

January 9, 2023

**PERCH LAKE TOWNSHIP
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Gary Harms opened the January 9, 2023, regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. and called for a roll call. Also, Harms requested a moment of silence for Judy Hoppe who recently passed away. Supervisor Keith DePre hosted the meeting on Zoom.

Board Members: Chair Gary Harms, Supervisor Steve Olson, Supervisor Keith DePre, Treasurer Cheri DeMenge, Clerk Lora Eames

Contractor: Tom DeLovely

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the January 9, 2023, agenda as presented. Motion carried.

3. RECEIPT/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the December 12, 2022, regular meeting minutes as recorded. Motion carried.

RECEIVED: January 3, 2023, ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Committee meeting notes.

4. TREASURER/CLERK REPORTS.

a. Review/Approve Treasurer's Report

(1) Treasurer's Report

Treasurer DeMenge provided the Treasurer's Report for December 2022.

MOTION (Olson/DePre): To approve the Treasurer's Report as presented with a cash balance of \$389,288.93 for the period ending December 31, 2022. Motion carried.

(2) Certificate of Deposit

DeMenge suggested that the Board should consider investing in an eleven-month Certificate of Deposit (CD) for 4.25% offered by Members Cooperative Credit Union.

MOTION (Olson/DePre): To invest available funds, calculated as \$83,290.24, into in an eleven-month Certificate of Deposit with Members Cooperative Credit Union at a rate of 4.25%, as advertised on the MCCU website. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Informational Clerk's Budget Report.

(1) Revenues

Clerk Eames reported that she recently billed the Cloquet Area Fire District for \$2,944.95 in fourth quarter Station 2 costs.

Also, she estimated that the Township would receive the following large payouts, based on 2022 records:

\$15,756 State Gas Tax Road Allotment, March
\$122,077 County Property Tax Settlements, July

(2) Operating Budget for January 2023

Monthly Operating Budget as of December 31, 2022

Projected Revenues	\$255,367
Revenues Received YTD	-258,784
Over Budget Received YTD	<u>\$-3,417</u>
Projected Expenses	\$396,712
Disbursements Made YTD	-374,564
Under Budget YTD	<u>\$22,148</u>

5. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

The supervisors approved the following claims for payment:

a. Regular Claims

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve payment of regular claims for January 9, 2023.
Motion carried.

\$1,853.42	Late claims list for December 2022: #4834-#4836
\$7,677.72	Regular claims list for January 1-January 31: Claim Nos. #4837-#4850.
\$1,341.52	Employee payroll for January 2023
\$2,137.75	Regular payroll for January 2023
<u>\$13,010.41</u>	Total

b. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Claims.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve payment of ARPA claims of \$5,586.74 for October, November, and December of 2022. Motion carried.

6. REPORTS.

a. Cloquet Area Fire District (CAFD).

Chair Harms had nothing new to report.

b. Big Lake Area Sanitary District (BLASD)

Supervisor Depre reported that the BLASD Board held a meeting on December 16, 2022, and decided to go “dormant” during 2023. Of course, things could change if the FDL expresses an interest in reviving the district; then, the BLASD would meet again. For now, any BLASD matters will be handled by the Perch Lake Town Board.

c. Road and Bridge.

(1) Olson's Report on the Storm of December 13-15:

(a) Clearing Roads

DeLovely proactively cleared downed trees everywhere on various roads. Resident Bob Lund called about Reponen Road. Olson and DeLovely worked on Reponen for some time. Reponen was in the worst condition with trees hanging down and breaking off. Everyone hoped that the snow would end soon, and that the branches would spring back. However, that did not happen, so Olson had to hire an excavator.

(b) Special Emergency Meeting held Monday, January 9, 2023:

Olson, DePre, DeMenge, and Eames met virtually with:

- Wayne Lamoreaux, Deputy Public Assistance Director, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security
- Marlyn Halvorson, Carlton County Emergency Management Director
- Other townships

Halvorson had applied for state emergency management funds, and he and Lamoreaux were trying to obtain township estimates for clean-up costs.

Olson reported during the Zoom meeting that Perch Lake had already spent over \$5,000 and would need another \$10,000 to clean up the mess in the spring. If an emergency is declared, the state will reimburse the township 75% of its total actual costs. (There are eight counties in northeast Minnesota which would be covered under this declaration.)

FEMA allows eight categories of eligible common work; Perch Lake costs would qualify under Category A, Debris Removal. (The Township would need a minimum of \$3,800 to qualify for any other category.)

Eligible costs include supervisors' time and use of their own equipment, including chain saws.

Eames asked if the township will be reimbursed for its payments to the county for snow removal during this period. She will clarify this issue with Halvorson.

(2) Discussion about County Response during Storm

Board members discussed the County's response in snowplowing township roads during the storm of December 13-15. They expressed frustration about what they saw as the County's inadequate and delayed response during the disaster. They discussed several possible options, then agreed to discuss this further with residents at the Annual Meeting on March 14, 2023, and with other townships at the CCATO (Carlton County Association of Townships) meeting on April 25, 2023.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Old Housekeeping Items.

None.

b. American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Committee – Eames/DeMenge.

Eames provided the following information:

Estimated as of December 31, 2022

▪ ARPA Fund Balance	\$1,954.36
▪ ARPA Committee Budget Balance	\$5,591.76

DeMenge reported on the ARPA meeting held January 3, 2023. Committee members have tentatively scheduled a four-hour Farmers Market/Craft Fair for August 5, 2023. They will coordinate dates and hours with the Big Lake Improvement Association’s rummage sale and FDL Powwow.

