



Perch Lake Township News

2779 Big Lake Road, Cloquet, MN 55720 Summer 2021-01

Just a reminder
to residents regarding 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.

We're on the web
<http://www.perchlaketownship.org>

Perch Lake Township
2779 Big Lake Rd
Cloquet, MN 55720

RIGHT OF WAY ORDINANCE

2020 and 2019 were relatively high snow years. There were several township roads where snowplowing was becoming difficult due to residents pushing snow across the road and narrowing the road. At the 2020 Annual Meeting, the township citizens authorized the town board to develop a right of way ordinance. The Perch Lake Town Board worked with the township attorney to develop an ordinance. The ordinance draft included: General provisions, including depositing snow in right of way; parking; towing;

driveway culverts; and utilities within the township road right of ways. In February of 2021 there were problems with cars parked on both sides of Magney drive between Cary Road and Brower Drive. There are no shoulders on this portion of Magney Drive so the parking was in the driving lane. The parking interfered with traffic and

prevented snowplowing on more than one occasion. A public hearing on the ordinance was held on April 26, 2021. After the hearing the ordinance was approved at the regular township meeting, May 10, 2021. The town board designated Magney Drive and Brower Drive as NO PARKING a to prevent a re-occurrence of the February parking incident. Magney Drive and Brower Drive have now been posted No Parking Anytime. The west 900 feet of Hardwood Lake Road



Right-of-way

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ENBRIDGE

Perch Lake Township has received good news!

Minnesota state officials have not only agreed to pay Enbridge more than \$45 million for overvaluing pipeline property, thereby settling a long-standing tax

case; but also approved \$30 million to cover the share owed by local governments along the pipeline routes.

How would this have impacted Perch Lake Township? The Township

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Town Board meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

- August 9
- September 13
- October 11
- November 8
- December 13

Annual Town Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Town Board Members:

Chairman Gary Harms, (218) 451-1629
Supervisor Steve Olson, (218) 591-1795
Supervisor Keith Depre, (218) 348-4119
Treasurer Cheri DeMenge, (218) 390-0636
Clerk Lora Eames, (218) 391-9178

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ENBRIDGE

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could have been liable for a budget-busting refund bill – with interest.

Enbridge and other utility companies had accused the Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR) of overvaluing pipeline property for years. Enbridge took the DOR to Minnesota Tax Court and won its first major judgement against the state for years 2012-2014. Then, in 2019, they also won a case for years 2015-2016. The State appealed only one case - 2012 to the Minnesota Supreme Court. Therefore, a property tax refund was due for four

of the five years in question. The bill was estimated to be more than \$30 million. Much of the payback was set to fall on the shoulders of local governments along the pipeline route (who also receive a large share of the taxes.

The State Legislature intervened and passed a bill which resulted in the State paying the refund bill to Enbridge out of the general fund.

We have the following to thank: Representative Mike Sundin, Senator Jason Rarick, Carlton County Assessor Kyle Holmes, and Minnesota Association of Townships.

Our Town Hall continues to be available for rentals. The rates are \$50.00 for township residents and \$75.00 for non-residents. Contact Pat Anderson at 218-499-1903 for an application.

“The Cloquet Area Fire District is always looking for volunteers. These are paid-on-call positions and paid training. Call 218-499-5258 or check out the website: <https://www.cloquetareafiredistrict.com>”

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

We are set to receive a second round of COVID-19 money, much bigger than the last round, thanks to President Biden’s American Rescue Plan, passed March 11, 2021. The most comprehensive of the towns’ stimulus will give \$19.5 billion to local municipalities throughout the United States.

We estimate that Perch Lake Township will receive between \$100,000 and \$120,000.

We can use the funds for the

following purposes:

- ◆ Responses to the public health emergency and its negative impacts.
- ◆ Replacement of reduced revenue.
- ◆ Premium pay for essential workers.
- ◆ Investments in water, sewer, and broadband.
- ◆ Gift transfers to non-profits and other entities.

The Town Board has discussed setting up a committee – to include residents – to make recommendations on how to spend the funds. Towns can use the money for eligible costs incurred between March 3, 2021, and December 31, 2024.

We will have more details later.

PERCH LAKE RECYCLING CENTER

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 Wednesday – Friday from 2:00-6:00 pm and Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

This is a free service to all.

