

August 9, 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. Supervisor Keith Depre hosted the meeting on Zoom.

Roll Call Chair Gary Harms, Supervisor Steve Olson, Supervisor Keith Depre, Treasurer Cheri
Members: DeMenge, Clerk Lora Eames

Others: Tom DeLovely, Foreman, Pat Anderson, Building Caretaker

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve the August 9, 2021, agenda with one change – the removal of Old Business 7-b. (Transferred to September agenda). Motion carried.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve the July 12, 2021, regular meeting minutes as recorded. Motion carried.

4. TREASURER/CLERK REPORTS.

a. Review/Approve Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Cheri DeMenge provided the Treasurer's Report for July 2021.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve the Treasurer's Report as presented with a cash balance of \$ 523,194.47 for the month ending July 31, 2021. Motion carried.

b. Informational Clerk's Budget Report.

(1) Revenues

Clerk Lora Eames reported that the Township received its first installment of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, in the amount of \$56,982.47. The second installment will be paid next year in May of 2022.

(2) Monthly Operating Budget

Projected Revenues	\$171,967	
Revenues Received YTD	<u>-138,392</u>	Not incl. funds from Enbridge & ARPA
Revenues Not Yet Received	\$33,575	
Projected Expenses	\$185,396	
Disbursements Made YTD	<u>-102,206</u>	
Under Budget YTD	\$83,190	

5. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT FOR BOTH JULY AND AUGUST**

The Board had two sets of claims to approve – those missed in July and those for August.

- (a) **MOTION (Depre/Olson):** To approve payment of claims for July 12, 2021. Motion carried.

\$7,200.76	Late claims list for June 2021: Claim Nos. #4529-#4530
4,194.67	Regular claims list for July 1-July 31, 2021: Claim Nos. #4531-#4547
850.31	Employee payroll for July 5, 2021
2,115.52	Regular officer payroll for July 12, 2021
<u>\$14,361.26</u>	Total

- (b) **MOTION (Olson/Depre):** To approve payment of claims for August 9, 2021. Motion carried.

\$314.16	Late claims list for July 2021: Claim Nos. #4529-#4530
4,891.45	Regular claims list for August 1-August 31, 2021: Claim Nos. #4550-#4560
898.11	Employee payroll for August 5, 2021
1,744.17	Regular officer payroll for August 9, 2021
<u>\$7,847.89</u>	Total

6. **REPORTS.**

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

Chair Harms reported that the CAFD Board is continuing the evaluation process for Chief Matt Ashmore, and that the board will hold its annual retreat at the Cloquet Public Library on September 13, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Harms reported that the board is paying more attention to paid-on-call (POC) staff; it has even created a special committee to deal with POC issues.

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

Supervisor Depre reported that he had nothing new to report.

At this point, resident Dave Otterson, 3101 Pine Grove Drive, engaged the supervisors in a discussion about the possible dissolution of the BLASD. The discussion highlighted the following questions and comments.

- Question/Response: Is it true that the “special taxing district” fee on the property tax statement will no longer include the BLASD? Depre responded that yes, the special taxing district fee on the property tax statement will not include BLASD after this year; but will continue to include CAFD.
- Question/Response: Has the BLASD loan been paid? Depre responded that the current BLASD levy will pay off the loan.
- Question/Response: When is the BLASD dissolved? Does the Perch Lake Township Board have the authority to dissolve the district? Depre responded that the BLASD Board would initiate steps towards dissolution of the district.

Depre pointed out that dissolving the district may be premature, though, because the BLASD:

- still holds \$4.5 million in state funding which needs a match.
- may qualify for ARPA or infrastructure funds.
- still holds a connection point to the WLSSD (Western Lake Superior Sanitary District) through Cloquet.

Circumstances could change to make a sewer district feasible (though not likely).

- Question/Response: When the time comes, will the Township Board say its commitment is done? Is there a timetable? The supervisors' consensus was that BLASD, being its own taxing authority, would initiate steps to dissolve the district; then the Town Board would likely ratify the decision, or consider an alternative. There is no timetable for dissolution.

c. **Road and Bridge.**

- (1) Road Foreman Tom DeLovely reported that:
 - Enbridge will reimburse the Township for damaging the following roads:
 - Ditchbank Road, damage from clipping bridge
 - Culvert on Strand
 - Culvert on Reponen
 - No parking signs have been installed.
 - Beavers continue to be a problem. (Olson has contacted the trapper.)
- (2) The Board noted that Taysha Martineau has not complied with conditions for her driveway access permit at 3124 Magney Drive – the payment for a new culvert, and the removal of two extra driveways. After some discussion, the supervisors decided to have the Town's Attorney prepare an enforcement letter.

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To have Town Attorney Troy Gilchrist prepare a letter to Taysha Martineau, 3124 Magney Drive, as a first step in initiating enforcement action for her lack of compliance with the conditions in a certified letter, dated June 3, 2021, and hand-delivered by Steven Olson on June 25, 2021. Motion carried.

