

February 14, 2022

**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., calling for a roll call. Supervisor Keith DePre hosted the meeting on Zoom.

In addition, Harms closed the period for accepting quotes from the Watkins Spur Rebuild and Paving Projects and announced that the Township had received six proposals.

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

Contractor: Tom DeLovely

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION (Olson/DePre): To approve the February 14, 2022, agenda with the deletion of Old Business OB-8d (3): "Review/act on Resolution No. 2022-007." Motion carried.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the January 10, 2022, regular meeting minutes as recorded. Motion carried.

4. RECEIPT OF NOTES FROM AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) COMMITTEE.

Chair Harms acknowledged receipt of notes from the February 7, 2022, ARPA Committee meeting.

5. TREASURER/CLERK REPORTS.

a. Review/Approve Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Cheri DeMenge provided the Treasurer's Report for January 2022.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the Treasurer's Report as presented with a cash balance of \$488,327.06 for the month ending January 31, 2021. Motion carried.

b. Informational Clerk's Budget Report.

(1) Significant Revenues

(a) Clerk Eames reported that the Township is in the process of applying for the SCORE Grant for \$5,000. The grant provides funding for the recycling shed.

(b) Eames projected that the Town could receive the following significant amounts during the first half of 2022, based on last year's figures:

- February - approximately \$11,159 in the Gas Tax Road Allotment.
- June/July - approximately \$113,000 in property tax settlements.

(2) Monthly Operating Budget for January 2022

Projected Revenues	\$194,367
Projected ARPA \$	61,000
Revenues Received YTD	<u>-2,881</u>
Not Yet Received	\$252,486
Projected Expenses	\$396,712
Disbursements Made YTD	<u>-19,626</u>
Under Budget YTD	\$377,086

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

The supervisors approved the following claims for payment:

- a. **MOTION (Olson/Depre):** To approve payment of regular claims for February 2022. Motion carried.

\$11,082.90	Late claims list for January 2022: Claim Nos. #4631-#4636
8,964.06	Regular claims list for February 1-28: Claim Nos. #4637-#4648.
1,226.18	Employee payroll for February 5, 2022.
2,818.58	Regular payroll for January 10, 2022.
<u>\$24,091.72</u>	Total

- b. **MOTION (Depre/Olson):** To approve payment of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) claims for February 2022. Motion carried.

\$807.78	ARPA Claims to date.
<u>\$807.78</u>	Total

7. **REPORTS.**

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

Chair Harms reported that Interim Chief Buhs recently had COVID-19; but has recovered.

Harms acknowledged that Station 2 is short of staff. In fact, the duty crews have been inactive for the last few months. He expressed confidence that the district will get over this bump and will be able to “staff up” soon. Olson noted that the district has been running recruitment ads on Facebook for both full-time and paid-on-call positions.

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

Supervisor Depre reported that the BLASD Board met on February 2, 2022, and acted on routine business, including decisions to:

- Meet four times this year.
- Elect Keith Depre as Chair, Bill Jaskari as Vice-Chair, and Gary Harms as Treasurer.
- Pay the D&O (Directors and Officers) professional insurance.
- Authorize a resolution for check-signers.

In addition, Depre reported that the board agreed to prepare the following letters:

- A letter to the County, stating that the BLASD is no longer a viable option for failing septic systems; so, the County should proceed with enforcement against these systems.

- A letter to Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD), stating that the BLASD is inactive, but alive; and seeks to preserve planning for the connection to WLSSD.
- A letter to the City of Cloquet, stating that the BLASD is inactive, but alive; and seeks to preserve the planning for a pipe to Cloquet.

The BLASD Board members also discussed reaching out to the FDL. (The FDL is having an election in April; some Reservation Business Committee members are up for re-election.) The board also discussed reaching out to legislators regarding funding options for infrastructure.

c. **Road and Bridge.**

Supervisor Olson reported that he had received some complaints about recent County snowplowing; so, he contacted Robert Dahl, County Transportation. Evidently, the County had some equipment breakdowns in Perch Lake Township that day, which slowed progress.

In addition, Olson reported that a Watkins Spur bidder found an error in the plans and specifications. Olson contacted County Transportation who then corrected the error. Then, Olson and Eames notified all potential bidders of the update; Eames updated the website.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Old Housekeeping Items**

None.

b. **Review Quotations from Watkins Spur Rebuild and Paving Projects**

Chair Harms reported that the Township had received six quotes; and he turned the discussion over to Supervisor Olson.

The supervisors discussed finances, confirming that they had the funds to complete both the rebuilding and paving of Watkins Spur. They expressed concern over how to pay for future projects – whether they should continue to pay for projects without assessments; rely on ARPA or future infrastructure funds; or use assessments. Each project is different. Olson encouraged the supervisors to review how assessments are done; but expressed his preference for having landowners petition the Board.

After some discussion, the board tabled consideration of the quotations received, opting for a special meeting on February 22, 2022, 9:00 a.m. (This time was later changed to 6:00 p.m.)

Unofficial List of Quotes Received.

(Olson prepared an official tabulation which will be attached to the minutes for the special meeting on February 22, 2022.)

