

February 12, 2024

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

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Gary Harms opened the February 12, 2024, regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. with a roll call. Supervisor Keith DePre hosted the meeting on Zoom.

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

Other: Tom DeLovely, Foreman
Rob Abramowski, Resident & Fond du Lac Reservation Business Committee Member

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the February 12, 2024, regular agenda with the following additions/changes:

- NB 8-g: Article from Wisconsin Public Radio re Lac Du Flambeau Tribe and Town.
- NB 8-i: MAT (Minnesota Association of Townships) Proposed Changes in Bylaws.
- NB 8-j: Setting Up Tables for Renters.

Motion carried.

3. RECEIPT/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the January 8, 2024, regular meeting minutes as recorded. Motion carried.

4. TREASURER/CLERK REPORTS

a. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer DeMenge provided the Treasurer's Report for January 2024.

MOTION (Olson/DePre): To approve the Treasurer's Report as presented with a cash balance of \$275,110.53 for the period ending January 31, 2024. Motion carried.

b. Certificate of Deposit MCCU

The supervisors approved a rollover to a one-year certificate of deposit.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve the rollover of \$86,534.54 to a one-year certificate of deposit with Members Cooperative Credit Union at a 4.18% interest rate. Motion carried.

c. Clerk's Report Tracking of Storm Damage Claim for 2023-SD-070

Supervisor Olson asked about the status of the storm damage reimbursement funds. Clerk Eames reported that MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) had received the Township's claim but was delayed in processing claims due to a backlog.

5. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

Supervisors approved the regular claims and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) claims for payment.

a. Regular Claims

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve the payment of regular claims. Motion carried.

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|-------------|---|
| \$1,520.38 | Late claims list for January 8, 2024: #5063 - #5065 |
| \$5,742.05 | Regular claims list for February 12, 2024: Claims #5 - #5 |
| \$913.33 | Employee payroll for February 5, 2024 |
| \$205.00 | Election judge payroll for February 12, 2024 |
| \$2,149.61 | Regular payroll for February 12, 2024 |
| <hr/> | |
| \$10,530.37 | Total |

b. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Claims.

Clerk Eames reported no ARPA claims for this month.

6. REPORTS

a. Cloquet Area Fire District (CAFD).

Chair Harms reported the following:

- The CAFD responded to 3,335 incidents in 2023 for fire and ambulance, an increase of 29 incidents from 2022.
- The district's first responders at the scene of the January 8, 2024, shooting did a commendable job and are now taking additional incident stress training.

b. Big Lake Area Sanitary District (BLASD)

Supervisor Depre reported that Carlton County will send letters to property-owners with noncompliant septic systems on Big Lake. They will have two years to replace their systems.

Eames reported that the BLASD still receives correspondence which requires a response – i.e., levy, outstanding indebtedness, census. Someone must complete the reports even if the answer is “zero,” or “no change.” Depre replied that Eames was authorized to respond as needed.

c. Road and Bridge.

(1) Tom DeLovely, Foreman

DeLovely provided no report.

(2) Steve Olson, Road & Bridge Supervisor

Supervisor Olson reported that the road conditions are variable due to the freezing and thawing. Simian Creek Road has moguls. Enbridge has been doing quite a bit of hauling on Reponen, Strand and Ditchbank Roads. Olson consulted with the grader operator about grading Reponen and Strand. The grader operator was afraid that the

forecasted rain would turn the road to soup if graded. Olson checked the roads and determined that it was best to leave the roads ungraded. Rob Abramowski stated that Enbridge had planned to do a test removal this week, but the weight restrictions delayed the test.

Supervisor Olson also brought up that the Township roads are not posted during seasonal weight restrictions. The township should consider posting roads during seasonal weight restrictions. Supervisor DePre thought it was not necessary to post roads because the weight restrictions are assumed. Supervisor Olson said he would research the statues.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Old Housekeeping.

None.

b. American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Committee (Treasurer DeMenge):

DeMenge reported that eight participants have signed up for the five yoga classes which start February 21, and end March 6.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. New Housekeeping

(1) Accept donation of 18-quart roaster from Big Lake Covenant Church.

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To approve Res. No. 2024-008, accepting the donation of a NESCO 18-quart roaster from the Big Lake Covenant Church. Motion carried.

b. Driveway Permit – Robert Abramowski

Olson reported that he inspected the property and entrance and found no issues. Therefore, he recommended approval and supervisors voted to approve the application for a permit.

MOTION (Olson/DePre): To approve application for Access (Driveway) Permit No. 24-01 for Robert Abramowski, Lot 2 SE NE Section 33, Pine Grove Drive, pending payment of \$50. Motion carried.

c. Discussion about Annual Meeting.

