member Vilas County board has been short three members but when the county board next meets in regular session on Aug. 22, county clerk Kim Olkowski expects to have two of those vacancies filled.

Frank Kulpa, the district seven representative for Arbor Vitae, resigned earlier this year, Marcia Rohr of Conover resigned in April and Walt Maciag, representing wards one and two in the town of

Cloverland, submitted his resignation in May.

Olkowski told *The Lakeland Times* Monday there's been progress made in that she now has three applicants to take Maciag's place and one to replace Rohr.

"I had three for that seat," she said. "One withdrew and now, a second applicant withdrew."

The toughest seat to get applicants for has been the district seven Arbor Vitae seat.

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## Case study: Vaccine court shuts down inquiry into possible vaccine death

Government experts ride high in vaccine injury compensation program

News analysis

Part 1 of a five-part series

By Richard Moore  
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

The death of a child is always a parent's worst nightmare. When a child dies, the persisting misery common to any grievous experience becomes an inescapable agony, a living hell from which there is virtually no escape.

Many parents find themselves thrust into the trauma unexpectedly when the death is sudden, from accident or disease or foul play. In post-World War II America, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) has added mystery and numbers to the complex for younger children, as has death

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# Study

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following routine vaccinations.

Those are not infrequent occurrences. After World War II, when “crib death” was a rare phenomenon and still a footnote in the science, SIDS became statistically significant, and, after 1990, when the nation’s Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) was established, so did death following vaccination.

For SIDS, the official number of children having succumbed to the syndrome in 2020 was 92.9 per 100,000 live births (combining SIDS and accidental suffocation rates to account for diagnostic shifting), or 3,356 deaths. For vaccines, as of July 21, 4,973 children have been reported since 1990 to VAERS as having died following vaccination, which most experts consider vastly underreported.

Interestingly, there is a correlation between SIDS and vaccination, a startling intersection of the story lines.

For stories involving VAERS, it is standard operating procedure to cite the critics, who stress that reports to VAERS of injuries and deaths following vaccination are correlative rather than causative. That’s true, though the purpose of VAERS was never to establish causation, only temporal association between vaccination and injury, such that a high number of incidents would warrant further investigation.

And further investigation has, through the years, proven many of the reports to be non-associative with vaccination, some wildly so. On the other hand, further investigation has also shown some of the claims to be at least arguable, while in many others a high probability as well as actual causation has been established.

All of which is why the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (NVIC) was established. That program shields vaccine manufacturers from civil liability in most vaccine injury and death cases, but it also established a procedure for compensating those who have suffered injury or deaths, ostensibly through a no-fault non-adversarial alternative to litigation.

The program has paid out more than \$4.5 billion as of July 1, not counting attorneys fees.

But through the years, as *The Lakeland Times* has previously reported, the program has faced withering criticism. Critics point out that most victims or their families never receive compensation, and not just because their claims are baseless. Indeed, critics say the system is adversarial and time-consuming, not merely dismissive of claims but aggressive in opposing them, with the government acting as judge and jury, mostly in defense of vaccine policy and pharmaceutical companies.

There are a litany of complaints. For one, the official injury list, known as Table Injuries, which are presumed to be caused by vaccination if they occur within a short time after vaccine administration, is constricted, while, since 2015, critics say the government has sought to delegitimize non-table injuries, for which claimants must prove causation.

That has resulted in lengthy appeals resulting in multiple hearings, the aggressive use of a raft of government expert witnesses, often set against parents with limited resources who have attorneys with limited expertise and experience in vaccine injury and death.

On top of that are powerful judges — officially known as special masters — who many times seem uninterested in fact-finding or probing in depth, even though their appointments are made to ensure a wide range of vaccine expertise.

That said, there are many cases where the system has worked, at least for a while, hence the billions in compensation.

To examine the pros and cons of the system, *The Times* is taking a look at two case studies of infants who died of SIDS after vaccination — both of which the government has cited as quintessential cases — and the experience of their families in the nation’s vaccine courts.

