

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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13 December 2022
Approved

7:30 p.m., 13 December 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, Zoning Administrator John Kemen also attended, along with members of the planning commission and members of the public. Priscilla Schneider substituted for Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of plow truck.

Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 29 November 2022 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Tchida read her report, noting that as of 30 November 2022, the township has a balance of \$616,032.43 in the treasury. The report noted that \$104,339.83 of that balance is ARPA/COVID-19 aid that is restricted to certain uses, leaving a spendable balance of \$487,510.46. Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve payment of checks #10634-10656 in the amount of \$5,062.68. 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.

No additional submissions from Cole Newman regarding his proposed minor subdivision had been received. Zoning Administrator Kemen will contact Mr. Newman regarding specific concerns.

The board noted the planning commission's discussion regarding the sign permit applications and attendant variance applications from Chris DeGray and John DeGray to erect business signs on their properties for Grasston Excavating. Both sites are on Harvest Road and would be larger than provided for in Royalton's Code of Ordinances. The board noted that in the past such larger-than-permitted signs had been approved as part of conditional use permits provided that the signs be placed on land owned by the applicant and subject to conditions specific to the site. Supervisor Pearson opined that the distances noted in the applications should be from the center line of the road rather than the edge of the driven surface. John DeGray annotated each variance application using that formula. The board, acting as the Board of Adjustment and Appeals, noted that both site applications and both variance applications were in order, that the signs would not be lighted and would not be larger than four feet by eight feet, and would be sufficiently off the right of way. Placement of the signs would not interfere with traffic flow or be visual impairments to travelers on the public right of way. Sufficient acreage was available at both sites so that placement of the signs would not result in the appearance of blight caused by numerous signs on individual properties. The board further found that erection of these signs is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the comprehensive plan and ordinance which encourages business development and would not alter the essential character of the locality or adversely impact the environment. The board considered the size of the signs and recognized that a business sign following the ordinance requirements would not be effective for advertising purposes suited to this business. The board also noted that a public hearing, optional at the discretion of the board, was not needed in this case because of the distance between adjacent properties.

WO____ MP____ JS____ WT____ DS____

After discussion, Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the site application and the attendant variance request of Chris DeGray to erect a four by eight-foot sign, unlighted, at 11064 Harvest Road, Grasston, to authorize the zoning administrator and town clerk to sign the documents, and to authorize the town clerk to file the approved variance with the Pine County Recorder as required by the ordinance. The motion, requiring a two-thirds majority for adoption, was approved unanimously, with all three members voting “Aye.”

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve the site application and the attendant variance request of John DeGray to erect a four by eight-foot sign, unlighted, at 9431 Harvest Road, Grasston, to authorize the zoning administrator and town clerk to sign the documents, and to authorize the town clerk to file the approved variance with the Pine County Recorder as required by the ordinance. The motion, requiring a two-thirds majority for adoption, was approved unanimously, with all three members voting “Aye.”

Old Business:

Chair Olson acknowledged receipt of the final 2022 septic report.

In zoning issues, 7876 Bluebell Road will receive a second letter about excessive numbers of abandoned vehicles. The new trailer house on PID 290085001 has been tied down and skirted and will be removed from the agenda. No updates from the county had been received on 5214 Royal Woods Road.

The board reviewed the 2022 final road report draft. Road Superintendent Saumer noted that, according to the past scheduling, certain roads that had been graveled in 2021 were scheduled again in 2023. That issue will be revisited during the 2023 road inspection. Chair Olson directed that comments be sent to Clerk Swanson for incorporation into the draft.

Supervisor Schlaeger reported that no meetings regarding the proposed fire district had been held but that one was upcoming.

New Business:

The board reviewed the MATIT insurance coverage and estimated costs for 2023. By consensus, the board authorized that the new snow blower (with a value of \$1300) be listed under covered equipment. Road Superintendent Saumer will get model details to Clerk Swanson.

Chair Olson asked for discussion on proposed Resolution 2022-7 declaring the town’s intent to remove trees from the right of way. Clerk Swanson noted that this was the language recommended by the Minnesota Association of Townships as the beginning point to comply with newer regulations for the effective management of vegetation along road rights-of-way. He had added verbiage including protection of town maintenance workers as a justification for remedial action. This resolution only declares the intent of the board and does not relate to actions regarding specific roads. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Pearson seconded, to approve and sign Resolution 2022-7; the motion carried unanimously. A copy of said resolution shall be part of these minutes.

Chair Olson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve and sign Resolution 2022-12 appointing election judges and an absentee ballot board for the 14 March 2023 town election; the motion carried unanimously. A copy of said resolution shall be part of these minutes.

Road Superintendent Saumer reported on his research for a new plow truck. He has found base trucks, without accessories, for \$114,000 to \$115,000, with a long wait for delivery.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

WO____ MP____ JS____ WT____ DS____

FYI:

Chair Olson reported that the resolution declaring the town hall to be the polling place in 2023 was forwarded to the Pine County Auditor-Treasurer and that the Auditor-Treasurer had been notified of offices to be voted on at the 14 March 2023 township annual meeting, in accordance with state deadlines.

Chair Olson also noted that candidacy filings for one supervisor (three-year position) and one treasurer (two-year position) will open on 3 January 2023 and close at 5:00 p.m., 17 January 2023, by appointment with town clerk; the clerk's office will also be open for filings on 17 January 2023 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The next regular town board meeting will be 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 31 January 2023. **[Note correction of date from that announced in December's agenda.]**

At 7:54 p.m., Supervisor Pearson moved, Chair Olson 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