Harms opened discussion about the Perch Lake Township Annual Meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, and acknowledged receipt of the following documents:

- A draft agenda.
- A spreadsheet showing past levies.
- Road and bridge costs from 2023.

Harms asked if supervisors wished to propose a levy for residents to consider. After some discussion, supervisors decided to recommend a 5% levy (same as last year).

MOTION (DePre/Olson): To propose an increase of 5% in the 2025 Levy, to be considered by electors at the March 12, 2024, Annual Meeting. Motion carried.

In addition, supervisors agreed to attend the meeting to provide reports and answer questions.

d. Approve Documents - Requests for Quotes (RFQs) for Township’s Annual Road Maintenance Contracts.

The road maintenance contracts currently held by Tom DeLovely will expire April 1, 2024. Therefore, the Town Board must seek quotes for the March 11, 2024, meeting.

Supervisor Olson discussed a change from last year – County Transportation is now grading township roads. The County has sufficient capacity for grading the Township’s roads, and this activity is covered in the County-Township maintenance agreement.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To post two RFQs (Requests for Quotes) for the 2024 annual road maintenance contracts below:

- One for brushing, mulching, and equipment.
- One for loading and hauling.

The Town Board will consider proposals at the March 11, 2024, meeting. Motion carried.

e. Obtain Quotes for Roadside Mowing.

Board members asked Eames to obtain roadside mowing quotes from both Jerry Telcher (Jerry’s Roadside Mowing) and Eric Carlson for the March meeting.

MOTION (Depre/Olson): To authorize the Clerk to seek quotes from the usual contractors – Jerry Telcher (Jerry’s Roadside Mowing) and Eric Carlson by the March meeting. Motion carried.

f. Letter of Support for Cloquet Area Fire District’s Bonding Request.

Supervisors reviewed a request for support from Chief Jesse Buhs for the Cloquet Area Fire District (CAFD) request for state bonding.

MOTION (Olson/Depre): To approve letters of support to four state legislators for the Cloquet Area Fire District’s \$10 million bonding request for the 2024 Legislative Session. Motion carried.

g. Bureau of Indian Affairs: Notice of Land Acquisition Application

- (1) Harms noted that BIA Notice of Land Acquisition was informational only.
- (2) Discussion of article re Lac Du Flambeau tribe and town

Olson opened discussion about an article from Wisconsin Public Radio about the Lac Du Flambeau Town and Tribe. The town had a twenty-five-year lease going through tribal land but did not renew the lease. Thus, they were “trespassing on tribal land. The tribe brought the town to court for a large judgement.

Olson noted that Perch Lake Township has some work to do:

- To record its roads; and
- To make sure its roads do not go through FDL properties.

h. Upcoming Events

Eames reported on upcoming events which will be published soon in the Pine Knot:

- Presidential Nomination Election, March 5.
- Annual Meeting, March 13.
- Board of Appeal & Equalization, April 3.

i. Changes in MAT (Minnesota Association of Township) Bylaws

Olson recalled his trip to the MAT Annual Meeting in St. Cloud to follow up on MAT issues, including the proposed bylaw changes. MAT did not conduct business, claiming that they lacked a quorum. What changed? MAT has done business in past years with less than a 10 percent quorum and only one membership per town (not counting supervisors, clerks, treasurers, and deputies as individual members).

Olson noted that MAT will present these bylaw changes for a vote at the spring short courses. (See winter issue of “Township Insider” for details.)

Olson plans to respond to President Gary Burdorf’s comments in the “Township Insider.”

j. Setting Up of Tables for Rentals

Supervisors discussed the current dilemma in setting up tables or putting them away – eight-foot tables stacked against the wall in a tight storage area. The tables are cumbersome for the Township’s maintenance employee and renters to retrieve or store.

Supervisors were in consensus that the Town Board:

- has always had a policy of having renters set up their own events.
- should purchase six-foot tables with a cart for easier access.
- should consider widening the storage access area.

Harms will return next month with some costs for supervisors to approve. In addition, he and Jeanette Olson, rental manager, will also ask the Board to approve a revised rental agreement with a waiver to protect the township from liability.

9. VISITOR COMMENTS.

Resident Tom DeLovely commented that the Town should not use its employees to set up private parties or events. He recommended that rental rates should be raised to cover the employee wage or events should be eliminated. The supervisors, clerk, and treasurer returned various comments. Harms (as Facilities Manager) will screen all future requests for setup.

10. ADJOURNMENT.

Chair Harms adjourned the meeting at approximately 08:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Town Board

Lora Eames, Clerk

Gary Harms, Chair