Though their cases are similar, the outcomes were not, at least initially. One was booted out of hand; one family triumphed in front of the special master but lost on appeal. Taken together — one family story this edition and the other following — these cases showcase both positives and negatives about the nation’s vaccine courts, and point a way toward reform.

Perhaps more important, they reveal how the compensation system itself rules out important associations between vaccines and injuries — in this particular case, SIDS — before anyone, including the vaccine courts, can judge those potential associations on their merits.

## LEGAL NOTICES

### TOWN OF LYNNE

Request For Quote/Bid

The Town of Lynne is requesting quotes/bids to renovate a town storage building. The building has a steel structure, aluminum siding, and is approximately 65 feet long with four 12' x 10' doors on the front side of the building (former fire house).

In order to accommodate town road equipment, we would like to modify the structure and install two larger doors across the front of the building, replacing the current four. The town reserves the right to reject any, and all quote/bids, and to accept the quote/bid most advantageous to the town, even if that quote/bid is not the lowest in cost.

For more information contact:

Dave Klemm  
(Board Supervisor)  
715-564-2679

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### NOTICE

The Town Board of Manitowish Waters is accepting bids for black-topping roads for 2023. Bid specs may be obtained by contacting the Town Clerk at 715-543-8400, or by emailing clerk@mwtown.gov. Bids by qualified bidders must be received in the clerk’s office by 1:00 PM Tuesday August 15th, 2023. The Board reserves the right to reject all bids.

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### NOTICE TO INTERESTED PERSONS AND LIMITING TIME FOR FILING CLAIMS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
CARL G. BESON

An order to probate has been issued by the Lac du Flambeau Tribal Court for the estate of the above named person, enrolled member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and a resident at the time of his passing.

In accordance with the requirements of the Lac du Flambeau Tribal Probate Code, Chapter II, Section 82.410, notice is being given to all creditors of the estate of to present their claims against the estate.

1) Creditor’s claims are to be submitted in writing, with the supporting documentation to Steve Beson, PO Box 987, Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538, Administrator of the Estate.

2) Creditor’s claims must be filed on or before November 3, 2023, ninety days after the date upon which the notice is hereby given.

3) The publication of this notice in accordance with the provisions of Section 82.410 of the Tribal Probate Code shall constitute notice to any persons whose names or addresses are unknown.

/s/ Steve Beson  
Administrator of the Estate  
08/04/2023

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### STATE OF WISCONSIN, CIRCUIT COURT, ONEIDA COUNTY

Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)  
Case No. 23PR58

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
STEVEN J. KROPIDLOWSKI  
DOD: June 30, 2023

#### PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

1. An application for informal administration was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth January 14, 1958 and date of death June 30, 2023, was domiciled in Oneida County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 8426 Beach Dr., Lake Tomahawk, WI 54539.

3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent’s estate is November 9, 2023.

5. A claim may be filed at the Oneida County Courthouse, 1 S. Oneida Ave., P.O. Box 400, Rhinelander, Wisconsin, Room A-318 (probate office).

/s/ Amy M. Franzen  
Probate Registrar  
07-17-2023

Attorney Bridget M. Erwin  
Hager, Dewick & Zuengler, S.C.  
200 S. Washington St., Ste. 200  
Green Bay, WI 54301  
Bar No. 1055528  
(920) 430-1900  
107769

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### INVITATION TO BID

LAC DU FLAMBEAU CHIPPEWA HOUSING AUTHORITY  
REQUESTING BIDS FOR THE 2024-2026  
(2YR) LAWN CARE SERVICES

The Lac du Flambeau Chippewa Housing Authority is requesting written sealed bids for lawn care services for 2 years from any interested contractor.

The contractor will service approximately 100 units on the the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation. A list of units will be available on bid specs with address for visual inspection by contractor.

