

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes  
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006  
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29 October 2024  
Approved

7:30 p.m., 29 October 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, Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson, and Road Superintendent Dan Saumer, along with members of the planning commission and the public attended. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Supervisor Belland moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the agenda as presented, with the addition of road concerns on Majestic Road west, Hummingbird Road, Country Drive, and Royal Heights Lane and clerk's general announcements. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 24 September 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer gave her report, noting that as of 1 September 2024, the township had a beginning balance of \$291,902.28 in the treasury. Deposits were \$1,729.82, disbursements were \$8,708.10, leaving an ending bank balance on 30 September of \$289,944.58. Outstanding checks were \$5,020.58 and a certificate of deposit in the amount of \$50,000 was in place, leaving a spendable balance of \$234,924.00. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger called for discussion of checks #11325-11359 in the amount of \$28,779.44. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve payment of the bills. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Graham, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye." Clerk Swanson presented two late arriving claims and asked for authority to issue checks: Rydberg & Sons, \$5,525.00 (ditching and/or culvert installations on Royal Heights Lane and Hummingbird Road) and Northstar Media, Inc., \$15.90 (public accuracy test notice). Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve payment of the Northstar Media claim, with Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Graham, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye." The board reviewed the bid requirements and quotes for Hummingbird Road. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to hold mailing of the Rydberg & Sons' check, to ask all supervisors to inspect the ditching on Hummingbird and report their findings to Clerk Swanson, and to authorize mailing if all supervisors agree that the job meets requirements. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Graham, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye." The board noted that the ECE monthly budget billing amount had been reduced from \$175 to \$145.

Planning Commission recommendations:

Planning Commission Chair Jessica Johnson and Supervisor Graham presented the draft of a proposed campground ordinance (#001-2024), noting that wording had been updated slightly from the draft in members' packets. After discussion, Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize Chair Johnson and Clerk Swanson to prepare a final draft of the ordinance and to forward said draft to legal counsel for review and recommendation. The motion carried unanimously.

Planning Commission Chair Johnson and Supervisor Graham presented the drafts of a site permit procedure and an "amendment or removal of ordinance no. 008-2010" whose purpose is to remove the state building code adoption from the township zoning ordinance and establish alternate procedures for issuance of site permits. After discussion, Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to forward the drafts to legal counsel for review and recommendation. The motion carried 2-1, with Chair Schlaeger and Supervisor Graham voting "Aye" and Supervisor Belland voting "Nay."

Old Business:

Septic issues: Septic Administrator Thompson and Clerk Swanson reported that septic concerns on the following parcels had been satisfied either by installation of new systems or repair of existing systems: PID 290124003 (10343 Wildflower Road), PID 295148000 (7744 Royal Way), PID 290136003 (12014 Brunswick Road), and PID 290061004 (3084 Pokegama Lake Road). These issues will be removed from the agenda. A new system at PID

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290156000 (6559 Raspberry Road) has been installed but remains to be finalized. Pine County has issued a cease-and-desist order, dated 8 October 2024, for PID 295231000 (1995 Royal Heights Lane) ordering the immediate stoppage of the dumping of raw sewage on the site. The board acknowledged the receipt of copies of the subsurface sewage treatment system regulations regarding straight pipe systems, provided by Administrator Thompson.

Zoning issues: No information was available on the results, if any, of the arraignment regarding building and septic issues at 5214 Royal Woods Road (PID 295137000) that was scheduled for 11 September 2024. No additional information had been received on the alleged zoning violations at PID 295231000 (1995 Royal Heights Lane).

No response had been received from the owners of PID 290043000 (8011 Cabin Drive) about people living in multiple recreational vehicles. During discussion, the board noted that apparent access to this property is via a township-owned strip of land that is not a road or a driveway. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to forward this issue to legal counsel for action regarding the recreational vehicle issue and for review and recommendation on the town's possible sale of its strip of land. The motion carried unanimously.

