

New bar and grill to open on Sumner's Blackhawk Island

By *Tristan McGough*
Special to the Reporter

With the Riverfront Resort closed, a new establishment is taking its place on Blackhawk Island as the Island Bar & Grill. New owners James F. Bowers, Jr. and Christa Bowers came before the Sumner Town Board at its regular meeting on Dec. 12, 2016 to petition for a group of interrelated licenses.

The old location, W7545 Blackhawk Island Rd., Ft. Atkinson, will have a new look, as well as owners. Currently under renovation, the Bowers hope to have the bar and grill opened by late December. Accordingly, before that "soft" opening date, they applied for a liquor license, cigarette and tobacco retail license and a couple of operator's licenses.

The two appeared before the board on Monday night to answer any questions supervisors might have had regarding the new business. Jim confided that he's desired to own and operate his own bar for a long time and as this is a dream coming true, he wanted to make sure they had met all municipal requirements.

The couple will not only run the bar and grill operation, they plan to "breathe new life" into the 9-acre campground, which they are hoping becomes a "very special destination."

Not new to business ventures, the Bowers also own Newville Marine and Threads Consignment. Newville Marine

is a specialty shop, focusing on boat dock and lift installations and removal, a barge service, hauling, winter indoor storage and shrink wrapping at their Newville location or on-site. Threads Consignment is a Janesville clothing boutique featuring gently used brand name attire.

The amenable atmosphere had the supervisors quipping with the Bowers, hoping they would charge reasonable prices for their food and drink. Smiling, both Bowers assured the assembly of officials and town folk that they wouldn't be disappointed.

Having reviewed all applications beforehand, Supervisors Randy Burdick and Rosemary Olson were unanimous with Chair John Dohner, Jr. in approving an original liquor license for the establishment, as well as the cigarette and tobacco retail license. Also approved were operator's licenses for both owners. And as a technical but necessary detail, the board additionally approved James F. Bowers, Jr. as Agent for the business by Municipal Authority.

Other Sumner items

•Parks Committee Chair Burdick reported that the recently held Chili Supper and Bake Sale raised \$402, all which was donated to maintenance of the local cemetery. Burdick commented, "We had a successful event," and thanked all who participated.

•Samantha Essler, Jake Stenli and Rosemary Olson were

appointed as renewed members to the Parks Committee, and Jo Ann Armstrong was newly appointed.

•The board agreed to spend \$529 to upgrade the town's website design and functionality, after consulting with Clerk Glendon Rewoldt, who said that sooner or later the town would be forced by its municipal software provider, TOWN Web Design, into the upgrade as the current system would, eventually, not be supported.

•Dohner reported to residents in attendance that the recently contracted snow removal provider, Marc Garlock, had done a second run this season, and that the town would, in all probability, "show quite a bit in savings" when compared to the costs Jefferson County had charged for snow removal in the past.

•Rewoldt informed the board that the Veter Participation Center (VPC) sent correspondence regarding the board's resolution to have VPC cease and desist from sending out mass mailings to town residents. VPC claimed their process for selecting mail targets was methodical and exhaustive; however, Rewoldt and the supervisors were unimpressed, as past letters had been addressed and sent to people who were deceased or had moved out of the area. Allegedly, even some pets had received the unsolicited mailings.

•The next town board meeting will be Saturday morning at 8 a.m. on Jan. 14, 2017.