

February 8, 2021

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

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Gary Harms opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with a roll call.

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

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the February 8, 2021, agenda as presented. Motion carried. Roll call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, DePre-yes.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

MOTION (Olson/DePre): To approve the January 11, 2021, minutes of the special meeting with the County Engineer as recorded. Motion carried. Roll Call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, DePre-yes.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the January 11, 2021, regular meeting minutes as recorded. Motion carried. Roll Call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, DePre-yes.

4. TREASURER/CLERK REPORTS.

a. Review/Approve Treasurer's Report

- (1) Treasurer Cheri DeMenge provided the Treasurer's Report for January.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the Treasurer's Report as presented with a cash balance of \$391,906.67 for the month ending January 31, 2021. Motion carried. Roll call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, DePre-yes.

- (2) Discussion of options regarding Certificate of Deposit (CD) with Members Cooperative Credit Union (MCCU).

DeMenge and the Board reviewed options for funds held in the CD (set to expire on February 21, 2021.) After discussion, the Board came to the consensus that they should keep funds in a savings account until they have obtained bids for a road project; then, they can decide whether to invest in a CD or road project.

b. Informational Clerk's Budget Report.

- (1) Revenues

Eames projected that the Town could receive the following significant amounts from the County in the first half of 2021, based on last year's figures:

- March – approximately \$12,000 in Gas Tax Road Allotment.
- June – approximately \$105,000 in property tax settlements.

(2) Monthly Status of Operating Budget

Projected Revenues	\$171,967
Revenues Received YTD	-2,149
Revenues Not Yet Received	<u>\$ 169,818</u>
Projected Expenses	\$185,396
Disbursements Made YTD	-8,553
Under Budget YTD	<u>\$ 176,843</u>

5. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT.**

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve payment of the following claims. Motion carried.
Roll call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, Depre-yes.

\$1,132.58	Late claims list for January 2021 Claim #s 4458-# through Claim # 4460
8,457.61	Regular claims list for February 1-February 28, 2021 Claim #s 4461-#4476
\$984.50	Employee (Harms, Anderson) payroll for February 5, 2021
\$1,690.26	Regular (officer) payroll for February 8, 2021
<u>\$12,264.95</u>	Total

6. **REPORTS.**

a. **Cloquet Area Fire District (CAFD).**

Chair Harms reported that he met with the Strategic Committee to discuss the options discussed with the architects last week, Harms said he told the Committee that the Perch Lake Town Board could not move ahead with Station 2 improvements until after the District decides if Station 2 is the best location. (Both Olson and Harms expressed their preference for a location close to Highway 33.)

Harms also reported meeting CAFD Chief Matt Ashmore when he was out here last week.

b. **Big Lake Area Sanitary District (BLASD)**

Supervisor Depre had nothing new to report. BLASD Chair John has not called a meeting; however, he will likely have to call a meeting soon to pay the bills.

c. **Road and Bridge.**

(1) Olson reported that he had received two communications:

- a text from resident Bob Lund who said that the 20-mile per hour speed limit signs seemed to be working. No one has been in the ditch recently.
- a call from Rick Norrgard, County Transportation, regarding the protesters on Magney Drive. (The protesters have not been active in the subzero weather.)

(2) Watkins Spur Project:

Olson discussed estimates received by email from Will Bomier, County Transportation. (The costs shown do not include engineering and land acquisition costs.)

- The full project with loop out to Lakeview Drive and new pavement: \$178,000.
- The same as option 1 but without paving. Then, the Township would maintain as a gravel road (paving could be done later): \$75,000.
- Maintaining current alignment and hauling class V on existing pavement. Then, the Township would maintain as a gravel road. This would be done by our regular road contractor with no additional County involvement.
- Extending the road through the wetland/swamp area to make the loop, but leaving the existing road “as-is” for now: \$56,000.

After some discussion Board members came to a consensus that they would (i) present all options to Watkins Spur residents at Wednesday’s meeting; and (ii) recommend the second option for \$75,000.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Old Housekeeping Items**

None.

b. **Annual Meeting, Zoom, 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 9, 2021**

Clerk Eames distributed the draft Annual Meeting agenda and explained her strategy for the upcoming meeting. She planned to open the meeting on March 9, 2021, and have residents approve the agenda, elect a meeting moderator, and vote to continue (not adjourn) the meeting later in the year (early September). Eames expressed hope that by then, conditions would allow for in-person attendance to vote on the levy and to discuss the draft right-of-way ordinance.

