

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes  
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006  
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28 May 2024  
Approved

7:35 p.m., 28 May 2024, Chair Jeff Schlaeger called the Royalton Township regular board meeting to order, with Supervisor John Graham, Supervisor Pete Belland, Treasurer Jenessa Saumer, and Clerk Duane Swanson present. Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, Zoning Administrator John Kemen, and Road Superintendent Dan Saumer also attended, along with members of the planning commission and members of the public. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Belland moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agenda as presented, with the addition of personnel item. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the road inspection of 29 April 2024, as presented, with the understanding that specific items may be reconsidered due to budgetary concerns. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 30 April 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer read her report, noting that as of 30 April 2024, the township had a balance of \$325,606.31 in the treasury. Deposits were \$51,498.33; disbursements were \$12,736.26, leaving an ending balance of \$377,688.12. Outstanding checks were \$13,319.75, leaving a spendable balance of \$364,368.38. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson noted the continuing deficits in the fire fund and the road and bridge fund. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to transfer \$50,000 from the general fund to the fire fund. The motion carried unanimously. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to transfer \$155,000 from the general fund to the road and bridge fund. The motion carried unanimously. Supervisor Belland cautioned the board to watch the expenditures closely.

Clerk Swanson noted that the township's bank representative had suggested that the board consider investing in a short-term certificate of deposit to earn a higher interest rate. Treasurer Saumer had investigated this possibility and noted her approval. Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to authorize Treasurer Saumer to invest \$50,000 in a six-month certificate of deposit earning 5.12% at Frandsen Bank and Trust (Pine City). The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer reported that she had prepared paperwork to remove former Chair Marshall Pearson from the list of authorized signatures and to replace him with Supervisor Pete Belland.

Chair Schlaeger called for discussion of checks #11149-11178 in the amount of \$37,884.13. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve payment of the bills. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Graham, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye."

Planning Commission recommendations:

Planning Commission Chair Les Orvis requested permission for commission members to attend the public informational session on the new cannabis law being held by the Pine County board of commissioners on 18 June at 1:00 p.m. Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the request. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Orvis also reported that the commission would be taking another look at the administrative citations ordinance in light of legal counsel's questioning if the township had authority to impose them. He noted that no other ordinance updates were available.

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Old Business:

Septic issues: Regarding 11227 Homer Road, Peter McMahon was present to resubmit his expired septic permit application with the appropriate fee and penalties; Septic Administrator Amy Thompson approved the application. This issue will be removed from the agenda. Clerk Swanson distributed a draft letter regarding the lack of remediation of the septic issues at PID 290124003 (10343 Wildflower Road). Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, that the draft be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

Zoning issues: There is still no response from Pine County about the zoning concerns at 5214 Royal Woods Road (PID 295137000). Clerk Swanson distributed a draft letter regarding zoning violations at PID 295231000 (Royal Heights Lane). Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the draft to “Resident” and to the institution holding the foreclosure. The motion carried unanimously.

Road issues: Clerk Swanson noted that Road Superintendent Saumer had, as requested, submitted a culvert and sign inventory. Supervisor Belland noted that he and Superintendent Saumer were continuing to work on the issue of using “red” and/or “green” fuel. This item can be removed from the agenda.

The board then considered details from the road inspection minutes and accompanying spreadsheet and made the following decisions:

Regarding ditching: Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve ditching on either side of the driveway at fire number 5789 on Hummingbird Road, to approve ditching and installation of a culvert on Royal Heights Lane, and to approve extension of the ditching on Country Drive. The motion further paused ditching considerations on Eagle Lane and Church Road and authorized Road Superintendent Saumer to discuss ditching possibilities with the landowners along Grasston Court. Road Supervisor Belland will solicit quotes for each individual project. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize Road Superintendent Saumer to order the following culverts: Two (2) twenty (20)-foot long fifteen (15) inch culverts, one (1) fourteen (14)-foot long fifteen (15) inch culvert, along with three (3) aprons and one (1) band. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to authorize Road Superintendent Saumer to order the following signs and posts: Five (5) dead end signs (for Eagle Lane, Bears Ear Road, Maple Shores Drive, Acorn Drive, and Majestic Road west), one (1) left hand turn sign (for Timber Drive), and eight (8) signposts. The motion also authorized installation of stop ahead signs on Raspberry Road north and Timber Drive from existing inventory. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the full length graveling of Royalton Road north, Hazelnut Road, Bluebell Road, Clover Lane, Hummingbird Road, and Majestic Road. The motion carried unanimously.