RECESSED ANNUAL MEETING

On March 9, 2021, residents who attended the Annual Meeting voted to recess the meeting until September 7, 2021, when in-person attendance was more likely.

Residents are invited to attend the Annual Meeting in person or via Zoom on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., in the Perch Lake Town Hall

So why is it so important for you to attend the Annual Meeting? We can offer three good reasons:

(1) The most important reason is

for you to vote on the upcoming levy for 2022. The town’s electors (voters) set the town’s property tax levy at the annual town meeting. The town clerk certifies the amount of the levy voted on to the County Auditor annually by September 30. The property tax levy is the major source of revenue for local governments.

(2) This is a good time to mix with other residents and discuss issues of importance.

(3) Lastly, Pat Anderson will offer cake and coffee.

PERCH LAKE TOWNSHIP SUMMER ROADS 2021

The township has kept the tax levy flat with no increases from 2010 to 2020. This year the town board found out that was a mistake. The township hasn’t kept up with the road construction cost increases. It’s been over 6 years since the township had a major road project.

This year the town board had planned a major road project, the rebuilding of Watkins Spur. The pavement is badly deteriorated and the drainage of the road needs improvement. In 2019 we had engaged the Carlton County Transportation Department to complete a design of the rebuild. The road is very narrow 12 to 16 feet, which is too narrow for two-way traffic. There is not room to widen the road. Instead of widening the road it was proposed to eliminate the cul-de-sac at the end, extend the road to Lakeview Drive and make Watkins Spur a one-way road. This option would allow for better snowplowing and better access for fire engines and ambulances. The engineer’s estimate for the project exceeded the funds available when black topping was included. The town board requested quotes for the

project with a gravel surface this June and the quotes came in about 30% over the engineer’s estimate. The quotes once again exceeded the township funds available for the project. The town board decided to delay the project and requote the project in the winter when we may get more favorable pricing.

Asphalt pavement has a 20-30 life. Perch Lake township has 3.45 miles of paved roads where the pavement is older than 20 years. This pavement will need to be replaced soon. The estimated cost to re-pave the 3.45 miles is \$862,500. This estimated cost does not include other associated cost like culvert replacement. Last year we set aside \$23,000 for road projects. At that rate it will take 37.5 years to save up enough to repave these 3.45 miles of 20+ year old roads.

Due to COVID the township continued the Annual Meeting to September 7, 2021, at 7:00 pm. The citizens of the township set the levy at the annual meeting if you have concerns about roads funding in the township, please attend this meeting

Pipeline Construction and Township Roads

Ditchbank was heavily traveled for the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline construction, which resulted in significant damage to the driving surface. The Enbridge contractor had hauled in rock (6 inches in diameter) to fill in soft spots. The made for a very rough surface. Perch Lake Township and Enbridge have a road use agreement to ensure the township roads impacted by the pipeline construction are brought back to pre-pipeline construction conditions. Perch Lake Township repaired the Ditchbank Road and Enbridge reimbursed the township under the road use agreement. There could be at least two more years of pipeline construction with replacing Line 4 in the township and removal of the old Line 3. The Perch Lake Town Board supervisors and our road contractor will monitor the conditions of the township roads to ensure they are brought back to pre-pipeline construction conditions.

Other road maintenance

Lakeview and Lake Drive have been scheduled for crack patching. This work should be done in the fall.

RIGHT OF WAY ORDINANCE

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was also designated as no parking.

What does this mean for those of you who live along Magney and Brower Drives? You will need to provide off pavement parking for your vehicles and guests. Magney and Brower are really too narrow for on pavement parking. During the snow free months lawns may provide the parking. The lawns are not available during the winter and

the snow furrows can make the road even narrower. If you have a winter event when guests exceed available parking perhaps your neighbors can help out with additional parking.

We understand that this may cause problems when residents have guests over and there is not adequate parking in their driveways. If your guests can pull completely off the black top roadway, they will not

be violating the ordinance. Hopefully, the larger gatherings will not occur in the winter.

The Right of way ordinance is posted on the Perch Lake Township website at: www.perchlaketownship.org/Perch_Lake_Township_Right-of-Way_Ordinance.pdf.