Road issues: Supervisor Belland reported that the culvert installations and ditching project on Royal Heights Lane had been completed and appeared to be working fine. The ditching project on Hummingbird Road had also been completed (see above for additional information). He reported that the possible replacement of two culverts with a single larger one on Homer Road had been discussed during the road inspection, but no decisions were made. The issue will be revisited during the 2025 road inspection. He also reported that during broadband fiber installation on Country Drive the lines had been placed too close to the road surface; he will discuss their realignment with ECE. Chair Schlaeger noted that a culvert on Majestic Road west appears to be plugged; the issue will be studied on the 2025 road inspection. No updates have been received on road T13.

Campus building issues: Chair Schlaeger reported that the roof had been added to the picnic shelter but that more work may not be accomplished this fall. The board asked that the existing supply of lumber be moved into the storage building for the winter. Chair Schlaeger asked for board and public input into the design of and material for the picnic tables. Clerk Swanson distributed a draft of a "What's New" statement on the picnic shelter that he suggested could be posted during the general election on 5 November 2024; by consensus, the board approved.

Clerk Swanson reminded members that the board had postponed decisions on security cameras at the last meeting. The planning commission will continue to investigate.

Clerk Swanson presented a memorandum, approved by Travis Kemen, on the legal requirement and impact for the township to move to the .gov domain for its website and email. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize Mr. Kemen to proceed with this change. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham again noted the apparent overlap between the Braham and Rush City fire service areas and recommended that these issues be resolved at the time of the next contract renewal. This issue will be removed from the current agenda.

Supervisors Graham and Belland were again encouraged to become trained for the board of appeal and equalization.

#### New Business:

Clerk Swanson presented the revised draft of a position description for town hall cleaner. The planning commission had reviewed the original draft and suggested some additions. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the revised position description. The motion carried unanimously. Clerk Swanson noted that Paul Benoit had already started in this capacity.

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to set the 2025 board of appeal and equalization meeting for 9:00 a.m., 28 April 2025, in the Royalton Town Hall. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson presented resolution 2024-10 delegating regulation of retail cannabis businesses to Pine County. He noted that this draft follows the recommended wording from Pine County Auditor Kelly Schroeder with the incorporation of a fourth "Whereas" clarifying that Royalton Township will continue with its zoning ordinance. He also distributed the recently received model language for such a resolution issued by the Minnesota Association of

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Townships. MAT's recommended language clarifies significantly the definitions of various types of cannabis business activities. The board requested that the planning commission compare the drafts and suggest changes. The board further asked the planning commission to expedite its consideration so that final board action can be taken at its November meeting.

The board noted that the Minnesota Benefit Association has changed life insurance companies. No board action was required.

Clerk Swanson then presented a four-question survey from Pine County Auditor-Treasurer Schroeder requesting the board's opinion on cannabis regulation. 1 and 2 regard who completed the survey. Question 3 asked which of five options the town wished to proceed regarding the issue. After considerable discussion, Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to choose option 3 – "We plan to adopt the language in the County Cannabis Zoning Ordinance as a guide and then administrate our own zoning cannabis ordinance. Question four asked for any further narrative comments. The board, by consensus, noted that its only comment was that no retail cannabis sales licenses be in Royalton Township. Chair Schlaeger directed Clerk Swanson to complete the survey in accordance with the above decisions by the deadline of 1 November 2024.

Public Forum:

Discussion on the last item of new business morphed into a public forum on numerous cannabis-related issues. Planning Commission Member Gary Valvoda reported on the ad-hoc working group of residents that has been attending the county meetings. He noted that interim/conditional use permits with certain conditions appear to be legal. Planning Commission Member Doug Stanger recommended that the township enact its own cannabis regulation ordinance. Residents Patrice DeGray and Denise Weis expressed their desire for more attention to regulation activities, especially regarding water usage and lighting. Joe Zappa responded that this agricultural operation would likely be the most regulated of any existent in the state as the state will be monitoring all aspects of growth, manufacture, production, transportation, and sales.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

FYI:

Chair Schlaeger reported that the September report of building or zoning permits issued for new residences was submitted to the US census bureau; that MATIT has removed the 1995 plow truck from the town's insurance policy; that the certification of 25.725 miles of town roads was filed with Pine County public works; that the township voter account grant report had been submitted to Pine County auditor-treasurer; and that Nessel Township has reimbursed Royalton for one-half the cost of gravel used on 540<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The next regular meeting of the town board will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 26 November 2024.

At 9:27 p.m., Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger 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