

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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26 September 2023
Approved

7:39 p.m., 26 September 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, 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 Schlaeger moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to approve the agenda as presented, with the addition of 4870 Woodland Road and 8195 Cabin Drive. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 29 August 2023 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer read her August report, noting that as of 31 August 2023, the township had a balance of \$541,929.41 in the treasury. After including income and outstanding checks, the balance was reduced to \$529,165.59. 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 \$424,935.75. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer noted that the electronic payment processes for CenturyLink bills and for federal withholding are going well. She and Clerk Swanson noted that documentation had been received from Frandsen Bank and Trust assuring that all township funds are protected in case of the bank's failure. This collateralization includes amounts exceeding the \$250,000 limit insured by the FDIC. This documentation will be filed in the town office. Treasurer Saumer also noted that the difficulties gaining access to the Minnesota Management and Budget account for the township are nearing resolution.

Chair Pearson called for discussion of checks #10910-10938 in the amount of \$8,535.08. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to approve payment of the bills. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Pearson, Supervisor Schlaeger, and Supervisor Graham voting "Aye."

Public Forum was offered. Patrice DeGray asked about the policies on ditching when, in the future, additional work needed to be done. Supervisor Graham noted that the township had a binder containing quotes from various firms giving rates for various jobs and that that information would be used to award additional ditching.

Planning Commission recommendations:

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the wording of the draft letter regarding filing of septic compliance reports with the township. The motion carried unanimously.

The board noted that the issue of administrative citations would be studied by the planning commission.

Old Business:

Septic issues: 4050 State Highway 70 (PID 290262001) still needs a letter regarding the board's decision on a compliance inspection report. Mitchell Thompson's three septic system designs for Bears Ear/Oakwood now have applications; this issue can be removed from the agenda. Regarding 4870 Woodland Road (PID 290247000), Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Pearson seconded, to approve the draft language of a letter notifying the owners that their newly renovated septic system is compliant but that the system needs annual monitoring with reports being submitted to the township beginning by 1 September 2024. The motion carried

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unanimously.

Zoning issues: No updates had been received from Pine County regarding enforcement of building permit issues at 5214 Royal Woods Road (PID 295137000).

Planning Commission Chair Leslie Orvis noted that the commission recommended to the board that the applications for a conditional/interim use permit and variance for 110 Greeley Road (PID 290374000) contained inadequate data for action and that the unpermitted sign needed to be taken down and left on the property. By consensus, the board authorized Chair Orvis to talk with Zoning Administrator John Kemen to effect the removal and to communicate the commission's recommendations to the owners.

A letter will be sent to the owners of 7876 Bluebell Road with a copy to the town's building official regarding unpermitted upgrades to the dwelling.

For the board's information, Chair Pearson explained issues surrounding 8195 Cabin Drive. The property is being offered for sale with an automatic easement to the river, which appears not to be on record. A garage on the property appears to be bisected by the property line. A site permit for the garage would have been issued by the county, so it would not be on file with the township. A building permit is on file with the township, but that would not have given the exact location of the structure. At this point no action is contemplated by the township, but board members need to be aware of future discussions about these issues.

Road report: Supervisor Graham reported that the landowner at 10601 Country Drive had done additional ditching, but that the water flow was still not appropriate. He recommended that the issue be reviewed at next spring's road inspection and that the check for current work (which had been held by the township) be released. By consensus, the board approved. The issue of placement of two mailboxes on Bears Ear Road remains under consideration by the Pine City Post Office and its superiors.

Regarding dust control on Frost Drive, Planning Commission Chair Orvis noted that Dick Doenz, operator of the pit, may do dust control as needed. He reiterated the need to move forward from this issue and leave it in the hands of the legal counsel for the parties involved.

There were no updates on the possible establishment of a fire district. The grader is scheduled to be delivered during the first week of November.

Chair Pearson reported that the lawn service company will reinstall edging that had been removed or had come up; lawn mowing bills had not been received yet. Road Superintendent Saumer noted that he had additional edging stored in the shed and would make it available.

Chair Pearson updated the board on building upgrades: The front door has been repainted. Chair Pearson has investigated cabinetry for the file room, estimating costs between \$800-\$900. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize Chair Pearson to purchase and install cabinetry not to exceed \$1,200. The motion carried unanimously. Chair Pearson noted that he will need assistance in the installation. At this time, Clerk Swanson reported that additional file cabinet purchases could wait. Road Superintendent Saumer reported that he had sealed most of the septic tank but needed additional sealant. Chair Pearson will arrange for the sprinkler system to be winterized. Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to authorize spraying for insects around the exterior of the town hall building only. The motion carried unanimously.

Robin Boeke was present to ask about the sale of the township gravel pit adjoining their property. Chair Pearson explained that the town had one offer, that the town would require a turnaround for the grader and other town equipment, that this would be included on a certificate of survey and in a purchase agreement. He noted that legal fees for negotiating the contract may be about \$250.00. He stated that the town would accept offers until 7:00 p.m., the 24 October 2023, when the board may decide. Ms. Boeke confirmed her understanding of this

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process. Ms. Boeke also reported that beaver had returned to the gravel pit off Sage Drive. By consensus, the board authorized Road Superintendent Saumer to engage Jared Lucht for beaver control.

New Business:

Clerk Swanson detailed the request of County Auditor Kelly Schroeder about Pine County's allocation of \$7,827.95 for election administration. Each jurisdiction is entitled to a proportional share of those monies; Royalton's share is \$83.94. The township can elect to receive that amount, use it on election administration, and be responsible for the reporting on how the monies were expended. Alternatively, the town can agree to have the county expend the monies on the town's behalf. Chair Pearson moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to forego the \$83.94 and agree to let the county expend it on the town's behalf. The motion carried unanimously. Chair Pearson signed the agreement.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve Resolution 2023-5 verifying area served by the Braham Fire Department. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be part of these minutes. Supervisor Graham and Clerk Swanson reported on their attendance at the open house sponsored by Braham Fire and Rescue. The department is planning to begin an equipment fund so that replacement equipment can be budgeted and planned for. The city has contributed \$50,000 and is asking the areas served by the department to contribute another \$50,000. This fund will be dedicated solely to the replacement of equipment. The net result will be a more than doubling of Royalton's fire assessment for 2024 and beyond.

The board discussed the secondary road operator job description draft, especially the part relating to the requirement of the CDL and health card. By consensus, the draft was deemed okay, and the office was tasked with placing an ad in the Pine City Pioneer for two weeks with concurrent announcements on the website and sign board.

Clerk Swanson gave an update on his attendance at the Couri & Ruppe legal seminar, noting especially that the new employment law would have a significant effect on the township's workload for keeping track of personnel compensation and may increase its personnel budget.

Clerk Swanson also updated the board on the status of the FEMA disaster reimbursement request. Road Superintendent Saumer has spent a great deal of time collating information on his time and that of the grader. He, along with Supervisor Graham and Clerk Swanson, met with John Menendez, our FEMA contact, who was very supportive of the data we had submitted so far and is anxious to assist us in going forward.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence.

FYI:

The next regular meeting of the town board will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 24 October 2023. Please note the change of date from the last Tuesday of the month, which is Halloween.

At 9:01 p.m., Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to adjourn the meeting. 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