

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
Email: royalton@royaltontownship.com -- Website: www.royaltontownship.com
25 October 2022
Approved

7:30 p.m., 25 October 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 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 four items: beavers on Bayberry, snowplow truck monies, ditch on Pine Bough Road, and noise/septic issues on Royal River Road. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 27 September 2022 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Tchida gave her report, noting that as of 30 September 2022, the township has a balance of \$558,291.05 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 \$449,162.22. 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 #10566-10595 in the amount of \$48,872.21. 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 board noted that the nonpermanent structures discussion was continuing to be researched and that the wedding venue proposal would be removed from the agenda until more information was received from the proposers.

Old Business:

Clerk Swanson distributed a status report on 2022 septic issues noting that 19 projects had been completed/resolved and nine were still pending. Regarding 3546 State Highway 70, court convened on 12 October, the owner did not attend, and the case was continued until 29 December. Regarding 10343 Wildflower, updates are in process. Regarding 11367 Wildflower, 8623 Woodland, and 5027 Brunswick certificates of compliance for new systems have been filed with the township and these items will be removed from the agenda. Regarding 8311 Brunswick an imminent health threat has been issued because of faulty wiring; there has been a dispute over whether or not the township septic inspector has the authority to issue such a decision; discussions with the state electrical inspector have confirmed that the septic inspector can issue such an order under Minnesota statutes and rules.

Regarding zoning issues: No response has been received from the owners of 7876 Bluebell regarding the town's letter about removal of gravel from the town road and excessive vehicles. More research will be done. Clerk Swanson relayed a message from a nearby resident that the excessive noise on Bluebell Road has diminished, that sheriff patrols have been very frequent and have included traffic stops. The resident thanked the board for its support. The permit issue regarding a trailer house on Alfalfa Lane remains in the purview of John Kemen to

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involve the building inspector as needed. Clerk Swanson presented a draft of a letter to Michael Murphy regarding graveling on Riverbed Road. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Olson seconded, to approve the draft and send the letter. The motion carried unanimously. Clerk Swanson presented a draft of an email response to Audrey Sherman regarding her request for building fee refunds. Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the draft and to send the email. The motion carried unanimously.

No road updates were received.

Supervisor Schlaeger and Road Superintendent Saumer reported on the progress toward establishing a fire district. Discussion centered around the probable costs; a cost projection handout was distributed. Changing fire service boundaries within the township was also discussed. Supervisor Schlaeger will continue to attend the district meetings and update the board.

Regarding town hall building upgrades, Supervisor Pearson noted that the outside electrical lighting had been installed so that the sidewalk will be usable at night, and that the final cosmetic work on the front doors will be deferred until spring. Road Superintendent Saumer noted that the relining of the septic tank will likely wait until spring. He also reported that the new snow blower has been picked up and is now available for use.

New Business:

Mr. Brett Westbrook was present to introduce himself as a candidate for Pine County Sheriff. He noted that he would be an “active” sheriff participating in events outside the office, that deployment of resources is an issue, and that he is familiar with the issues facing Royalton Township residents. Chair Olson thanked Mr. Westbrook for his presentation, and Mr. Westbrook left the meeting.

Chair Olson noted the information about a vacancy from District 7 on the Minnesota Association of Townships board of directors. No action was taken.

Clerk Swanson gave an update on the upcoming elections, noting that the public accuracy test of the voting equipment will be conducted on Saturday, 5 November 2022 at 10:00 a.m. Members of the public are invited.

Clerk Swanson presented Resolution 2022-10 accepting donation of a used wheelchair, proposed to be donated by Marion M. Larson. Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the resolution accepting the donation. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be part of these minutes.

A general discussion ensued about the possible availability of acceptable used snowplow trucks, including a 2012 model with 40,000 miles for under \$50,000. Chair Olson will verify that the type of engine is acceptable. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to delegate inspection of that and other similar vehicles to Road Superintendent Saumer and to authorize Superintendent Saumer to commit up to \$75,000 from American Rescue Plan funds should he identify an acceptable vehicle. The motion further authorizes that a check be issued before the next board meeting should an acceptable vehicle be found. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Olson, Supervisor Pearson, and Supervisor Schlaeger voting “Aye.”

John DeGray informed the board that he would be starting very soon on the ditching project on Pine Bough Road. It has already been staked for utility lines.

Road Superintendent Saumer reported that he had once again removed the obstructions created by beaver on Bayberry Road. He will contact another individual about removing the beaver.

Chair Olson reported that the Planning Commission had forwarded to the board the issues of trespass, septic concerns, and junk at a property on Royal River Road. Members of the public supported the contention that this was a major concern and health hazard. The board noted that the septic issues, at the present time, fall in the

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Shorelands District, of which Pine County, and not Royalton Township, has jurisdiction. The board sympathized with those detailing the situation, which includes the leaving of feces and garbage on neighboring parcels of land. The board discussed various strategies for encouraging the county to fulfill its responsibilities in this regard and continued to entertain the option of attempting to reclaim septic jurisdiction to the township. The board authorized Planning Commission Chair Les Orvis to bring this issue to the attention of county officials and to gather additional evidence for presentation at a later meeting. Chair Olson thanked members of the public for their vigilance in keeping the board informed of developments in the area.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

FYI:

Chair Olson noted that an insurance claim had been filed by the township with MATIT to recover costs associated with the electric pole broken by the town grader. He noted that the Board of Equalization and Review has been scheduled for 9:00 a.m., Monday, 23 April 2023 at the town hall.

The next regular town board meeting will be 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 29 November 2022.

At 8:45 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