

**Princeton Township  
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

**Township Board Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 18, 2023**

**Minutes**

The April monthly meeting of the Princeton Township Board was called to order by Chairman Gene Stoeckel at 7:00 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:** Mike Bishman, Dan Hiller, Thomas Duden, Gene Stoeckel, Bill Whitcomb

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

**Public attendees:** Matt Ackerson, Greg Anderson, Al Bekius, Barb Bekius, Duane Bekius, Jason Betzler, Victoria Dyson, Brandon Fossum, Ken Jones, Tanya Jones, Joss Jondahl, Steve Kloss, Dave Kornell, Joseph Lieberbach, Jean Loscheider, Joel Minks, Nancy Moan, Justin Remer, Lisa Remer, Sara Rutten, Tammy Severson, Jenna Slack, Casey Stearns, Juanita Steans, Craig Wennsman

**Online attendee:** Tom Braun, attorney for Jason Betzler and North Country Flats

**Open Forum**

Joel Minks suggested soliciting volunteers from among the residents who would have the requisite skills to upgrade the Township website.

Mr. Braun, attorney for North Country Flats, referred to the original opinion from Zoning Administrator Scott Richards, delivered to the Planning Commission on March 6, that the North Country Flats Conditional Use Permit application had complied with all Township Zoning regulations. He noted that Mr. Richards had changed his opinion in a memo dated April 12, 2023, based on County Zoning requirements. He asserted that his clients are prepared to assert their full rights under the law based on the original recommendation prepared by Mr. Richards.

Attendee Jean Loscheider asked where the process stands at this point. Mr. Richards explained that the Planning Commission recommended denial to the Town Board. The Town Board must now discuss the recommendation, brought to them in the form of a resolution, then act on the recommendation.

**Approve Meeting Minutes**

**March 28 Monthly Meeting:** Mr. Duden moved to approve the minutes of the March 28 monthly meeting. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried.

**Clerk-Treasurer Report**

**Cash Control Statement—April 3, 2023**

NOTE: Mr. Dahl reported he had created the cash control statement as of April 3, rather than March 31 to reflect balances after transferring the certificate of deposit balance to the General Fund.

General Fund Beginning Balance	\$ 41,306.24
Receipts	\$118,233.75
Disbursements	\$ 32,604.95
Ending Balance	\$126,935.04
Road & Bridge Fund Beginning Balance	\$311,660.64
Receipts	\$ 0,00
Disbursements	\$ 17,570.78
Ending Balance	\$294,089.86
Total Cash Beginning Balance	\$554,705.90
Receipts	\$124,233.75
Disbursements	\$ 51,595.31
Ending Balance	\$627,344.34

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

**March Payroll**

Gross	\$6,212.00
Net	\$5,088.14

Mr. Hiller moved to approve the March payroll. Seconded by Mr. Duden. Motion carried.

**Claims for Approval**

Total Claims through April 18	\$16,810.15
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Mr. Hiller moved to approve the Claims List. Seconded by Mr. Bishman. Motion carried.

**Auditor Search Update**

Mr. Dahl reported that he had received an engagement letter from Burkhardt & Burkhardt, CPA, proposing a three-year audit engagement. The proposal offered the following fee rates for the covered years:

2022	\$6,000.00
2023	\$6,650.00
2024	\$7,350.00

Mr. Dahl noted that the proposed rates were less than half those of the other two proposals he had received. Members reviewed the engagement letter and found it acceptable.

Mr. Bishman moved to accept the Burkhardt & Burkhardt engagement letter. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Update on Clerk-Treasurer Search**

Mr. Dahl reported that he had received only one application for the clerk-treasurer position, that from Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Terry Pflieger. Mr. Stoeckel stated that the Board will act on her application at the May 16 meeting.

### **Zoning Report**

#### **North Country Flats Conditional Use Permit**

Zoning Administrator Scott Richards reviewed the details of the North Country Flats Conditional Use Permit application. He reported that, based on its conflict with Mille Lacs County zoning regulations for the proposed district, the Planning Commission had voted to recommend denial of the application. He also discussed the situation with the Mille Lacs County Zoning Administrator as well as Township Attorney Jason Hill, both of whom agreed that the application did not comply with County regulations. He therefore prepared Resolution 2023-7 denying the application.