In addition, Depre reported that dogs have been reported running about on Magney Drive, near Camp Migizi, even chasing bikes and nipping at pant legs. Depre advised complainants to register a complaint with the FDL police.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Old Housekeeping Items**

None.

b. **Tom DeLovely's Proposal for Lakeview Drive Erosion**

This item was previously removed from the agenda.

c. **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds**

Clerk Eames asked the Board to approve a resolution to accept \$56,982.47 in ARPA funds.

Also, Eames recalled that Board members had previously discussed the idea of setting up a committee (to include both Board members and residents) to discuss how to spend the money. The supervisors recommended bringing up this idea at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

MOTION: (Depre/Olson): To approve Resolution No. 2021-011, authorizing the Town Board to accept and spend the first installment of \$56,982.47 in American Rescue Plan Act Funds in accordance with all state and federal requirements and guidelines. Motion carried.

d. **Discussion: Recessed Annual Meeting on September 7, 2021.**

- (1) Board Recommendation for 2022 Levy - Clerk Eames reminded everyone that the Town Board has always provided a levy proposal for electors to consider; and any eligible resident can offer an alternative proposal.

Eames asked the supervisors if they wished to update their proposal from March. Previously, they had recommended 0% change from 2021. However, since March, the supervisors had discussed the increasing costs of road repairs, the need to increase the levy more often, and the hope that residents would authorize a levy increase for 2022. (Residents approved a levy increase in 2020 for 2021.) So, after some discussion, the supervisors decided to recommend a 5% increase.

- (2) Also, Eames asked supervisors to provide short reports and answer questions.

e. **Review of Summer 2021 Issue of Newsletter.**

Board members reviewed the newsletter and approved its distribution.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve the distribution of the latest draft of the Summer 2021 Edition of the "Perch Lake News." Motion carried.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **New Housekeeping**

None.

b. **Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT): District 10 Meeting (Zoom), August 26, 2021**

Board members agreed to gather at the Town Hall to on August 26, 2021, 6:00 p.m. to attend.

c. **Discussion: Draft Utility Permit Application**

The supervisors had previously reviewed a utility permit form from Aitkin County and asked the Clerk to modify it for Perch Lake Township's use. She had completed this task.

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve Utility Permit Form UL-001, "Application of Utility Permit Form on Township Road Right-of-Way," for use by anyone working in township road rights-of-way; with said form to be posted on the Township website. Motion carried.

d. **Driveway Access Permit: Coralee Nelson, Strand Road, Parcel ID 92-034-5215**

Supervisor Olson estimated that Nelson will need to purchase a 24-inch, 30-foot-long culvert from the County at \$1,463.50, plus 15%. DeLovely will check the size needed. In addition, Olson reported that Nelson will need a wetland permit and official address.

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To approve Access (Driveway) Permit No. 21-02 for Coralee Nelson, Strand Road, Cloquet, MN 55720 subject to her receipt of a wetland permit and official address. Motion carried.

e. **Big Lake Road (County Road 7) Feedback - Absence of Bike Lane**

Board members and some residents in attendance expressed disappointment that the CSAH 7 Project had been completed without a bike/walk path along Big Lake Road.

Chair Harms opened discussion by reporting that his email to County Commissioner Dick Brenner and County Engineer JinYeene Neumann received only one response – that from Neumann who referred to the lack of funds to cover a bike/walk path.

The discussion soon widened to include the following comments:

- The highway should be multimodal to accommodate pedestrians, bikes, and vehicles.
- The new driving lane is narrower with no paved shoulder for biking.
- The new shoulders have washed out in some areas and will have to be reconstructed.
- The County should have used class 5 for firm shoulders (as was used on Twin lakes Road).
- The County held no public hearings for community input.
- The County should have had sufficient funds to preserve a firm walking/biking surface; after all, the project was federally funded, and project bids came in at 15% below the County Engineer’s estimate.

Supervisor Depre proposed that the Town Board should prepare a letter to the entire County Board of Commissioners; and that the Board may want to publish the letter, but not right now. Harms agreed to prepare and sign a letter. The supervisors’ only consensus was to send a letter to the County Commissioners. They expressed no consensus on when to publish the letter.

Resident Dave Otterson suggested that the Big Lake Improvement Association (BLIA) might be helpful in preparing a letter of support. The Town supervisors encouraged this move.

f. **CAFD Budget for Year 2022.**

The supervisors discussed the CAFD Budget for Year 2022. After some discussion, they determined that they could not support the proposed budget increase (estimated by Harms to be 7%); and they asked the Clerk to forward this comment to Chief Ashmore.

9. **VISITOR COMMENTS**

Resident Kurt Besser reported that the BLIA held its annual meeting last Saturday. Sheriff Lake spoke on the new jail, a new female offender program, and the Enbridge protest group on Magney Drive.

10. **ADJOURNMENT.**

Chair Harms adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Town Board

Lora Eames, Clerk

Gary Harms, Chair