

Perch Lake Township

Newsletter - Fall/Winter 2018

Town Office:

2779 Big Lake Rd
Cloquet, MN 55720

Town Board:

Chair Gary Harms
Supervisor Steve Olson
Supervisor Tom DeLovely
Treasurer Cheri DeMenge
Clerk Lora Eames

Town Meetings

Held the second Monday
of each month at 7:00 p.m.

PLEASE CONTACT US AS FOLLOWS:

Town Board:

Chair Harms: 218-879-5300
Supervisor Olson: 218-591-1795
Supervisor DeLovely: 218-390-8926 (Roads)
Treasurer DeMenge: 218-390-0636
Clerk Eames: 218-391-9178

Other:

Email: perchlaketownship@gmail.com.
Website: perchlaketownship.org
Pat Anderson, Town Hall rentals: 218-879-9720

To Perch Lake Township Resident:

Feedback from our first-ever newsletter has been very positive. Therefore, we will continue to provide updates on township matters via periodic publications.

1. This past summer, we made several improvements to your Town Hall property. This includes a permanent lighted display of the flag, hanging flower planters, and sealcoating of the parking lot.
2. As a member of the Cloquet Area Fire District (CAFD), Perch Lake Township is represented on the District Board by Township Chairman Gary Harms. Our views are always about providing the best service at an affordable cost to Perch Lake taxpayers. We continue to support the goal of increased community membership. The Town Board, at its August 2018 meeting, voted unanimously not to support an overall CAFD tax levy increase of 14% being proposed for year 2019. Since then, the overall CAFD levy has been reduced to 10.2% and the actual increase for residential properties is 2.04%. The preliminary CAFD levy was approved in September 2018, and will be finalized at the December 19, 2018, CAFD meeting.

3. Supervisor Tom DeLovely reports that two culverts have been replaced on the Ditchbank Road. (See attached photo on page 5.) Despite heavy rains this summer, our township roads remain in good condition. A contract was awarded to SealTech, Inc., to crackpatch and seal specific Perch Lake Township roads. This was intended to begin in early September, but was delayed until October. The roads included Maple Drive, Pine Grove Drive, Lakeview Drive, Lyndhurst Bay Drive, and Salmi Road. Additional roads will be done in 2019.

4. The Perch Lake Recycling Center, located adjacent to the Town Hall, continues to serve our residents at a high level and you are encouraged to bring your recyclables to us for further processing. We also collect cardboard, including cereal boxes and paper egg cartons.

The hours of operation are:

Recycling Shed Hours:

Wednesday-Friday: 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This is a free service to all.

5. Our Town Hall continues to be available for rentals. The rates are \$50.00 for Township residents and \$75.00 for non-residents. It is an excellent choice for birthdays, bridal showers, meetings, etc., as the rental includes a recently remodeled kitchen with all amenities. Contact Pat Anderson at 218-879-9720 for an application.

6. An update on the discussion of a proposed “nuisance” ordinance by the Town Board of Supervisors:

- The Town Board has been discussing the need for a nuisance ordinance for animal control and other miscellaneous matters, such as noise pollution and excessive burning from recreation fire pits.
- Our Town Attorney advised us that we need to obtain the authorization from the Township residents to develop such an ordinance. (Note: The residents would not approve the actual ordinance itself. They would simply authorize or give permission to the Town Board to prepare and pass one.)
- So, Town Board members went to the residents. The discussion began at our Annual Meeting earlier this year on March 13, 2018.

The Town Board proposed a “nuisance” ordinance which would include animal control and other miscellaneous items. We asked residents to authorize us to prepare and pass such an ordinance.

Some residents had a “wait and see” attitude and asked us to return with some estimated costs. For example, what would it cost the town to contract with Fond Du Lac Animal Control to enforce the township's ordinance?

- We contacted FDL Animal Control for this purpose and Supervisors Harms and Olson met with them in October to see if they could help us, and if so, at what cost, if any. FDL

informed the supervisors that once they hire a staff person to deal with the animal control problem, and find a place to board animals, then they would have no objections to contracting with our Township to provide this service to non-band members. At this time, the actual cost is unknown.

