

November 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., calling for a roll call and moment of silence for the passing of resident, friend, and former town supervisor Roy Charon. Supervisor Keith DePre hosted the meeting on Zoom.

Roll Call Members: Chair Gary Harms, Supervisor Steve Olson, Supervisor Keith DePre,  
Clerk Lora Eames

Excused Absence: Treasurer Cheri DeMenge

Contractor Tom DeLovely, Foreman

**2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

**MOTION (DePre/Olson):** To approve the November 8, 2021, agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

**MOTION (DePre/Olson):** To approve the October 11, 2021, regular meeting minutes as recorded. Motion carried.

**4. TREASURER/CLERK REPORTS.**

**a. Review/Approve Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Cheri DeMenge was absent. No one presented the Treasurer's Report.

**b. Informational Clerk's Budget Report.**

(1) Revenues

Clerk Lora Eames reported that she and DeMenge have completed all approved interfund transfers; and the Road & Bridge Capital Improvements (CI) Fund now stands at almost \$242,000. Also, the Township will receive about \$30,000 in property tax settlements in December; so, the board can transfer \$30,000 to the Road & Bridge CI Fund in January 2022.

(2) Monthly Operating Budget

Projected Revenues	\$171,967
Revenues Received YTD	<u>-142,923</u> *
Revenues Not Yet Received	\$29,044

Projected Expenses	\$185,396
Disbursements Made YTD	<u>-126,066</u>
Under Budget YTD	\$59,330

\* This total does not include funds from Enbridge or American Rescue Plan Act.

5. **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 October 11, 2021. Motion carried.

\$456.36	Late claims list for October 2021: Claim Nos. #4586-#4587.
\$14,891.11	Regular claims list for November 1-30, 2021: Claim Nos. #4588-#4597.
\$922.20	Employee payroll for November 5, 2021
\$2,093.00	Regular officer payroll for November 8, 2021
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\$18,362.67	Total

- b. **MOTION (Depre/Olson):** To approve payment of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) claims. year to date through November 8, 2021. Motion carried.

\$213.92	Previous & current claims assigned to ARPA
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\$213.92	Total

6. **REPORTS.**

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

Chair Harms reported that Chief Ashmore has tested positive for COVID-19; his family member has COVID-19.

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

The term of member Chris Rousseau is set to expire December 31, 2021.

Supervisor Depre reported that he had nothing new to report. Eames reported that she emailed Fredrickson, heard nothing back; then, she finally reached him by phone. He told her that he had not been able to reach Chris Rousseau. Further, he (Fredrickson) doubted that the BLASD Board could even hold a legal meeting now that the FDL has withdrawn from the joint powers agreement and pulled its members from the board.

Depre disagreed with Frederickson’s conclusion that the BLASD Board could not hold a legal meeting, based on the following:

- Quorum: The board has three members left which could constitute a quorum - John Fredrickson, Chris Rousseau, and Keith Depre.
- Closing business: The board must approve the payment of remaining bills.
- Future direction: The board may wish to consider an option other than disbanding.

On another note, Harms reported that Heather Cunningham, County Zoning Administrator, told him that she is waiting for a letter from the BLASD asking the county to resume enforcement of noncompliant septic systems on Big Lake. She has requested this letter from Fredrickson, but he has not responded. (The Town Board sent her a letter, dated May 14, 2021, but Harms reported that Cunningham wants one from directly from the BLASD Board.)

After some discussion, the supervisors asked Eames to contact the Town Attorney Troy Gilchrist regarding next steps with the BLASD. (Update: The supervisors later asked Eames to contact Attorney Frank Yetka instead, since he was the BLASD’s attorney.)

c. **Road and Bridge.**

- (1) Foreman Tom DeLovely reported that he:
  - hauled gravel to Strand Road where it was flooded.
  - heard three or four more beaver were trapped on Reponen by Berthiaumes.
  - hauled Class 5 to impacted areas.
  - got a call from John Angell who reported that residents constructing a new driveway on Strand were destroying the roadbed.
- (2) Supervisor Olson reported that he:
  - checked on the driveway incident and found that it was a misunderstanding - the residents were dumping pit run on the road, then using an excavator to move it back into their driveway. No problem here.
  - checked with the FDL Police regarding the status of the protestor trailer on Magney Drive. It is now gone.
  - received “as-builts” for everything done so far by FDL Communications.
  - received a call from Patrick Dechant (Enbridge) regarding gravel on Reponen and Strand Roads. DeLovely reported that they laid down sufficient class 5.
- (3) Sinnott Blacktop

Board members discussed the job Sinnott Blacktop performed – crackpatching Maple, Lake and Lakeview Drive. Harms asked if the contractor had chiseled properly on Maple before filling in the cracks. Olson and DeLovely explained that Sinnott’s equipment routed new cracks only; then filled all cracks, new and old.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Old Housekeeping Items**

Harms reported that Nylund Electric (Duluth) will be replacing lights on the Perch Lake Town Hall building. Harms noted that Nylund was the only contractor who responded.

b. **Report on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds**

(1) Committee

Clerk Eames reported that the first ARPA Committee meeting has been set up for Monday, December 6, 2021. The committee’s focus is to develop recommendations for using ARPA funds in the community.

