

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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27 September 2022
Approved

7:30 p.m., 27 September 2022, Chair Wayne Olson called the Royalton Township regular board meeting to order with Supervisor Jeff Schlaeger, Supervisor Marshall Pearson, Treasurer Wendy Tchida, and Clerk Duane Swanson present. Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, Road Superintendent Dan Saumer, and Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson also attended, along with members of the planning commission (Priscilla Schneider and Gary Valvoda attended via remote electronic videoconferencing) and members of the public. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of five items: beavers on Bayberry, snowplow truck monies, noise issues near Royal River Road, MATIT, and MAT educational opportunities. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 30 August 2022 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Tchida gave her report, noting that as of 27 September 2022, the township has a balance of \$575,980.13 in the treasury. The report noted that \$109,128.83 of that balance is ARPA/COVID-19 aid that is restricted to certain uses, leaving a spendable balance of \$466,851.30. Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Pearson moved, Chair Olson seconded, to approve payment of checks #10533-10565 in the amount of \$18,784.74. 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 nonpermanent structure issues and the wedding venue proposal on Greeley Road will continue to be researched.

The board discussed the planning commission's proposal for fees for variance permit applications. Members expressed their opinions that few variance applications have been received and that its policy remains that fees should be kept as low as possible. Chair Olson directed the planning commission to focus on the nonpermanent structure issues as a higher priority.

Old Business:

Clerk Swanson reported on the status of several septic issues: 3546 State Highway 70 has a court date of 12 October 2022. Data on 10343 Wildflower Road has been forwarded to legal counsel for recommendation and action. 5027 Brunswick Road is awaiting finalization by Septic Administrator Thompson. After discussion with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, issues at 11183 Country Drive have been resolved and will be removed from the agenda.

Roger Teich was present to update the board on his septic issues. Regarding 11367 Wildflower: Town legal counsel had issued an imminent health threat notice of violation demanding remediation within the state-mandated 15 days (by 27 September 2022). This document had been received and signed for by Mrs. Teich. Remediation included: removal of the sewer pump, disconnection of the pipe from the mound, written

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verification by both the septic administrator and the zoning administrator that the pump had been disconnected, the signing of a pumping contract with a company to pump the tank whenever the alarm goes off, said contract and pumping receipts to be filed with the town, and a design for a new system to be filed with and approved by the septic administrator. Mr. Teich noted that the pump had been disconnected and the tank pumped and that he had delivered those documents to town counsel. Clerk Swanson verified that an invoice had been forwarded to the town for the pumping. The invoice stated that the pump had been “disabled.” Septic Administrator Thompson noted that she had not received any of the other documentation required by the notice of violation. Upon questioning by board members, Mr. Teich said all the requirements were in the works and he anticipated completion soon. Because the new design is significantly different from the existing one, a new septic permit must be issued. After substantial discussion, Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to require that all six issues identified in the notice of violation be resolved and approved by Septic Administrator Thompson by 11 October 2022, including the issuance of a new septic permit at a cost of \$150 (the repair cost because part of the existing system will be used in the new system). The motion carried unanimously. Chair Olson urged Mr. Teich to proceed expeditiously in accomplishing these requirements.

Mr. Teich then proceeded to discuss the septic situation at 8623 Woodland. The landscaping of the mound, as required by the board, has been completed. Septic Administrator Thompson noted that she does not have the required paperwork for the abandonment of the existing system on the property or the as-built design. Chair Olson reiterated that Mr. Teich must immediately work with Septic Administrator Thompson to complete these paperwork requirements before the existing system can be finalized. Mr. Teich indicated that he would follow-up with Administrator Thompson.

Clerk Swanson reported that a certified letter had been sent to 7876 Bluebell Road (PID295103000) regarding grading of the town road, removal of gravel from the road, and excessive vehicles on the property. No response had been received. Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to forward this issue to counsel for recommendation and action. The motion carried unanimously.

Mike Murphy was present to ask about the letter he received relating to the possibility of removing gravel from the town road and onto his property. Mr. Murphy denied that he had removed any gravel from the town road, saying that he had “done the town a favor” by smoothing it out. He indicated that he had receipts from Rydbergs for gravel purchased for his property extending west from the town’s right-of-way. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Olson seconded, to authorize a letter to Mr. Murphy indicating the town will rescind its request for a written reply to its letter if Mr. Murphy would agree to leave the town’s road right-of-way alone. Mr. Murphy indicated his agreement to that condition. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson reported that a letter had been written to the supposed new owner of 1702 Royal Heights Lane thanking him for the removal of junk and encouraging him to continue with the progress. A copy of said letter had been sent to the taxpayer of record per the county’s assessment records. This issue will be removed from the agenda.

No new information existed on 1605 Royal Heights Lane or PID 290085001 (Alfalfa Lane).

There were no updates on the road report.

Supervisor Schlaeger updated the board on the possibility of establishing a fire district. He had attended a meeting at which a legal representative discussed the procedures for establishing such a district, noting that the first step should be the naming of a fire chief to oversee the process.

The town hall concrete project is complete, except for minor cleaning of the doors. Exterior lighting will hopefully be installed on the west side of the building within a week.

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The electrical repairs needed to the town hall septic system have been completed by Road Superintendent Saumer. He will continue with the relining of the tank.

Superintendent Saumer reported that Sauser's is readying the new snow thrower and that he will pick it up when it is ready.

The board discussed Audrey Sherman's request for refund of inspections that were not made by the building official. The board reiterated that its policy is that refunds will not be granted. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to see to it that inspections are made.

New Business:

Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve Resolution 2022-9, a Resolution Appointing Election Judges for the 8 November 2022 General Election. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be part of these minutes.

The board, by consensus, authorized Road Superintendent Saumer to contact Jared Lucht to remediate the beaver problem on Bayberry Road.

Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to authorize the office to issue a check in the amount of up to \$10,000 to be used as a down payment to hold a purchase if Road Superintendent Saumer and Gary Valvoda locate a suitable snowplow truck for purchase. The motion carried unanimously, with Chair Olson, Supervisor Pearson, and Supervisor Schlaeger voting "aye."

John Graham and Linda Cobb were present to update the board on noise and other issues in the neighborhood of Royal River Road, leaving some documentation with the board. The sheriff's office has been repeatedly called and has responded with increased patrols. Residents remarked that the music is so loud that neighbors' walls vibrate. They also reported on the stench from raw sewage. Chair Olson encouraged continued calls to the sheriff's office. Supervisor Schlaeger distributed contact information for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. The board noted the difficulty of assisting when properties lie in the Shorelands District, which is under Pine County's responsibility, but encouraged residents to continue to keep the board informed.

Clerk Swanson reported on his communications with MATIT, the town's insurance carrier, about bills resulting from the guy wire broken by the town grader that resulted in an electric pole breaking. The board asked how this might affect our insurance premiums but encouraged the office to pursue the issue with MATIT.

Clerk Swanson noted that the Minnesota Association of Townships would be holding educational sessions around the state in October and November for supervisors on local boards of assessments and for clerks and treasurers on year end closeout activities.

Correspondence:

Chair Olson noted that WH Security's monitoring charge will increase by \$1.00 per month. He noted the response of Mike Malenowski to the board's denial of snowplowing a private driveway.

FYI:

Chair Olson reported that approval of William Saumer's minor subdivision request had been forwarded to Pine County.

The next regular town board meeting will be 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 25 October 2022.

At 8:40 p.m., Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

Wayne Olson, Chair/Supervisor

Jeff Schlaeger, Vice Chair/Supervisor

Marshall Pearson, Supervisor

Wendy Tchida, Treasurer