



## Deb Amery Candidate for Supervisor Town of Spider Lake (TOSL)

As a candidate for Town Supervisor, one of my guiding principles is to encourage a community conversation. I believe this conversation can improve our collective knowledge; which will strengthen our decisions as a community and renew confidence in the future of our town. This will take a lot of hard work. I am committed to a "hands-on" approach as a Town Supervisor; to get involved and gather all the information I can about our town and the people who care about it. To get the ball rolling, the following is a summary of observations on an important issue. My goal is to encourage thought and debate, which I believe can elevate our community conversation. (Contact me at: [voicesofspiderlake.com](http://voicesofspiderlake.com))

### TOSL Ordinances

#### Topic:

We are in the midst of a rapid succession of ordinance changes. Although to some this is merely new Board members following through on their campaign promises, to others it is an ill-advised, needlessly aggressive approach; without any indications as to where it will all end. This matters, because our ordinances are all encompassing. They cover everything from ATVs and camping to the Quiet Lakes philosophy. And ordinances, as we have seen, can be changed. Some changes may be simple and reversible, while others would be profound, altering the basic principles that define the 'Northwoods Character' of our town. If this is important to you, read on. This may be the point at which you decide to become active in town governance.

#### Facts:

- The TOSL ordinances are guided by a Comprehensive Plan. This is a 'master plan' for community development that Wisconsin requires of us in order to receive state funding. It carries a lot of weight. TOSL cannot "enact or amend" any land use ordinance (i.e. zoning) unless it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The concept of 'Northwoods Character' permeates the document and is its driving force.
- The TOSL has zoning ordinances which are more restrictive than the county or state. Specifically, Land Use Ordinance 17-88 describes minimum lot sizes and shoreland requirements, and these are unique to our town. This ordinance was "grandfathered" in back in 1968, and its status remains intact unless and until the TOSL changes it. Once changed, it is permanently revoked. This distinction is considered by many to be the cornerstone of protecting our 'Northwoods Character.' Without it, we are the same as 1,200+ other towns in Wisconsin.
- While the TOSL ordinances carry the rule of law, we lack the infrastructure to effectively enforce some of them. Enforcement is 'complaint-based' -- If we see an infraction, our recourse is to lodge a complaint with the Town or the Sheriff. The resources available to respond are limited, and we rely heavily on people doing the right thing. It's always been this way. This limitation is worth keeping in mind when we consider changing or introducing new ordinances.

#### Conversation:

In my campaign activities I have been impressed by how much people care about our town. I find there are certain core values we collectively share. They have to do with cherishing and protecting that which is unique about the Town of Spider Lake. When people sense these values are being threatened, they react strongly. Attend a monthly Board of Supervisors meeting and you will see what I mean. I suggest we use the current situation as a call for activism. It starts with an approach to ordinance change that is thoughtful and deliberate. We need objective input from a wide array of stakeholders, not just the opinions of a few. We also need a structured review process -- a way to evaluate every ordinance change in terms of the reason for change, viable options (with pros and cons for each), financial, environmental and quality of life impacts, and consistency with our Comprehensive Plan. This will guide us in making wise and forward-looking changes, ensuring we keep our Northwoods Character at the forefront. The people leading the town back in the 1960s did it for us; now we need to step up for the next generation. I encourage you to get started by reading the TOSL Comprehensive Plan (available on the TOSL website: [www.townofspiderlake.com](http://www.townofspiderlake.com)) and join us in a community conversation.

***Paid for by Deb Amery for Town of Spider Lake Supervisor***