- The Town Board has determined that the nuisance ordinance does not need to include 24/7 burning from recreational fire pits since the Cloquet Area Fire District is doing a good job of monitoring this issue.
- We will keep you updated.

7. For the past two years, the Perch Lake Board of Supervisors has been working with the property-owners of the Big Lake Store on 796 Cary Road demolish the building, as its deterioration poses health and safety issues. The property was sold to another party in mid-September of 2018, and as of this writing, we are happy to report that the demolition has finally occurred. We want to thank the new owner for his timely attention to this matter and to express our appreciation for setting a positive example in ensuring the health and safety for all of Perch Lake Township.

8. Town Clerk Lora Eames reported good turnouts for both the State Primary and General Election:

State Primary Election August 14, 2018	Turnout - 29.5% 171 eligible residents voted at the Town Hall or returned absentee ballots.
General Election November 6, 2018	Turnout - 80.2% 480 eligible residents voted at the Town Hall or returned absentee ballots.

The winners of the local races are listed below:

- Treasurer - Cheri DeMenge
- Supervisor A - Gary Harms
- Supervisor C - Keith Depre

Tom DeLovely, who currently holds the position of Supervisor C on the Town Board, chose not to run for another term. (Tom will continue to be available to work on Township roads as time permits.) Keith Depre will be replacing Tom on the Board on January 7, 2019.

9. The Big Lake Area Sanitary District's project - the sewer pipeline around Big Lake - is in limbo right now. The BLASD is waiting for the Fond du Lac Reservation Business Committee to approve or disapprove a joint powers agreement (JPA). The District is also planning the next step forward if the FDL does not respond or disapproves the JPA. For additional information, contact Chairman John Fredrickson at 218-269-4871, attend the BLASD monthly meetings on the second Thursday of each month, 6:30 PM, at the Perch Lake Town Hall, or check out the BLASD website at blasd.org. Stay tuned!

10. Just a reminder to residents about clearing driveways or yards of snow, leaves, and debris:
- It is against the law to push snow and ice onto a Township roadway.
 - It is against the law to dump leaves or other debris onto a Township roadway.

11. Enbridge: As you are aware, Enbridge pipelines run through Perch Lake Township and the Fond Du Lac Reservation. The Minnesota State Department of Revenue (not the local county assessor) sets the tax value for utilities. You may have read in the newspaper that Enbridge (and other utility companies) have taken the State Department of Revenue to Tax Court to challenge their formula for valuations. The companies claim that the State has overvalued and overtaxed them for years. The Tax Court sided with the utility companies and the State Supreme Court has supported the Tax Court. This past spring, Enbridge won a favorable ruling from the Tax Court. The State has appealed this ruling, but the general direction appears to favor Enbridge.

Assuming that the Tax Court ruling favoring Enbridge prevails, the impact is twofold:

- Short term: State, county and local governments (including Perch Lake Township) will be required to issue property tax refunds to Enbridge.
- Long term: The fact that the utility company will pay lower tax rates means that some burden shifts to other taxpayers who will pay more to make up the difference.

County Auditor Paul Gassert has briefed the Township Board on the current status of the potential tax liability for the Township. At this time, everything is up in the air until the legal process has run its course. In addition, the Board has invited him to the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, to provide information which will help us to determine how much to set for the 2020 Levy.

12. If you have any stories and/or photos that relate to the history of Perch Lake Township, please contact Lora Eames at 218-391-9178 or email them to her at perchlaketownship@gmail.com. We will make every effort to incorporate them into the new newsletter.

If you find this newsletter helpful, please let us know by contacting the Town Clerk at 218-391-9178, or perchlaketownship@gmail.com. Suggestions are welcome to add anything to our next addition. Thank you and we encourage everyone to attend our monthly board meetings, held the second Monday of each month at the Town Hall.

The Cloquet Area Fire District is always looking for volunteers firefighters. These are on call positions, paid calls, paid training. Contact Darren at 218-499-4258.



Culverts replaced on second bridge, Ditchbanks Road.