

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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30 November 2021
Approved

7:39 p.m., 30 November 2021, Chair Wayne Olson called the Royalton Township regular board meeting to order, with Supervisor Jeff Schlaeger, Treasurer Wendy Tchida, and Clerk Duane Swanson present in the meeting room and Supervisor Marshall Pearson attending via remote electronic communication. Zoning Administrator John Kemen, Road Superintendent Dan Saumer, Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, and Deputy Clerk Priscilla Schneider also attended, along with members of the planning commission and members of the public. Supervisor Pearson had received the agenda materials prior to the meeting. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agenda as presented with two additions: Mac Perry and the permit process. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Pearson moved, Chair Olson seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 26 October 2021 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Tchida gave her report, noting that the township has a balance of \$472,484.92 in the treasury. She reminded the board that \$61,268.06 of the balance is COVID-19 aid that is restricted to certain uses and cannot be used for general fund items. Clerk Swanson reported that additional COVID monies from the American Rescue Plan Act will be received because not all jurisdictions requested the funds. Treasurer Tchida noted that about \$2,000 in additional funds is expected in this round. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Olson seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve payment of checks #10209-10237 (with check numbers 10230 and 10237 being void) in the amount of \$22,518.50. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Olson, Supervisor Pearson, and Supervisor Schlaeger voting "aye".

Public Forum was offered. No one spoke.

Planning Commission recommendations:

The amendment to the zoning ordinance increasing road frontage and the permit checklist were deferred. Compilation of replacement truck requirements was deferred until spring.

Gerald and Andrea Plasek were present to discuss their proposed land split for PID 290022000. Mrs. Plasek distributed a certificate of survey from Hancock Surveying, dated 17 November 2021 detailing the split of the approximately 40-acre parcel into two parcels of approximately 27+ and 11+ acres, and showing the locations of soil borings on both parcels. She also distributed a survey, same date, of the 11+-acre and a copy of Pine County's minor subdivision checklist. Zoning Administrator Kemen noted his approval. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the proposed minor subdivision and to authorize the clerk to report same to Pine County. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson reported that Andrea Anderson had accepted, in principle, the position of deputy clerk, subject to final compensation decisions. The board welcomed her to the staff and extended a round of applause.

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No further information had been received regarding the Antonson minor subdivision matter and this issue will be removed from the agenda.

Chair Olson noted that the planning commission had reviewed and recommended approval of the draft agreements with county officials for law enforcement and prosecution activities for misdemeanor criminal septic and other ordinance violations. Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the agreement with the Pine County Attorney's office for prosecution services, dated 30 November 2021. The motion carried unanimously. Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agreement with the Pine County Sheriff's office for law enforcement services, dated 30 November 2021. The motion carried unanimously. Both agreements had been reviewed and recommended by town legal counsel.

Old Business:

Chair Olson referenced Clerk Swanson's memo regarding the township's insurance coverage. Cost of replacement insurance coverage for all three town buildings would increase the town's premium \$160, if the deductible remained at \$1,000. Supervisor Schlaeger questioned if the deductible should be increased to \$2,500, causing a reduction in premium. After discussion, Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve resolution 2021-9 authorizing replacement coverage for all three buildings and keeping the deductible at \$1,000. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be a part of these minutes.

Clerk Swanson distributed an update to the 2021 septic report. He noted that legal action regarding 3546 State Highway 70 and 4500 Buffalo Road was on hold pending approval of the service agreements with the Pine County Attorney and Sheriff. He reported on a complaint that replacement tanks had been installed at 5027 Brunswick Road without a septic permit. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the draft of a letter to the owners seeking an explanation. The motion carried unanimously.

Regarding 4201 State Highway 70, the supervisors noted that they have continued to receive complaints about activity on this property, from which it appears that an automobile repair business is operating without a conditional use permit. Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the draft letter to the resident requesting clarification of the business. The motion carried unanimously.

Zoning Administrator Kemen reported that he had driven by 1702 Royal Heights Lane and saw no activity; this issue was deferred until the annual road inspection.

Clerk Swanson reported the town Assessor John Keefe had visited 3623 State Highway 70 as one of the quintile properties to be assessed this year. Assessor Keefe noted that it appeared no one had been present for some time. He took images of a "shack" that appeared to have been lived in and a latrine. This matter will be revisited during the annual road inspection.

There has been no activity on the sound upgrades.

