

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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26 November 2024
Approved

7:30 p.m., 26 November 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. Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson, 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 Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the agenda as presented, with the addition three items: town hall, stop signs, MAT annual meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 29 October 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer read her report, noting that as of 1 October 2024, the township had a beginning balance of \$284,924.00 in the treasury. Deposits were \$15,808.99, disbursements were \$34,320.88, leaving an ending bank balance on 31 October of \$297,270.28. Outstanding checks were \$30,858.17 and a certificate of deposit in the amount of \$50,000 was in place, leaving a spendable balance of \$216,412.11. Supervisor Graham moved, Chair Schlaeger seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer noted that the certificate of deposit had renewed on 25 November. The board discussed options. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to leave the certificate at a five-month renewal at 4.5% interest. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger called for discussion of checks #11362-11398. Clerk Swanson noted that check #11389 had been voided, leaving the current bill total at \$20,677.85. 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". Chair Schlaeger reminded everyone that all time sheets, claims, agenda items, and handouts should be in the office by 5:00 p.m., the Thursday before the meeting and that all employees should cash their checks promptly.

Planning Commission recommendations:

Supervisor Graham noted that the planning commission had considered Resolution 2024-10 delegating regulation of retail cannabis businesses to Pine County, that it had suggested additional language to paragraph one, outlining the various types of cannabis businesses (from the MAT recommended language) and the addition of "and hemp" to the second paragraph. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve the resolution and forward a fully executed copy to the Pine County Auditor. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be a part of these minutes.

Supervisor Graham reported that both the campground ordinance, including the recommendations of legal counsel, and the short-term rental ordinance would continue to be discussed at the next working meeting.

Old Business:

Septic issues: Chair Schlaeger noted the updated 2024 septic report in members' packets. Regarding PID 295231000 (1995 Royal Heights Lane): Clerk Swanson reported that the county auditor had on her calendar to contact the attorney representing the bank after the 25 November 2024 expiration of the period for redemption of the property by the former owners. She has called for the immediate eviction of the residents because of the septic and zoning issue violations. Supervisor Graham had driven by the property noting that people were apparently working on the trailer on the property and that junk was everywhere.

PB____ JG____ JMS____ JS____ DPS____

Zoning issues: Regarding building and septic issues at 5214 Royal Woods Road (PID 295137000), the owner had appeared before the court on 11 September and entered a not guilty plea. A pretrial is set for 11 December. Regarding PID 290043000 (8011 Cabin Drive), the board reviewed a draft communication to legal counsel from Clerk Swanson detailing the issues surrounding that parcel as well as the township-owned strip of land adjacent to it and requesting recommendations. By consensus, the board approved the draft.

Road issues: Supervisor Belland reported that he had reviewed several culvert issues. The ditching done this fall on Hummingbird Road did not completely haul away the dirt removed from the ditch. Nothing can be done at this time and the issue will be reviewed during the 2025 road inspection. A new culvert on the east side of Hummingbird has been installed by a landowner (with an approved permit) but that installation damaged the roadbed. Road Superintendent Saumer will investigate and determine if any remedial action can be taken yet this fall. Regarding Country Drive, Supervisor Belland has been in contact with people from ECE fiber, but they have not reported back on the placement of the fiber optic lines. Supervisor Belland reported that the town grader had damaged a mailbox on Buffalo Road. The box itself did not appear to have been damaged, and the homeowner had straightened the post. Clerk Swanson was authorized to contact the homeowner requesting that he keep the township informed and that the mailbox would be reviewed at the 2025 road inspection. There was no new information on Road T-13; because the township is awaiting proposals from the adjacent landowners, this issue will be removed from future agendas until new information is received.

Campus building issues: Chair Schlaeger reported that additional work on the picnic shelter will be delayed until spring, and this issue will be removed from the agenda. Clerk Swanson reported that Travis Kemen had visited the town hall to upgrade the email capability of the township and that other potential technology upgrades are on hold pending the planning commission's review of security and camera protocols. The board discussed the current state of the town hall carpeting. The last time it was cleaned the carpet squares lifted from the cement. Supervisor Graham will investigate possible options.

Chair Schlaeger noted that Supervisors Graham and Belland needed to be trained for the Board of Appeal and Equalization. Supervisor Graham announced that he has received certification.

New Business:

Chair Schlaeger noted the receipt of a letter and a proposed ordinance drafted by a group of citizens that would regulate cannabis businesses in the township. He read both the letter and the ordinance draft. General discussion followed, including how this draft was prepared, its relationship to the 2018 farm bill language, to the earlier discussions of the planning commission and board, and to the July special meeting relating to a proposed cannabis moratorium. By consensus, the board referred this issue back to the planning commission.

Clerk Swanson updated the board on the November general election. Royalton had 582 in-person voters. When combined with the 159 absentee voters, nearly 86% of registered voters participated. The office is preparing for the March 2025 township elections, at which one supervisor and one treasurer will be elected. Filings for these positions will begin 31 December 2024 and continue for two weeks. The board expressed thanks to the election judges for the smooth operation of the election.

Chair Schlaeger noted the draft request for proposals to evaluate the possibility of establishing a southern Pine County fire district. Members were encouraged to read the RFP in their packets. Road Superintendent Saumer gave an update on the fire committee meeting.

Public Forum:

Patrice DeGray asked whether any licenses for cannabis operations had been filed with the township. The township has received no copies of licenses. Joe Zappa noted that his firm had filed all necessary paperwork with all the required jurisdictions.

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence.

PB _____ JG _____ JMS _____ JS _____ DPS _____

FYI:

The October report of building or zoning permits issued for new residences was submitted to the US census bureau on 7 November.

The next regular meeting of the town board will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 17 December 2024.

At 8:45 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