

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
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27 June 2023
Approved

7:34 p.m., 27 June 2023, Chair Marshall Pearson called the Royalton Township regular board meeting to order, with Supervisor Jeff Schlaeger, Supervisor John Graham, Treasurer Jenessa Saumer, and Clerk Duane Swanson present. Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, Road Superintendent Dan Saumer, Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson, and Zoning Administrator John Kemen also attended, along with members of the planning commission and members of the public. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the agenda as presented, with two additional items (additional claims to be paid and additional planning commission recommendations). The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 30 May 2023 as presented. Audience discussion revealed that three words needed to be corrected in the paragraph on PERA. Deputy Clerk Anderson made the recommended changes and provided updated copies to the board. After review, the motion carried unanimously, and the board signed the updated minutes.

Treasurer Saumer read her May report, noting that as of 31 May 2023, the township had a balance of \$545,022.85 in the treasury. After including income and outstanding checks, the balance was reduced to \$498,599.98. The report noted that \$104,229.84 of that balance is ARPA/COVID-19 aid that is restricted to certain uses, leaving a spendable balance of \$394,370.14. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Pearson called for discussion of checks #10826-10854 in the amount of \$9,267.93. Clerk Swanson indicated that two additional claims had been submitted and requested that they be included in the motion: 1) Mell Construction Inc. in the amount of \$4,860.00 for culverts and related reconstruction work on Bluebell Road, Grasston Court, Eagle Lane, and Church Road; 2) Hass Construction in the amount of \$33,642.00 for 2403 yards of gravel hauled on township roads between 25 April and 26 June. Both statements contained itemized expenses by road name. Road Superintendent Saumer and Supervisor Graham noted that the Mell invoice contained additional charges for reclaiming gravel on Grasston Court, for removal of the crushed culvert from Grasston Court, and for removal of swamp grass and muck from Eagle Lane. The board had no further questions on this invoice. After reviewing the Hass Construction invoice, Road Superintendent Saumer noted that one of the entries was for \$952.00 for gravel supposedly dropped on Canary Road, which is a county road. Steve Hass noted that this must be a mistake because no gravel was dropped on a county road. He suggested that this item be dropped from the invoice until he could verify which road the 68 yards should be attributed to. The remaining balance on the invoice is \$32,690.00. Road Superintendent Saumer also noted that the charges to Mystic Dove Drive (187 yards for \$2,618.00 would be split with Pokegama Township, which was previously agreed to). Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve payment of checks #10826-10854 in the amount of \$9,267,93; to authorize a check to be cut to Mell Construction in the amount of \$4,860.00; and to authorize a check to be cut to Hass Construction in the amount of \$32,690.00. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Pearson, Supervisor Schlaeger, and Supervisor Graham voting "Aye." Subsequent to the meeting, checks were issued to Mell Construction [#18055, given to Supervisor Graham for delivery] and to Hass Construction [#10856, hand-delivered to Steve Hass] in the amounts authorized by the board.

Public Forum was offered. Leslie Orvis noted that the Resolution Accepting Donation from the Rock Creek Lions for the Royalton Memorial Cemetery contained an error and asked that it be redone.

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Planning Commission recommendations:

Chair Pearson called for discussion of the minor subdivision and boundary adjustment proposal of Jared Ross. The planning commission recommended approval; Septic Administrator Thompson and Zoning Administrator Kemen indicated their approval. The board reviewed Mr. Ross’s certificate of survey. Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to approve the minor subdivision/boundary adjustment request of Jared and Alexandra Ross for PIDs 290208001, 290208002, and 290208003, according to a certificate of survey by E.G. Rud & Sons, Inc., dated 6 June 2023, with updated zoning comments of 26 June 2023 and to authorize the clerk to forward said approval to Pine County. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Pearson called for discussion of the variance request of Jeff Jefferson regarding removal of a nonconforming mobile home from one parcel on Royal River Road to another parcel on Royal River Road to replace an existing nonconforming mobile home. The planning commission recommended approval with conditions. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to approve the request for an in-house variance to accomplish this project, subject to the following conditions: That the dwelling to be moved be re-sided within one year of the activation of the variance, that the in-house variance fee of \$100 be paid before moving, and that any building or septic permits that are deemed by the septic administrator or zoning administrator to be needed to accomplish the relocation be completed within 12 months. Although the variance application was left with the township, Zoning Administrator Kemen noted that it should not be filed with the county until it was determined that the relocation will take place. The motion, which includes the stated conditions, carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson distributed a draft letter to Daniel Smith of 110 Greeley Road concerning the unpermitted sign that had been erected on his property. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to authorize sending of the letter as drafted. The motion carried unanimously.

Regarding other issues before the planning commission, the board directed the commission to draft wording regarding the town’s no-smoking policy, how to handle cigarette butts on the grounds, and how to enforce any regulations.