Clerk Swanson reported on his communications with Pokegama Township about road certification mileage for Mystic Dove Drive. Pokegama Township claims 0.28 miles; Royalton claims 0.31 miles. Road Superintendent Saumer measured the road as 0.33. Pokegama Township would like if each jurisdiction claims one-half of the mileage each year. By consensus, the board agreed to this policy and established the mileage as 0.31. The clerk will communicate this to Pokegama and will request a similar agreement with Nessel Township for 540th Street.

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Road Superintendent Saumer reported that a vehicle remains in the right-of-way on Hazelnut Road. The sheriff's office does not see it as a hazard and will not authorize towing it. The snow plow wing will likely hit the vehicle. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Olson seconded, to approve the draft of a letter to the property owner with the addition of phrases that indicate she will be responsible if town equipment is damaged by hitting the vehicle and the town will not be responsible for damages to the vehicle. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

There were no new zoning issues.

Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve Resolution 2021-8 designating the town hall as the annual polling place. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be a part of these minutes.

Chair Olson reviewed a communication from Denise Weis requesting that the rental fee be waived if the town hall is rented for a "return from deployment" party for her son. During discussion Chair Olson offered to pay the rental fee. Patrice DeGray spoke in support of waiving the fee noting Mrs. Weis's son's service in Kabul and his being on the last flight out of the capital at the end of the war. Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to waive the rental fee of \$50 but to not waive the refundable damage deposit of \$200. The motion carried unanimously. Chair Olson asked the planning commission to review the rental agreement with the possible insertion of a clause dealing with rentals in honor of returning military.

Roger Teich and Brandon Teich were present to ask the status of their land split and septic permit applications. Roger Teich noted that he had dug in water and electrical lines at 11367 Wildflower and that Grasston Excavating would be installing a new septic system at 9003 Wildflower. He asked Gary Valvoda and Septic Administrator Thompson to report on their visits, wondering why they had visited all three properties in question. Mr. Valvoda and Administrator Thompson reported that they had found all three sites too wet to begin work on the systems. They explained how the ground had been tested for moisture. Roger Teich disagreed with their assessments. Chair Olson then began to read the draft of an agreement with Brandon Teich covering the relationship between the proposed land split and the septic upgrades. He read each line, and asked Messrs. Teich if they understood. No objections were raised. The agreement, drafted by town legal counsel, requires the owner to bring the septic system at 9003 Wildflower into compliance before the town will approve the minor subdivision request for PID 290112000 or that an escrow account in the amount of 1½ times the estimated installation cost of the system by a licensed installer be established. Grasston Excavating has a verbal contract to install the system; a written copy of the contract must be submitted to the township. The escrow account would be in the amount of \$22,000. The septic system must be completed by 27 June 2022; the board determined that a penalty of \$100 per day will accrue if that deadline is not met. Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agreement. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Pearson reported on a meeting that Clerk Swanson and he had with Building Inspector Steve Thorp. Supervisor Pearson requested that the planning commission draft an outline of the 'normal' process for dealing with land splits and building permits. Chair Olson supported this request, noting that he has been advocating for the same result. He directed the planning commission to place this item on its January working meeting agenda.

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Realtor Mac Perry presented his proposal for a land split of PID 290068000, noting the difficulties of this parcel, which is bisected by State Highway 107 and the railroad right-of-way. On behalf of the owner, he noted that access to the east portion would be from the turnaround on Eagle Lane, there not being any other road frontage available. He was informed that septic tests could not be completed this year and that the site would have to be deemed not buildable until positive tests revealed that it could support a Type I septic system. If these conditions were acceptable to him, he could proceed with a survey. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve, in concept, Mr. Perry's request contingent upon submission of a certificate of survey and to note that the parcel would be declared not buildable until positive septic borings indicated that the site would permit a Type I septic system. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson requested a board determination if it desired to submit the broken grader window to insurance. Replacement of the window cost \$367 in glass and \$150 in installation costs. The town has a \$250 deductible in these matters. By consensus, the board decided to not submit this cost to insurance.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

FYI:

Chair Olson thanked Road Superintendent Saumer for seeing to the winterizing of the sprinkler system.

The next town board meeting will be 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 14 December 2021.

At 8:59 p.m., Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

Wayne Olson, Chair/Supervisor

Jeff Schlaeger, Vice Chair/Supervisor

Marshall Pearson, Supervisor

Wendy Tchida, Treasurer