Detailed bid specifications can be obtained at the main receptionist area of the main office of the CHA located on 554 Chicog St. in Lac du Flambeau.

Bids are due by **August 23rd, 2023 @ 4:30PM**. Bids that are received after the deadline *will not* be considered.

Interested contractor(s) should submit their sealed written lawn bid proposal to the CHA and label properly as “Sealed Bid for Lawn Care Services 2024-2026” on the front of the bid envelope. Please send attention to John Melzer, CHA Maintenance Department P.O. Box 187 Lac du Flambeau WI 54538.

Public opening of sealed bids will occur at 10:00 AM on Tuesday August 29, 2023 at the Chippewa Housing Authority office.

**The CHA reserves the right to reject all and any bids. Native American preference will be given according to the policies of the CHA. Any contractor seeking such preference must provide evidence that it is not less than 51% Native American owned and controlled. Any contractor wishing to claim Native American preference must indicate so in the bid.**

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### NOTICE

VACANCY - VILAS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
District #7 – Town of Arbor Vitae Wards 5 & 6

The Vilas County Board Chairman is accepting applications for an individual to be appointed to fill the unexpired term of Vilas County Supervisor, District #7, comprised of the Town of Arbor Vitae Wards 5 & 6. Pursuant to Wis. Stat. §59.10(3)(e) applicants for this appointment must be a qualified elector and a resident of District #7 for at least 28 days to be eligible to fill this vacancy. Applicants for this position should send a letter expressing interest in the position and a resume to:

Chairman Jerry Burkett  
Vilas County Board of Supervisors  
District #7 Applications  
330 Court Street  
Eagle River, WI 54521

Applications postmarked later than Friday, August 25, 2023 will not be considered. Appointment of any applicant by the Vilas County Board Chairman is subject to Vilas County Board ratification.

Kimberly A. Olkowski  
Vilas County Clerk

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### NOTICE

The Lac du Flambeau Public School is participating in a Free Breakfast and Lunch program for the current school year 2023-2024. This alternative is referred to as the Community Eligibility Provision. All students enrolled at the following school(s) may participate in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program at no charge. Household applications are not required to receive free meals, but applications may be distributed by the school to collect household income data for other programs that require this information.

All students will be served breakfast and lunch at no charge at the following sites: Lac du Flambeau Public School

For additional information please contact the Lac du Flambeau Public School, Attention: Donna Allen, Food Service. 2899 Hwy 47, Lac du Flambeau, WI. 54538. 715-588-3838. donna.allen@ldfschoo.org

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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### A big deal

In each of the stories, both this week and next, *The Times* is withholding identifying information to protect the families’ privacy. The stories were compiled from medical records and coroners’ reports obtained by *The Times*, as well as interviews with the families and the published decisions of the vaccine courts.

In the story of Family A, the case was dismissed almost from the get-go, and, on one level at least, not without reason. However, as will be reported, that reason itself points to flaws in the system and validates critics’ concerns.

In the case, the petitioners’ child was born between 2010 and 2015. According to vaccine court documents, the child was healthy at birth and the pregnancy was “uncomplicated.” The mother would later report to the police that, prior to immunization, “he had been very healthy with the exception of some previous slight jaundice.”

In an interview with *The Times*, the mother described that jaundice as “breast milk jaundice,” which cleared up rapidly. The technical name for the condition is suboptimal intake jaundice, also called breastfeeding jaundice. As was the case here, the jaundice usually goes away on its own, and treatment is not necessary.

“He was two weeks old and he got jaundiced,” the mother said. “But that was pretty much it. ... Basically other than that, he was healthy and he recovered from that just fine. He was good in three days. They sent us a Bilblanket and we put him in the sunshine and fed him a lot more and he was fine. So no, nothing major. Not at the time of vaccination.”

Then, at two months, came the routine vaccinations, six vaccinations in one day — DTAP, Hep B, Polio, Hib, Prevnar, and Rotateq — during a well-child check-up.