Old Business:

Septic report: Septic Administrator Thompson addressed the board regarding the proposal by Mitchell Thompson to install holding tanks rather than Type I septic systems on at least three properties in the Bear’s Ear subdivision. She shared with the board that Type I septic designs had been prepared for the three parcels. Section 502.4, subp. a, of the Royalton Code of Ordinances allows only Type I systems on these parcels. The board, by consensus, agreed that these parcels should have Type I systems. Administrator Thompson will communicate that decision to the owner.

There were no updates on zoning issues.

Road report:

Supervisor Graham reported to the board that a new proposal for culverts on Raspberry Road North had been developed. The board, during its road inspection, had decided to place a culvert across Raspberry Road north of Steve Saumer’s driveway directing water to the east side of the road and to replace an existing culvert in Mike Saumer’s driveway. Further inspection of the culvert in Steve Saumer’s driveway (now that water had receded) revealed significant degradation to the existing culvert. Supervisor Graham’s updated proposal calls for elimination of the culvert crossing Raspberry, the replacement of the culvert on Mike Saumer’s driveway, and any ditching on the east side. The new proposal calls for installation of a 30” culvert across Steve Saumer’s driveway with some “minimal” ditching on the west side to direct water flow. Mell Construction’s proposal for this work is \$800. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the revised plan and to authorize Mell Construction to proceed with work. The motion carried unanimously.

Secondary Road Operator Alex Anderson met with a representative from ECE regarding the culvert at 10601

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Country Drive. ECE will remove its line if the township replaces the culvert. Supervisor Graham and Road Superintendent Saumer indicated that the culvert was showing signs of degradation and should probably be replaced. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to install a 15” culvert at 10601 Country Drive and to coordinate activity with ECE. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham reported the beaver remediation on Sage Drive is not succeeding. He has contacted Jared Lucht who has assisted the township before in this regard. Large trees are being cut down that will likely fall on the roadway. Mr. Lucht will charge \$50 per trap and \$25 per beaver. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to authorize Jared Lucht to initiate beaver control on Sage Drive. The motion carried unanimously.

Tom Madison was present to express his concern about dust control on the sand/gravel pit on Wayde Lerbs’ property off Frost Drive. He explained the photographs, of which the board had copies. Deputy Clerk Anderson provided Mr. Madison with a copy of the interim use permit for the gravel pit. Chair Pearson directed the office to draft a letter regarding dust control within the pit, copying Mr. Madison. Chair Pearson also directed the office to see what documentation may exist for the gravel pit on the south side of Frost Drive.

Road Superintendent Saumer reported that the “roads are coming along,” that graveling is being accomplished, and that Bluebell is being packed and will get additional gravel. A 15” culvert was installed on Church Road instead of a 24”; that situation will require monitoring to see if it needs to be enlarged.

Road Superintendent Saumer also noted that the road inspection recommended ditching on Bear’s Ear and repair of the culvert at Bear Claw Drive. This project would be enhanced by moving two mailboxes approximately 50 feet south of their existing locations on Bear’s Ear Road. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to send letters to 10199 Bear Claw and 10278 Bear Claw requesting this move to facilitate snow removal and ditch cleaning. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson reported that Carol Gaard had contacted the office about how pleased she was with her new mailbox post and specifically thanked Road Superintendent Saumer for his work on the project.

Supervisor Schlaeger had nothing new to report on the establishment of a fire district.

Supervisor Graham reported that the new grader had been ordered and that it was scheduled to be finished on 16 October with delivery by the first or second week in November. Payment would be on delivery. Chair Pearson asked for pictures of the existing grader as the township considers its resale. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to ask for \$50,000 down from any potential buyer that may be interested. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion on the Pine City fire contract was postponed until the July meeting.

New Business:

Treasurer Saumer explained how she has set up electronic billing for the ECE bill. She will be authorizing individual payments each month electronically; payments will not automatically be deducted. Chair Pearson moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize electronic fund payments to ECE beginning with the June 2023 invoice and continuing until the board authorizes stoppage. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson explained the malfunctions with the township’s security system. A technician is scheduled to visit on 6 July.

Supervisor Graham asked about the future of the township gravel pit off Sage Drive. Chair Pearson directed the Planning Commission to study the possible sale of this 4.5+ acre parcel.

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Correspondence:

Chair Pearson explained the report of the State Demographer showing that Royalton's population as of 1 April 2022 was 1087 in 440 households.

FYI:

Chair Pearson noted that Resolution 2023-4 supporting a fire district grant was forwarded to Pine City Township.

The next regular meeting of the town board will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 25 July 2023.

At 8:56 p.m., Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

Marshall Pearson, Chair/Supervisor

Jeff Schlaeger, Vice Chair/Supervisor

John Graham, Supervisor

Jenessa M. Saumer, Treasurer