No brushing or tree cutting at this time was ordered.

Clerk Swanson noted the legal opinion of 15 May 2024 regarding the length of Clover Lane. It reads, in part, “Based on my review of those materials [it] is my opinion that there is not sufficient evidence to support a claim that Clover Lane extends beyond the 1983’ shown in the sketch prepared by Dan Saumer, and labeled Exhibit 3 in my materials.” By consensus, the board endorsed this legal opinion, and the issue will be removed from the agenda. Dan Downing and Troy Downing were given copies of the opinion.

Clerk Swanson reported that the fifth element of the FEMA grant, administrative costs (approximately \$1,100), had been obligated, and payment was expected soon.

Chair Schlaeger and Clerk Swanson reported on their meeting with legal counsel to determine the easiest way to effect the transfer from township authority to private ownership of road T-13 while maintaining access to the back parcels. Legal counsel’s recommendation was to have all the fee landowners involved, including any mortgage holders, agree to a group easement dedication and then approach the town board for a resolution accepting the easement. This

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resolution should be reviewed by town counsel before approval by the board.

Clerk Swanson reported that Travis Kemen will update the wireless key system in the town hall during the week of 2 June, if schedules permit.

The board authorized Road Superintendent Dan Saumer to investigate and repair, if possible, the soap dispenser in the women's bathroom.

The board asked Clerk Swanson to again provide them with copies of the proposed amendment to the Pine City fire department contract.

Clerk Swanson reported that two 2024 township handbooks had been received.

New Business:

Clerk Swanson reported that Pamela Wiener has offered a four-drawer legal file cabinet in excellent condition to the town hall as a donation, which he accepted pending board approval. Gary Valvoda transported it to the town hall, and it is being used. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve Resolution 2024-3 accepting this donation from Pamela Wiener. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be a part of these minutes.

Clerk Swanson presented Resolution 2024-4 accepting a donation of \$20,000 from the Rock Creek Lions for additions and improvements to the town's playground. Said monies are to be for a picnic shelter, table and bench, installation of a cement sidewalk, and the addition of woodchips. Members of the Lions will do the installation. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the resolution. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be a part of these minutes.

Clerk Swanson submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning Commission effective 1 May 2024. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to accept Clerk Swanson's resignation. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Forum was offered. Patrice DeGray noted her disappointment with Pine County for not issuing a county-wide moratorium on cannabis growing in order to study the effects of product on the welfare of the county's residents. She recommended that the township do something in this regard and recommended that the township do not sign any licenses until the state rule-making authority has done its job.

Denise Weis reiterated her call for a township hearing at which the public could ask questions and render opinions on a moratorium on the cannabis issue. She urged the board to set a hearing date after giving the required ten-day notice.

Planning Commission Chair Orvis urged planning commission members to review further House File 4757, which was recently approved by the Legislature.

Mrs. Weis then expressed her desire to be appointed to the planning commission.

Joe Zappa explained that the recent law would allow holders of social equity licenses to grow cannabis before 1 January 2025. He noted that his company does not qualify for a social equity license. He noted that his company is currently growing hemp inside and outside the greenhouses on the property for which he has a purchase agreement.

Peter McGovern noted that he qualifies for a social equity license for his property off Homer Road.

As an additional item of new business, Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to place an announcement in the town's legal newspaper seeking applications from residents who wish to be appointed to the planning commission. Applications, with resumé's, will be considered at the 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 25 June 2024, board meeting.

Correspondence:

Chair Schlaeger noted the invitation by the Pine County board of commissioners to attend a public discussion of

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the new cannabis law at 1:00 p.m., 18 June 2024, in the North Pine Government Center.

FYI:

Chair Schlaeger reported that the State, Local, and Tribal Support (ARPA) compliance report had been sent to the U.S. treasury department, that the final P4 form for FEMA-related management costs had been submitted to the Minnesota department of public safety, that the reimbursement request for presidential nomination primary expenses had been submitted to the Minnesota secretary of state, and that the April report of building permits issued for new residences had been sent to the U.S. census bureau.

The next regular meeting of the town board will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 25 June 2024.

At 9:04 p.m., Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

Jeff Schlaeger, Chair/Supervisor

John Graham, Vice Chair/Supervisor

Pete Belland, Supervisor

Jenessa M. Saumer, Treasurer