“During the check-up, [the child] was noted to have been healthy, except for a possible heart murmur for which he was referred to a cardiologist, and he ‘appear[ed] to be in no acute distress,’” the case decision states.

Still, the mother and the father say the child did not behave normally after that.

“We went into the pediatrician that morning,” the mother said. “He was two months old, so he got that first round of eight, and it was weird. So the nurse, she’s like, ‘oh, he’s going to get six vaccines today.’ She walks in with three needles and an oral, and I’m like, I’m not good at math, but that doesn’t equal up to eight. But I didn’t say anything about it, and I let them vaccinate him.”

It was all supposed to be a routine visit, but it was anything but afterwards.

“So after they gave him the shots, he screamed and cried,” she said. “Then he fell asleep pretty much immediately after that. A short burst, fell asleep.”

The mother, who was visiting with her sister-in-law afterwards, said the child pretty much slept all day, except for waking up twice, and she, the child, and her older child went to meet her husband and her in-laws.

During that afternoon, the mother said the child was definitely not acting like himself.

“He just slept,” she said. “He slept the rest of the day. I know he’s a little baby, but it was just

## Study

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really out of the ordinary. He was only awake twice. He woke up once after we got home just for a little bit, went back to sleep, slept all afternoon, and then slept all the way on the car ride all the way to my in-laws, and then woke up just for a little bit just to eat, and then went back to sleep.”

After she fed him and put him down to sleep, the mother brought her older [child] home, and then her husband was going to bring [the child] home a little later because he was sleeping.

“It wasn’t a big deal,” she said.

It quickly became a big deal. Soon, the mother said, she received a phone call from her brother-in-law saying she had to go to the hospital because the child was not breathing.

For his part, the child’s father corroborated the mother’s version of events and relayed what happened at the in-laws.

“So he was taking a nap for, I don’t know, a couple hours, just normally he was laying on, laying down in the bed,” the father said.

“He was sleeping. And then that’s when he got up earlier. We fed him some more, burped him, did our normal routine, and then he fell back asleep. We laid him down the second time, and then he slept for maybe, I don’t know, a couple hours. He was asleep for probably two, three hours.”

During that time, the mother went home with the other child.

“And then I went in there to go get [the child] and wake him up and start packing him up to go home, too,” he said. “And then when I walked in and basically came in, and I saw it looked like he had vomited or something coming out of his mouth a little bit fresh. And then I immediately went and

started checking on him. And then I noticed he wasn’t breathing. So then I started doing CPR, trying to resuscitate him, and then had my father take over doing CPR so I could call 911 and get an ambulance to come.”

The child had been by himself for about 10 minutes.

“He was never really alone,” the father said. “He was behind us in the room. We had people walking because it was in my father’s room too. So we had people constantly going in and out. He was technically never really alone for longer than 10, 15 minutes because there was always somebody going in and kind of walking around.”

The coroner ultimately ruled out any possibility of suffocation, said the cause was a natural death, and ruled the official cause as SIDS.

### Mountains out of mole hills

There is a short list of Table Injuries (those in which vaccination is the presumed cause of death if immunization occurred shortly before), but SIDS is not among them. In all other cases, the petitioners must prove causation.

In Family A’s case, two alleged potential Table Injuries were ruled out — encephalopathy and anaphylaxis — and the parents’ attorney advanced no alternative off-table medical theory linking the vaccination to the death, aside from temporal association.

From that viewpoint, it was a slam-dunk case for the government.

However, that didn’t stop the government — and the special master — from being adversarial. For one thing, the special master stretched far and wide to declare the two parents’ accounts of that day to be contradictory.