(2) Loss Revenue Calculator on MAT (Minnesota Association of Townships) Website/Availability of ARPA Funds for Road Projects

Eames discussed one of the major categories for ARPA funds – revenue loss. Townships can calculate revenue loss based on a federal formula; then, replace that lost revenue with ARPA funds. They have flexible use of these funds; they can even use these funds for road projects.

Eames used the Loss Revenue Calculator on the MAT website to determine that Perch Lake had a revenue loss of \$3,858.86 for year 2020. Accordingly, she will transfer this amount to the Road and Bridge CI Fund for road projects.

Eames reported that Perch Lake is unlikely to show a revenue loss for 2021 and 2022, because of increased revenue from:

- \$33,500.52 payments from Enbridge for damages to township roads.
- Five-percent increase in levy for 2021.
- Ten-percent increase in levy for 2022.

c. **BLASD Term Expiration of Chris Rousseau on 12/31/2021.**

Depre suggested that the supervisors should consider other nominations in December.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **New Housekeeping**

None.

b. **Report on CCATO (Carlton County Association of Townships) Meeting, held Tuesday, October 26, 2021.**

Eames, DeMenge, and Depre attended the meeting.

Supervisor Depre recalled hearing about a beaver bounty program at Automba Township, which works well for the community.

In addition, Depre reported comments he made in response to the County Engineer's update on county road projects – specifically County 7 (Big Lake Road). He noted that residents got less than what they had before; now they have a narrower road with substandard shoulders and no safe space to walk or ride a bike. He faulted the County for not holding community meetings in Perch Lake as they have done for road projects in Cloquet.

Supervisors asked the Clerk to publish Chair Harm's letter in the *Pine Knot*. (prev. published in the *Pine Journal*.)

Eames and Depre reported that Sheriff Lake discussed the new jail, now known as a "justice center." In addition, the County will hold a referendum for a one-half percent sales tax to help finance the jail. The County holds working sessions open to the public once a month.

c. **Discussion/Action: Consider Recruiting Trappers as Employees.**

Supervisors agreed that the Township needs trappers more than ever. Anyone can get a trapper's license; but must also obtain costly insurance and the permission of landowners. Olson reported that Brett Collier, the town's trapper, has insurance and works off road rights-of-way. Depre knows someone who might be interested in trapping. The idea of hiring trappers as employees was a way around requiring them to purchase the insurance. (As employees, they would be covered under the Township's insurance.) After some discussion, the supervisors delayed action on this item until after they obtained information about Automba's bounty program. Depre offered to obtain information on the bounty program and report back.

d. **Discussion/Action: Consider Approving New RFQ for Watkins Spur Project.**

Recent history:

On June 1, 2021, at a special meeting, the Town Board supervisors approved the solicitation of quotes for Option 2 of the Watkins Spur Project from four area contractors. Then, the Clerk

mailed RFQs to the specified contractors and posted the RFQ and drawings on the Town's website. On June 14, 2021, at a regular meeting, the supervisors reviewed quotes received and found them to be higher than the County Engineer's estimate of \$83,000.

Current:

At the November 8, 2021, regular meeting, supervisors discussed a new RFQ process to begin soon, allowing new contractors to submit proposals.

Olson suggested that the new RFQ should include Township-supplied culverts, removal of a private shed, and an option for paving.

**MOTION (Depre/Olson):** To draft a new Request for Quotes (RFQ) for the Watkins Spur Project which replaces the old RFQ and includes the following changes:

- The Township would buy the culverts and supply them to the contractor.
- The contractor would remove the shed on Steve Watkins' property.
- An option for paving.

The supervisors will review the RFQ at the December 13, 2021, regular meeting. Motion carried.

e. **Carlton County Board of Adjustment, Public Hearing: November 16, 2021, 7:00 p.m.  
Robert Walton, 3290 Welter Drive**

Supervisors discussed the variance request from Robert Walton. The nature of the request is to retain non-vegetative ground cover (patio and retaining walls) in the shore impact zone.

Chair Harms asked Supervisor Depre to attend the public hearing to provide input as needed.

9. **VISITOR COMMENTS**

Board members answered questions from residents and discussed grants for local bridges; the status of culverts on order; and the idea of selling the current town hall building to the CAFD, and building a new town hall on another site (such as the former Big Lake Store site).

10. **ADJOURNMENT.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Town Board

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Lora Eames, Clerk

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Gary Harms, Chair