Mr. Hiller moved to approve Resolution 2023-7 denying the Conditional Use Permit application for North Country Flats. Seconded by Mr. Bishman. Mr. Stoeckel called the roll:  
Mr. Bishman—Aye, Mr. Duden—Aye, Mr. Hiller—Aye, Mr. Stoeckel—Aye, Mr. Whitcomb—Aye.  
Motion carried unanimously. Resolution 2023-7 is adopted.

#### **Elevated Education MN Interim Use Permit**

Mr. Richards reported that the Planning Commission had voted to recommend approval of the Elevated Education MN Interim Use Permit. He presented Resolution 2023-8 approving the application.

Mr. Duden moved to approve Resolution 2023-8 approving the Interim Use Permit application for Elevated Education MN. Seconded by Mr. Bishman. Mr. Stoeckel called the roll:  
Mr. Bishman—Aye, Mr. Duden—Aye, Mr. Hiller—Aye, Mr. Stoeckel—Aye, Mr. Whitcomb—Aye.  
Motion carried unanimously. Resolution 2023-8 is adopted.

#### **County/Township Ordinances**

Mr. Richards reported that the Planning Commission, in view of conflicts recently encountered between Township and County zoning regulations, had requested approval to form a three-member sub-committee to review all zoning ordinances in search of other potential conflicts. Members agreed with the concept.

Mr. Bishman moved to approve the Planning Commission's request. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Old Business**

#### **Road Improvement Plan**

The Board engaged in an extended discussion of the detailed road-improvement plan covering work scheduled for 2023 and general plans for 2024. Mr. Whitcomb noted that the bids for work on 40<sup>th</sup> Street were significantly higher than expected, requiring reassessment of planned work.

Township Engineer Todd McLouth reminded the Board that it needed to take action on the 2023 road improvements bid. The Township received bids from four prospective contractors: Helmin Construction, Knife River Corporation, Kraemer Trucking & Excavation, and Astech Corp. Low bidder for the project was Helmin Construction at \$363,524.90.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to accept the bid from Helmin Construction. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Whitcomb stated that, due to cost increases of 40<sup>th</sup> Street and the unresolved shard-road agreement with Wyanett Township, the township would not be paving 50<sup>th</sup> Ave, the road-improvement plan needed to be modified. He proposed revisions to the contract with Helmin Construction that would reduce the total cost by \$45,278.10.

Mr. Hiller moved to approve the proposed revisions to the contract with Helmin Construction. Seconded by Mr. Bishman. Motion carried unanimously. The contract bid tabulation sheet and revised contract are filed at the Township office.

The contract with Allied Blacktop also required amendments. Mr. Whitcomb moved to revise the contract to remove the section on Brickton Road—Section 20, and to switch from chipseal to fog seal on the 82<sup>nd</sup> Street-33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue section. The spray patch was increase by \$3,850, for a total of \$7,700. Seconded by Mr. Duden. Motion carried unanimously. The contract bid tabulation sheet and revised contract are filed at the Township office.

#### **Interested Officer Resolution for Eugene Stoeckel**

Mr. Hiller moved to approve Resolution 2023-6 providing compensation at \$25/hour for Eugene Stoeckel for work on ditch mowing, brush clearing, and tree trimming. Seconded by Mr.

Bishman. Mr. Stoeckel called the roll:

Mr. Bishman—Aye, Mr. Duden—Aye, Mr. Hiller—Aye, Mr. Whitcomb—Aye. Motion carried 4-0 with Mr. Stoeckel abstaining. Resolution 2023-6 is adopted.

#### **New Business**

##### **Approve Liquor Licenses**

Mr. Hiller moved to approve liquor licenses for Long Siding Station, Moonshine Bar & Grill, Princeton Lanes, Old Log Liquor, and Shooters. Seconded by Mr. Bishman. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Supervisor Reports**

**Road Supervisor:** Winter was particularly hard on the roads.

**Snowplowing:** Grateful that it's done for the year.

#### **Liaisons**

**Airport Commission:** No meeting.

**City Planning Commission:** No meeting.

**Township Planning Commission:** Major issue was the North Country Flats CUP denial.

**Fire Board:** No meeting until July.

#### **Adjourn**

Mr. Hiller moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Doug Dahl  
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Town Board May 16, 2023

Eugene Stoeckel, Chairman