“The records filed by petitioners are internally contradictory regarding [the

child’s] health and behavior during the afternoon following vaccine administration,” the special master wrote. “After the child’s death, [the mother] reported to police that ‘[h]e appeared to tolerate the [two month well-check] appointment and the rest of the day with no apparent distress or complications .... He was eating, sleeping, and having normal bowel movements.’ In the affidavit filed in support of his vaccine claim, however, [the father] noticed that, during the afternoon ... [the child] ‘seemed different from his normal appearance and behavior,’ taking half of his usual bottle and appearing sleepy.”

It should be noted that, while there are surface inconsistencies in that reporting, inconsistencies do not necessarily add up to contradictions. For one thing, appearing “to tolerate the [two month well-check] appointment and the rest of the day with no apparent distress or complications” does not automatically translate into acting normally, especially if the child was sleeping more. Sleeping more than usual does not equate to “distress and complications,” though it could be “different” behavior.

That is in fact the way the mother described it in the interview with *The Times* — that he was sleeping in a way that was not normal for him. The bottom line is, not only is comparing a police report of a distraught mother after the child has died with a much later vaccine claim like comparing apples with oranges, but the only way to divine what the mother really meant in those few comments would be by further questioning by the special master.

That did not happen. The special master might not have been legally obligated to conduct such an interview, but comparing the available records does not result in obviously contradictory accounts, as the spe-

cial master asserts.

The other inconsistencies the special master latched onto were quibbles about nap time and ounces. The father in his affidavit claimed the child had three ounces of his bottle and went down to sleep between 8 and 8:30 p.m., the master wrote, while the mother’s affidavit has the child “still sleeping by 7:00 p.m., took only three (3) ounces of his bottle instead of his usual six (6) ounces,” and “went down to sleep between 8:00 and 8:30 p.m.” but in her statements to police the child took approximately 4 ounces of formula at 7 p.m., then fell asleep.

The number of ounces aside and whether it was 7 p.m. or 8 p.m. or 8:30 p.m., both parents — in the affidavits and in the mother’s statement to police — reported below normal eating by the child, while none of the statements contradict the ultimate assertion that the child had been sleeping a lot.

Indeed, the special master herself — after making a big deal about the “contradictions” — harmonized them to rule out a table injury the parents were offering as a possible cause: anaphylaxis.

“Eight hours later, between 7:00 and 8:30 p.m., [the child] was put down to sleep, and was discovered in distress around 11:00 p.m.,” the decision stated. “Although [the child’s] behavior may have been somewhat different from normal on the afternoon following vaccination (noting that [the child] took half of his usual bottle and appeared sleepy), he was not suffering from an ‘acute, severe reaction’ until approximately twelve hours after vaccine administration. [The child’s] acute distress occurred far too long after the vaccinations to be considered anaphylaxis.”

The special master’s reconciliation of the record in fact undercuts her earlier

assessment of internal contradictions, which seem more likely preparation work for any appeal.

### Dismissive

One of the biggest complaints about the vaccine court is that special masters are dismissive, that the proceedings are adversarial contests between battling attorneys much like the litigation the law sought to avoid, and that parents are often left without adequate representation to counter the government’s expert witnesses.

In other words, victims are outgunned in what is already a hostile environment.

In this case, lawyers also battled it out. The parents filed an array of documents — medical records, two affidavits, and a VAERS report — and later an autopsy report, a toxicology report, and a medical examiner’s report, as well as a police report, and they finally filed an expert report authored by a pediatrician, who opined, as the special master wrote, that “[t]he multiple vaccination [sic] administered to infant was a possible cause of death. To my reasonable knowledge, the six vaccines administered the same day could have caused a reaction which caused his death.”

In a status conference, the special master encouraged the parents’ attorney to file a supplemental expert report that articulated a more specific nature of the injury allegedly caused by the vaccinations.

The government attacked aggressively, too, alleging that the petitioners had not alleged a Table Injury and had failed to “establish a more likely than not causal connection between ... the vaccinations ... and his subsequent death later that night.”

They also argued that the pediatrician’s report was insufficient to meet petition-

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## Increase

From page 1

truck,” Christensen said. “The truck is at least a year out and we haven’t ordered it yet.”