The continued meeting must be held before September 30, when levy certification for townships is due (per Minnesota Statute 275.07).

Eames also asked supervisors if they wished to propose a levy for electors to consider. After some discussion, their consensus was to maintain the current levy of \$146,043. Eames reminded everyone that any eligible resident (elector) can submit a proposal.

c. **Wage Survey and Compensation Changes.**

Board members discussed the wage survey, dated February 4, 2021, which was organized and prepared by Treasurer DeMenge and Clerk Eames. (DeMenge gathered the information.) The survey included information from several local townships and County-supported recycling sheds and is available upon request.

Wage increases for Supervisors, Treasurer, Clerk, Building Caretaker, and Recycling Shed Operator (and subs) were previously approved on March 12, 2018. Harms and Eames provided a draft list of increases for consideration,

After some discussion, the Board approved an increase in wages, based on the following:

- The jobs involved have increased in complexity since the last pay increase, requiring additional hours and skills.

- The recommended pay raises are not far above the range of local rates paid by other jurisdictions of similar size.
- The impact to the budget is reasonable at \$4,100 per year.

MOTION (HarmsDepre): To approve the following compensation changes, effective February 1, 2021. Motion carried. Roll call. Harms-yes, Olson-yes, DePre-yes			
Changes Effective February 1, 2021			
Position	Meeting Rate		Monthly Stipends
	From	To	
Supervisor	\$100.00	\$125.00	
Chair	\$110.00	\$135.00	
Clerk	\$100.00	\$125.00	From \$200.00 to \$225.00
Treasurer	\$100.00	\$125.00	From \$200.00 to \$225.00
Position	Hourly Rate		
	From	To	
Recycling Shed Operator	\$11.50	\$12.00	
Road Supervisor	\$18.00	\$20.00	
Basic hourly rate remains the same at \$15 per hour. This rate applies to those working on the newsletter and special events such as National Night Out.			
The Building Caretaker's current wage of \$70 per month plus \$16 per hour, one hour per day, five days per week does not change.			

d. **Status of Newsletter.**

Board members reviewed the spring issue of the Perch Lake Township Newsletter and agreed that it was ready for distribution within the next couple of weeks.

e. **Status of Records Retention Project.**

Eames reported that she and DeMenge have finished reviewing and disposing of records for year 2011, in accordance with the Minnesota Historical Society schedule. In addition, they will research companies that do shredding.

f. **Brief Discussion of Watkins Spur Meeting, to be held February 10, 2021.**

After some discussion, the supervisors agreed that they would present all four options while indicating their preference for option 2. They determined that they must do something even if residents made no recommendation. The Board will make its final decision at the regular monthly meeting on March 8, 2021.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **New Housekeeping Items.**

None.

b. **Township’s Annual Road Maintenance Contracts.**

One for grading, hauling, and equipment.
One for loading and hauling town-provided class 5 and pitrun.

Both contracts with Tom DeLovely expire April 1, 2021. The Town Board must receive contractor proposals prior to the regular meeting on March 8, 2021.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve the posting and publication of the following (RFQ) Request for Quotes for the Township's annual road maintenance contracts:

- Grading, brushing, and equipment.
- Loading and hauling town-provided class 5 and pitrun.

Notices will be posted at the usual sites in the community and on the website. Motion carried.
Roll call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, Depre-yes.

c. **2021 Board of Appeal and Equalization.**

Clerk Eames announced that this year’s Board of Appeal and Equalization will be held by the County Assessor Kyle Holmes as an open book meeting on Friday, April 30, 2021, at the County Courthouse. The purpose of the meeting is to determine whether property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the Assessor. (The Town Board forfeited the right to hold a BAE in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.)

d. **County Assessor’s Instructions to Reestablish Township’s Right to Hold Board of Appeal and Equalization in 2022.**

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve Resolution No. 2021-008, reinstating the local board powers for Perch Lake Township in 2022 and re-establishing a local board of appeal and equalization pursuant to Minnesota Statute 274.014, Subdivision, 3, Paragraph C. Motion carried. Roll call: Harms-yes, Olson-yes, Depre-yes.

Eames reminded the supervisors that they must have at least one trained BAE member by February 1, 2022. Right now, Supervisor Harms is the only certified person, and his certification ends on July 1, 2021. All three supervisors made verbal commitments to go through the training.

9. **VISITOR COMMENTS.**

No visitors on Zoom.

10. **ADJOURNMENT.**

Chair Harms adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Town Board

Lora Eames, Clerk

Gary Harms, Chair