

PRINCETON TOWNSHIP TOWN BOARD WORKING MEETING
Wednesday, October 7, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
MINUTES

7:00 p.m.

- Called to order by Chairman Gene Stoeckel
Members present: Thomas Duden, Dan Hiller, Gene Stoeckel, Bill Whitcomb, John Wilhelm
Also attending: Town Clerk Doug Dahl, Planning Commission Member Dave Persing
- All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Working Meeting:

Issues discussed:

- Comprehensive Plan updates/revisions—Members noted discrepancies between the comprehensive plan and various ordinances passed since the adoption of the plan in 2009. Also, the plan calls for revision/updates every ten years. The Planning Commission is working on several issues related to zoning and permitting that will require revisions to the comprehensive plan. All such proposed revisions must go through the Planning Commission and public hearings before they can be adopted.

Members also noted that, despite rumors circulating throughout the township, there have been no changes to lot-size requirements since the adoption of the comprehensive plan.

- Township fee schedule—Petitioners, including township residents and developers, have raised the question of how township permit fees are determined. For example, why does the sketch plan/lot split application assess \$100 per lot for two or fewer lots, but \$500 per lot for three or more? Members also questioned how the fees for conditional- and interim-use permits are related to expenses the township incurs in researching and acting on those permit applications.

Members also discussed the park-dedication fee. The issue has come up in town board and planning commission meetings due to the township not having a specific purpose for the fund. One option is to dedicate some of the funds to the Great Northern Trail development. Mille Lacs County is undertaking the task of extending the trail through the county from its present terminal point at the Sherburne County line. The board directed the clerk to contact the Rum River Recreation Resource Board for information about the status of the project.

The board directed the clerk-treasurer to research the relationship between permit fees and related expenses.

- Snowplowing policy—Thomas Duden offered a draft snowplowing policy he had compiled from researching policies in other Minnesota townships. The main issues are specifying township plowing margins (33 ft. from road center), and responsibility for collateral damage. Example: plowed snow knocking over a mailbox vs. snowplow hitting a mailbox.
- Bank account management (Checking, Money Market, CD)—Doug Dahl reported that, in consultation with Chairman Stoeckel, he had moved funds from the Bremer money-market account to the checking account to cover the payment to Knife River for the 33rd St/82nd Ave project. It was confirmed that he has that authority/responsibility as treasurer.
- Retaining a financial advisor—Members discussed the implications of the Town Board having kept the same tax levy in place for more than 10 years. That practice has brought about a funding shortfall that

impacts the township's ability to meet its obligations, particularly as it relates to road maintenance. Mr. Whitcomb suggested seeking outside analysis and counsel on ways to begin filling that gap without over-burdening the town's taxpayers.

The following items will be added to the agenda for the October 20 regular town board meeting:

- Consideration of revisions to the comprehensive plan.
- Snowplowing policy.

Adjourn

Bill Whitcomb moved to adjourn. Seconded by Dan Hiller. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Dahl
Clerk-Treasurer