

**Princeton Township  
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

**Tuesday, September 15, 2020**

**Minutes**

The September meeting of the Princeton Township Board was called to order by Chairman Gene Stoeckel at 7:30 p.m.

Supervisors attending: Thomas Duden, Dan Hiller, Gene Stoeckel, Bill Whitcomb, John Wilhelm  
Also attending: Zoning Administrator Scott Richards, Township Engineer Todd McLouth, Clerk-Treasurer Doug Dahl

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Open Forum

No business in Open Forum.

## **Approve Minutes**

**August 18 regular meeting:** Dan Hiller moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Bill Whitcomb. Motion carried.

## **Clerk-Treasurer Report**

**Cash control statement:** Beginning balance for August: \$619,145.60; Receipts \$5,862.50; Disbursements \$66,865.74; Ending balance \$558,142.36.

Beginning balance for 2020: \$666,692.05; Receipts \$307,790.21; Disbursements \$416,339.90.  
Investment balance: \$105,817.53. Total cash balance July 31: \$663,959.89.

**August payroll:** Net pay distribution—regular payroll: \$3,382.64.

**Claims for approval:** Total claims \$44,857.12.

John Wilhelm moved to approve the financial reports. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

**Coronavirus relief funds:** Mr. Dahl reported that he had submitted the township's Coronavirus Relief Certification and had received an acknowledgement of receipt from the State of Minnesota.

**Snowplowing bids:** The ad for snowplowing bids has been delivered to ECM. ECM will publish August 17 & 24. The ad is on the ECM website and the township website.

**Quotes for annual audit:** Mr. Dahl has received a quote from the audit firm of Schlenner, Wenner & Company. Both Baldwin Township and Becker Township use the firm for their annual audits. The Schlenner quote covers three years, and is significantly less annually than the BerganKDV quote received last month. Mr. Dahl will continue seeking quotes from other firms.

**Great Northern Trail:** MLC Environmental Resources Manager Dillon Hayes emailed the township regarding the Great Northern Trail, a proposed trail route that would extend along the abandoned railroad bed adjacent to Highway 169 from Elk River to Milaca. He is offering the township the opportunity to participate in the planning and development of the trail.

**Other notes:** Mille Lacs County sent notice of a meeting regarding repair work on County Ditch 2. The public meeting will be held in the county board room at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, September 24.

Township resident Marcia Kendall sent an email asking if supervisor email addresses could be added to the township website. Supervisors were generally favorable, but suggested creating separate email accounts for the purpose, rather than using personal email. Mr. Dahl will pursue the question with the website developer.

#### **Zoning Administrator's Report: Scott Richards**

**Alphyn Machinery LLC Interim-Use Permit:** Mr. Richards reviewed the application by Alphyn Machinery LLC and presented a resolution approving the permit: Thomas Duden of Alphyn Machinery LLC has made application for an interim-use permit for a home occupation for the rental of machinery and equipment at the family farm at 9014 45<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Duden is looking to supplement their farm income to include the rental of equipment.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve the resolution. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Mr. Duden recused. Motion carried.

Mr. Hiller objected that an interim-use permit should not be required for township residents to use their property for home-based businesses. He moved to have the Planning Commission review the township's IUP requirements related to such businesses. Motion seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

**Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance amendments:** Mr. Richards reported that the Planning Commission, at its September 8 meeting, recommended amendments to the zoning and subdivision regulations as they relate to development standards, boundary-line adjustments, and the lot-split process. He presented a draft of the amended ordinance.

Supervisors are not completely satisfied with the draft language. Mr. Duden questioned the advisability of building cul-de-sacs in the River Conservation district. The board agreed generally that the ordinance needs additional modification.

Mr. Duden moved to waive the first reading of the ordinance and move the second reading to the October board meeting to allow continuing modification of the language. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried.

#### **Old Business**

**82<sup>nd</sup> Ave/33<sup>rd</sup> St project update:** Township Engineer Todd McLouth reported that the project is complete. He presented the final accounting for the project and application for payment. [Document on file.] He noted that the board may approve payment, but may not deliver payment until the township receives the IC-134 forms and all lien waivers from the contractor.