Supervisor Brian Cooper added to the list, saying “Maybe you want to add something in there about parks and rec(reation), since we seem to be having troubles funding that, as well?”

Cooper suggested asking supervisor Kalisa Mortag — the chair of St. Germain’s parks and recreation committee — for “an appropriate dollar-figure.” Mortag was absent from the meeting.

He said “It just seems like every (parks and recreation project proposal) we talk about just kind of falls off a cliff and doesn’t happen.”

Town clerk June Vogel brought up the need for repairs to the town’s aging community center.

“There’s no end to this,” said supervisor Ted Ritter.

Christensen replied “But if you want to accomplish something, all of these funds need to be started.”

Ritter said “If we were to proceed with suggesting” in-

creased spending to the town’s electors, “I think we would also need to suggest ‘This is what it might do to the levy.’”

Christensen replied “I would agree with that. Before I take time to figure out the numbers, if you guys say ‘Absolutely not’, I’m not in favor of going forward at this point and I won’t bother doing it ... I would do that for the equipment, and then also for the road replacements.”

Ritter reminded the board “It was last year at the elector levy meeting that we presented the idea of a levy increase for road maintenance, and we went through a great deal of explanation about what road-maintenance is, and it was approved. And the taxpayers were levied that amount of money, but they have yet to see anything done. They have yet to learn what is going to be done with the money that was levied in 2022.”

To that, Christensen replied “At our next meeting, you’re going to have a list of roads and what’s going to happen this fall, and that should be done by

the time the levy meeting happens.”

“That’s very, very important,” Ritter said. “The question is: do we want to present to the taxpayers that same concept for additional categories of spending, any one of which would raise the levy? Part of me thinks that’s a good idea, but you may not want to have a list of more than two or three.”

Christensen said “I think it’s a realistic thing that people understand that if you want improvements done, we need more money to do it; we don’t have the money in the regular budget.”

Vogel asked if various projects could be presented on one ballot as separate questions for November’s electors meeting.

Christensen asked “You want to have it itemized, so that if not all of it passes, some of it might?”

“Correct,” Vogel replied.

Christensen said “You could have the building, the road replacement, the equipment, and...parks and rec, or whatever you want to call it.”

Ritter cautioned “I would suggest we be real honest and say ‘Look; we’re telling

you we don’t have enough money to do all the things that need to be done...That’s going to raise your levy. And your levy was raised last year for the road-maintenance program. Good things are happening because you approved those levy increases. We’d like to ask you if you’ll approve even more.’ Be right up-front with them.”

Vogel pointed out all of the town’s smaller spending, which adds up to big dollars.

“Part of me feels it’s more important to raise our levy to cover everyday expenses,” she said. “Because we’ve had salary increases. We’ve had electricity increases. We’ve had truck-maintenance increases. The list goes on and on. And we’re really tight.”

She said “Every time a higher bill comes in, I get heart palpitations because we don’t want to run into trouble at the end of the year. If we’re seeing more increases, I don’t know if we can sustain the budget for the next year, with everything we have to do. Insurance is going up. The retirement is going up next year.”

Christensen said those expenses should also be included on the November electors ballot.

“I think people will understand those things,” Ritter said. “I don’t know if they’re going to give us a blank checkbook, but we explain honestly the situation we’re in and say ‘This is your town. Are you going to help us do these things?’”

“Some people will say yes to a levy increase; some people will probably say yes to all of them. Others will say no to all of them,” he said. “It’s a matter of getting the right people at the annual meeting.”

Christensen said he favored the idea of presenting several itemized requests before the electors in November, and said “I’ll be more than happy to put the numbers together.”

Cooper said “Let’s look at it.”

Ritter added “I support the concept.”

Christensen closed the discussion by saying “Then we’ll put some numbers together and talk about it at the next meeting. We need to keep rolling on it so that we’re ready.”