

**Princeton Township  
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

**Township Board Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 18, 2022**

**Minutes**

The October 18 monthly meeting of the Princeton Township Board was called to order by Chairman Gene Stoeckel at 7:30 p.m. Supervisors attended the meeting in person at Township Hall. The meeting was open to in-person attendance, plus remote participation via GoToMeeting.

**Supervisors present:** Thomas Duden, Gene Stoeckel, Bill Whitcomb

**Supervisors absent:** Dan Hiller, John Wilhelm

**Staff present:** Clerk-Treasurer Doug Dahl, Zoning Administrator Scott Richards

**Via GoToMeeting:** None

**Public attendees:** Barb Bekius, Ken Hennen, Ali LeBlanc, Joel Minks, Nancy Moan, Terry Pfleghaar, Dustin Woodson

**Via GoToMeeting:** Dominic Austing, Justine Pool

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approve Agenda**

Mr. Duden moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

**Open Forum**

Township resident Barb Bekius requested Board action to place traffic-control signs on 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Her primary concern was a hill on 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue that interferes with drivers' visibility, potentially endangering walkers along the road. She requested placement of signs before the upslope in both directions.

Board members pointed out that placing such signs would violate the Township's sign policy, which was adopted in accordance with the Minnesota Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and state law governing traffic-control signs. Mr. Stoeckel suggested, instead, that the Township could grade down the hump on the road to improve visibility. The Board will research the feasibility of that solution, and seek to implement it in 2023.

**Approve Minutes—September 20 Monthly Meeting**

Mr. Duden moved to approve the minutes of the September 20 monthly meeting. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

## Clerk-Treasurer Report

### **Cash Control Statement—September 30, 2022**

|                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| General Fund Beginning Balance       | \$ 78,367.95 |
| Receipts                             | \$ 7,799.48  |
| Disbursements                        | \$ 16,067.26 |
| Ending Balance                       | \$ 70,100.17 |
| <br>                                 |              |
| Road & Bridge Fund Beginning Balance | \$358,837.35 |
| Receipts                             | \$ 0.00      |
| Disbursements                        | \$101,215.63 |
| Ending Balance                       | \$257,621.72 |
| <br>                                 |              |
| COVID Fund Beginning Balance         | \$124,159.69 |
| Receipts                             | \$ 0.00      |
| Disbursements                        | \$ 0.00      |
| Ending Balance                       | \$124,159.69 |
| <br>                                 |              |
| Total Cash Beginning Balance         | \$657,071.33 |
| Receipts                             | \$ 10,299.48 |
| Disbursements                        | \$121,933.52 |
| Ending Balance                       | \$545,437.29 |

Mr. Dahl noted that the General Fund beginning balance differed from the August ending balance, as reported at the September meeting, by \$332.46. The discrepancy resulted from two checks from previous months that had been confirmed as lost. After consulting with CTAS support, Mr. Dahl voided the two checks, resulting in the discrepancy. The two checks were #13344 and #13406 for \$166.23 each. The checks were replaced with one new check, also per instructions from CTAS support.

Mr. Duden moved to approve the September Cash Control Statement. Seconded by Mr. Stoeckel. Motion carried.

### **September Payroll**

|       |            |
|-------|------------|
| Gross | \$5,524.50 |
| Net   | \$4,471.68 |

Mr. Duden moved to approve the September payroll. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

### **Claims for Approval**

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Claims through October 18 | \$13,189.84 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|

Mr. Duden moved to approve the claims list. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

### **Election Equipment Carts**

Mille Lacs County Auditor-Treasurer Brenda Ecklund asked if voting precincts in the county want to share the cost of carts to be used for transporting election equipment and supplies between the courthouse to the precinct. Cost of each cart is \$200; precinct share would be \$100. Mr. Dahl will observe carts at the November election to determine if having one will make transporting election equipment easier and safer.

## **New Business**

### **Metro Sales Proposal for Document Scanning and Retention**

Dominic Austing from Metro Sales, Inc., had approached the Town Clerk with an offer to digitize township records. Mr. Dahl provided a sample of the township's property files for the company to use in developing an estimate. In response, Metro Sales prepared a proposal in two parts:

- 1) Scan existing property files to digital files.
- 2) Provide ongoing service to digitize and store all township documents as they are created.

Mr. Austing and Justine Pool attended the meeting to explain the services they are offering, and to answer questions. Supervisors agreed to continue considering the question, perhaps putting it before electors at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

### **Federated Coops Application for an Amended Conditional Use Permit**

Federated Coops has applied for an Amended Conditional Use Permit to allow for an additional propane storage tank and conversion of another for propane on its property at 6467 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 10, and recommended approval of the application with conditions specified in the Zoning Administrator's report.

The Board was unable to act on the application because approval requires a 4/5 vote of the Board, and only three members were present at this meeting. The Board will take up the question at its November 15 meeting.

### **Schlenner Wenner & Company Letter**

Schlenner Wenner & Company has notified the Township that it will not be able to perform the town's 2022 external audit. The letter stated that the firm has lost several key employees, requiring it to cut back on its auditing obligations. The clerk will work with the chairman to research other options for conducting the audit.

### **Brush-Removal Policy Draft**

Mr. Duden presented a draft brush-removal policy for supervisors to review. Mr. Whitcomb suggested having Township Attorney Jason Hill review the document to ensure it complies with any relevant state statutes. Mr. Duden will do so, then offer the draft with any revisions for approval at the November 15 meeting.

## **Old Business**

### **Snowplowing Policy revisions**

The Board had considered a draft snowplowing policy at its September meeting. Mr. Duden offered an updated version of the original draft, including minor edits, for Board approval. Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve the policy with the noted edits. Seconded by Mr. Duden. Motion carried. The 2022-23 Snow Plowing policy will be posted on the Township website.

### **Silver Lake Oaks Default Status**

Mr. Whitcomb reported that he had toured the location with representatives from the developer, and builder, and Loucks Engineers. The developer had made significant progress against the outstanding items on the Engineer's punch list. Mr. Whitcomb expects the remaining tasks to be completed before the Township is to assume ownership of the road in June 2023.

## **Supervisor Reports**

### **Road Supervisor:**

Mr. Whitcomb reported that he and Supervisor Duden had conducted a road-employee meeting on October 13. The meeting covered a variety of topics including roadwork practices, schedules, safety, policies, and equipment maintenance.

Mr. Whitcomb also reported on the progress of graveling, tree removal, brushing, and sign-post removal.

### **Fire Board Liaison:**

**Mr. Stoeckel** spoke to his concern about the rising cost of fire coverage through the Princeton City Fire Department. The cost increased significantly from 2021 to 2022, and will probably rise more next year as the department increases hours for the fire chief, and prepares to purchase another truck. He suggested that the Township begin considering other options for fire coverage.

### **Adjourn**

Mr. Duden moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.  
Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Dahl  
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Board November 15, 2022.

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Eugene Stoeckel, Chairman