Contractor	Watkins Spur Rebuild
DeCaigney Excavating	\$96,950.00
Kiminski Paving, Inc.	\$89,700.00
Northland Constructors	N/A
Omar's Sand & Gravel, Inc.	\$69,456.00
Sinnott Contracting, LLC	\$82,679.25
Ulland Brothers, Inc.	\$99,533.00

Contractor	Watkins Spur Paving
DeCaigney Excavating	N/A
Kiminski Paving, Inc.	\$71,300.00
Northland Constructors	\$78,339.00
Omar's Sand & Gravel, Inc.	\$76,258.00
Sinnott Contracting, LLC	\$78,562.00
Ulland Brothers, Inc.	\$69,746.00

c. **Review Culvert Quote from County**

After some discussion, Board members approved the quote, to supply the culverts for the Watkins Spur project.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve the quotation of \$3,894.40 from Contech Engineered Solutions, a Carlton County contractor, for the purchase of culverts for the Watkins Spur Project. Motion carried.

d. **American Rescue Plan Update and Resolution(s)**

- (1) Update from Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) re new federal rule.

Clerk Eames discussed the new US Treasury rule which allows townships the flexibility of designating all ARPA funds received as lost revenue. The net effect is that townships may use all their ARPA funds for general government services, which includes roads. This new rule takes effect on April 1, 2022.

Eames reported that MAT recommends that townships do the following:

- Charge all disbursements to the ARPA Fund.
- Use resolutions to allocate preset amounts, depending on the allowable use.

Eames could not recommend any resolutions at this point, because the Board has not decided how to allocate most of the funds. After some discussion, the consensus was that the Clerk and Treasurer should leave money in the ARPA Fund until spending decisions are made. The Clerk can always return with a resolution later, if necessary.

- (2) Report on ARPA Committee meeting, February 7, 2022.

Eames reported that the Committee has successfully narrowed the focus to the following ideas:

- One-time grants for artists and businesses; committee members will develop a simple grant program.
- Family night out with food, music, and prizes.
- Expanded Town Hall use.
- New septic system for Town Hall.

Board members advised the Committee to (i) drop the septic system from consideration as the Board will handle that matter; and (ii) prepare a breakdown of costs for the regular meeting in March.

- (3) Review/act on Resolution 2022-007.

Removed from agenda.

- e. **Resolution No. 2022-008 Authorizing the Town Board to Accept Designation from BLASD Board as Official Custodian/Manager of District Records.**

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve Resolution No. 2022-008, approving request to become the official custodian and manager of the records of the Big Lake Area Sanitary District.
Motion carried.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **New Housekeeping**

Harms reported that employee David Eames installed a new door in the chair storage area.

- b. **Status of Spring Newsletter**

The Clerk reported that no has had time to prepare a spring newsletter.

- c. **Discussion about Upcoming Annual Meeting in March**

Clerk Lora Eames discussed the upcoming Annual Meeting to be held on March 8, 2022. She planned on holding the Annual meeting both virtually and in-person. After some discussion, the supervisors asked her to:

- publish a legal notice in both the Pine Journal and the Pine Knot; and
- send a printed post card to each residence in lieu of the Spring Newsletter. (Supervisors suggested using a local printing company.)

In addition, Board members recommended a five-percent increase in the levy.

- d. **Approve RFQ for Township's Annual Road Maintenance Contracts**

Chair Gary Harms announced that the current contracts held by Tom DeLovely will expire April 1, 2022; therefore, the Town Board should post a request for quotes (RFQ) before the next regular meeting in March.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To post an RFQ (Request for Quotes) for the 2022 Annual Road Maintenance Contracts below:

- Grading, brushing, and equipment.
- Loading and hauling.

The Town Board will consider proposals at the March 14, 2022, meeting. Motion carried.

- e. **Discussion about New County Zoning Ordinance Amendment**

The County passed a new amendment to Ordinance No. 27 on February 8, 2022.

Supervisor Keith Depre, a member of the Planning Commission, highlighted some items in the new amendment:

- VRBOs (Vacation Rental by Owners) are now a permitted use; it no longer requires a special or conditional use permit. The new use has stipulations.
- Language regarding nuisance property; it allows citations to be issued on a civil rather than criminal basis, enabling simpler enforcement.
- Language to match current Minnesota statutes

The entire ordinance is on file in the Auditor's Office.

f. **Review of Draft Letter to Sandra Warpula re Purchasing of Land**

The supervisors reviewed a draft letter, dated February 17, 2022, prepared by Olson to Sandra Warpula, the owner of property adjacent to the Town Hall. The Board desires to purchase an acre of her property to allow for the installation of a new septic system, and would pay for an appraisal, closing costs, and a surveyor if Warpala indicated an interest in selling her land. After making some minor changes, the supervisors decided the letter was ready for mailing.

g. **Discussion about Possible Three-Day Rental of Town Club by Club**

Treasurer DeMenge discussed the request from resident Bonnie Anderson, Salmi Road, to hold a three-day quilting club workshop at the Town Hall. She anticipated 15-20 persons. The club would prefer to have the Board waive the rental fee; however, if this cannot be done, they do have someone who will pay the fee. After a brief discussion, Board members declined not to waive the fee, but welcomed the quilting club at the standard resident rental fee of \$50 per day, or \$150 for three days.

h. **Discussion re Minnesota Benefit Association (MBA) Email re Group Life & Disability**

The Town Board carries life insurance coverage through the MBA for each of the officers. The MBA sent an email to town boards, recommending that they consider the group disability benefit as well. The supervisors acknowledged receipt of the email but took no action.

10. **VISITOR COMMENTS**

None.

11. **ADJOURNMENT.**

Chair Harms adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Town Board

Lora Eames, Clerk

Gary Harms, Chair