Mr. Duden moved to approve the final payment of \$351,262.88 when the forms and waivers are delivered to the township. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

Mr. Hiller moved to bill the City of Princeton \$78,724.76 for its portion of the project. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel. Motion carried.

**Princeton Township re-opening preparedness plan:** Mr. Duden and Mr. Wilhelm reported that the plan had been completed.

**Working Meetings:** Mr. Whitcomb suggested scheduling working meetings to advance certain projects including:

- Road agreements.
- Comprehensive plan updates/revisions.
- Township fee schedule.
- Road priorities.
- Snowplowing policy.
- Retaining a financial advisor.

Mr. Stoeckel set a working meeting date of October 7 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the comprehensive plan, fee schedule, snowplowing policy, and the need for a financial advisor. He instructed the clerk to prepare and post the special-meeting notices.

### **Supervisors' Reports**

#### **Snowplowing report—Mr. Duden:**

- Recommended dropping snowplowing triggers from four inches to three inches. He noted that the four-inch standard allows for ice build-up that can make plowing more difficult; it also poses more risk to drivers.

#### **Road report—Bill Whitcomb:**

- First round of mowing and brushing has been completed.
- Sections of roads treated with magnesium-chloride are holding up well, requiring less grading.
- Received one question and three complaints:
  - Question about not grading the full length of a road. Only grading sections that require it. No need to disturb surfaces that are stable and in good driving condition.
  - 105<sup>th</sup> Avenue not being graded. Resident was not complaining about the driving condition of the road, but about vegetation growing along the road. Told him we will make it a point to hit the road when needed to help stop vegetation from growing onto the road.
  - 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue not being graded. Had been checking the road several times. The surface is stable and in good driving condition. Again, we only grade when the road condition requires it, not according to an arbitrary schedule.
  - Report of a stolen road sign at east end of 17<sup>th</sup> Street. This is the 30 MPH sign scheduled to be removed this year. Only needed to remove the lower portion of the sign that was left in the ground.
- Completed traffic counts on 33 locations.
- Improve three turnarounds at dead ends (approximately \$3,000 total)

- North end of 105<sup>th</sup> Ave.—Remove small trees; add rock/gravel to stabilize (approx. \$1,200)
- West end of 70<sup>th</sup> St.—Minor excavation, add rock/gravel to stabilize (approx. \$1,200; cost to be split with Bogus Brook Township)
- North end of 52<sup>nd</sup> St./83<sup>rd</sup> Ave.—Remove two large dead trees to provide adequate room to turn around; add rock/gravel to stabilize (approx. \$500)

**Fire Board report—Bill Whitcomb**

- The fire department is facing some expenses, especially turnout gear, that could be covered by COVID funds. Mr. Hiller and Mr. Whitcomb will continue researching legitimate uses that could benefit the fire department.

**Airport Commission Liaison—Gene Stoeckel**

- Corrected an error in his response to Joyce Sproessig last month. Private airports are not the responsibility of the FAA, but of MNDOT.

**New Business**

**Add interior door to access the cold-storage room from inside the garage:**

Mr. Whitcomb noted that the existing outside door to the cold-storage room tends to get blocked by snow sliding off the lean-to roof. It is also inconvenient for access and storage. Having an inside door would be more accessible and less subject to the vagaries of weather. There was originally an interior door which could be re-opened and framed to replace the outer door.

Mr. Hiller moved to approve authorizing up to \$500 to move the exterior door to the interior of the garage. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

**Other Business**

Mr. Hiller reported that the Sterling truck sold for \$16,249; the International truck sold for \$5,350. Mr. Duden noted that Hiller Auction conducted the sale at no cost to the township.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to authorize up to \$400 to add grab rails to the exterior handrails on the front of the town hall building to facilitate access for people with limited mobility. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel. Motion carried.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Hiller moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

Adjourned 10:00 p.m.

**Attendees**

Doug Fiala, Nancy Moan, Craig Wensmann, Tanya Lundberg, Kevin Walz, Joel Minks, Jesse Jondahl, Jason Betzler, Marcia Anderson, Scott Moller, Bart Kendall, Nicholas Taylor, Andrea Gerrard.

Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Dahl, Clerk-Treasurer