DeMenge will give a brief presentation at the Annual Meeting and hand out information packets. (Eligible voters at the Annual Meeting must approve a resolution authorizing the Farmers Market/Craft Fair.) Supervisors asked committee members to include a blurb about the Farmers Market/Craft Fair in the next newsletter.

The committee will not sponsor any new classes for now. There will be no February committee meeting; the next meeting will be on March 6, 2023.

c. Discussion of Weight Limit and Special Use on Ditchbank Road

Supervisor Olson reported that he has not been able to work on this item.

d. Status Attorney’s Letter to Jankowski re ROW (Right-of-Way) Obstruction.

Last month, the Board asked Town Attorney Gilchrist to draft a letter to Steve and Linda Jankowski, 3143 Pine Grove Drive, asking them to remove fencing they had erected in the road right-of-way. In response, Gilchrist prepared a draft letter dated December 12, 2022. The supervisors reviewed the letter and asked him to make some changes.

The new draft dated January 2023, included the requested changes, and Olson authorized sending the new draft. (The attorney should allow thirty days from the date of mailing.)

Depre noted that this discussion had stretched over three meetings. He encouraged the Board to avoid future delays by approving similar letters once; then, authorizing Olson (rather than the full Board) to make changes before mailing.

e. Email from MAT Attorney re MATIT (Minnesota Association of Townships Insurance Trust) Coverage of Snowplow.

Eames recalled the Board’s recent actions. The Town Board, on December 5, 2022, hired Glenn Renne to plow the Town Hall parking lot. Renne did not have commercial insurance. His hiring as an employee was conditional, based on whether the Township’s insurance would cover such an employee’s accident with a fire truck or other vehicle in the parking lot.

Then, on December 12, 2022, Eames reported that MATIT would cover such mistakes. As a result, the Board changed Renne’s employment from “conditional” to “official.”

At today’s meeting, Eames further reported that the MATIT would not cover damage to Renne’s plow since the Township does not own or lease it. After some discussion, the supervisors determined that it was sufficient to cover Renne’s potential mistakes, but not his plow. They asked the Clerk to obtain a copy of Renne’s vehicle insurance to be sure that he is compliant with the law and covers his own vehicle.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. New Housekeeping.

None

b. Consent Agenda.

The supervisors approved the consent agenda with one motion without discussion or debate.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve the following items on the consent agenda as presented.
Motion carried.

- (1) Approval of schedule of regular meeting dates for 2023, to include the designation of Monday, October 10, 2022, Columbus Day, as a non-holiday for the purpose of conducting public business.
- (2) Approval of compensation and mileage (as needed) for officers attending training and non-regular meetings, including online courses.
- (3) Approval of additional posting sites for meetings and other notices besides the Town Hall and Recycling Shed - Big Lake Golf Club, Lounge on Big Lake Shores, Sawyer Community Center (if open), and website.
- (4) Designation of Town's depositories: Frandsen Bank, Members Cooperative Credit Union, and Cornerstone State Bank as an alternative if needed.
- (5) Designation of Town's official newspaper as the Pine Knot.
- (6) Adoption of 2023 IRS standard mileage rate.

c. Annual Resolutions

- (1) **MOTION (Depre/Olson):** To approve Resolution 2023-001, authorizing a contract with interested officer, Supervisor Gary Harms. Motion carried. *2 in favor/1 abstaining - Harms.*
- (2) **MOTION (Depre/Olson):** To approve Resolution 2023-002, authorizing a contract with interested officer, Treasurer Cheri DeMenge. Motion carried.
- (3) **MOTION (Olson/Depre):** To approve Resolution 2023-003, authorizing a contract with interested officer, Clerk Lora Eames. Motion carried.
- (4) **MOTION (Depre/Harms):** To approve 2023-004, authorizing a contract with interested officer, Supervisor Steve Olson. Motion carried. *2 in favor/1 abstaining-Olson.*
- (5) **MOTION (Olson/Harms):** To approve 2023-005, authorizing a contract with interested officer, Keith Depre. Motion carried. *2 in favor/1 abstaining-Depre.*
- (6) **MOTION (Olson/Depre):** To approve Resolution 2023-006, authorizing a contract with spouse (David) of interested officer, Clerk Lora Eames. Motion carried.

d. Annual Town Board Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

MOTION (Depre/Harms): To re-elect Gary Harms as Chair and Steve Olson as Vice-Chair for 2023. Motion carried,

e. Annual Town Board Member Selection of Assignments

The supervisory consensus was that Board member assignments should remain the same:

- Harms – Facilities, Cloquet Area Fire District
- Olson – Road and Bridge
- Depre – County Boards, Big Lake Area Sanitary District

f. Discussion of Storms and Disasters Impacting Perch Lake Township

Board members discussed options for an emergency plan for the community. For example, they could install a backup generator and open the Town Hall to residents. The Town Hall is already a designated Red Cross location. Additional discussion is needed with emergency managers. Supervisors asked the Clerk to invite Marlyn Halvorson (County) and Bruce Blacketter (FDL) to the next meeting in February.

9. VISITOR COMMENTS.

Everyone discussed local emergency disasters and victims. Tim Hafvenstein noted that the recovery is not only about a government response, but also neighbors helping neighbors. Harms offered to ask if the CAFD will share the costs for a backup generator.

10. ADJOURNMENT.

Chair Harms adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Town Board

Lora Eames, Clerk

Gary Harms, Chair