

Bridgewater Township Board of Supervisors
County of Rice, State of Minnesota
February 14, 2024
Official Minutes

Call to order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Glen Castore, Andrew Ebling, Mike Little, Thomas Hart, Kathleen Kopseng, Lori Noreen, Debbie Salaba

Introduction of Guests: Jessica Green, Kathleen Doran-Norton, Michael Day

Approval of Agenda

- It was noted to add “Mark Thompson Property” to Planning & Zoning.
- Kathleen Kopseng made a motion to approve the Agenda, Thomas Hart seconded, all approved as amended.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

- Kathleen Doran-Norton presented information to the Board on how one can work on reducing the risk of Landfill fires. She explained a bill to improve electronic waste collection is in the works in which she is advocating the Board to write a letter in support of said bill.
- Kathleen Doran-Norton noted that there will be a “Building Our Future Legislative Roundtable” on Friday, February 23rd, 2024 at the Bridgewater Town Hall from 12:30-2pm and encouraged the Supervisors to attend if they are able.
- Kathleen Doran-Norton mentioned to the Board that if the 2024 Candidates for Township Supervisor are interested, she and Bruce Morelan would be willing to host a forum before the election.
 - It was noted that the Clerk will reach out to the Candidates to see if there is interest in doing so. The date would tentatively be March 6th at 7pm.

Approval of Minutes & Claims

- January 10th and February 2nd Meeting Minutes
 - Andrew Ebling made a motion to approve the January 10th and February 2nd, 2024 meeting minutes, Mike Little seconded, all approved.
- February Claims
 - Mike Little made a motion to approve the February claims, Kathleen Kopseng seconded, all approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer’s Report
 - Debbie Salaba noted that the final payment for property tax was deposited into the operating account in January.
 - It was noted that the balance after February Claims is approximately \$75K
 - It was noted that the Township opened 3 new CDs to take advantage of a higher interest rate.
 - It was discussed that the Paver CD currently at Merchants Bank has matured and decided that the money will be moved to Frandsen Bank and placed in a short-term CD at a better interest rate.
 - It was noted that Check #10395 has been voided
 - Glen Castore made the notation that of the total operating fund, \$165K is a loan from Frandsen Bank.

- IRS Reporting
 - The Treasurer will provide the report to the Chair.

Clerk's Report

- Appoint Election Judges
 - Andrew Ebling made a motion to approve the 2024 Election Judges, Thomas Hart seconded, all approved.

Roads

- 2024 Dust Control
 - Andrew Ebling stated that the Board has budgeted \$45K in 2024 for dust control. The roads that are slotted to receive dust control will follow the gravel schedule. Those roads receiving new gravel in 2024 will receive dust control when the weather allows. The roads that the Township will not have dust control applied on, the homeowners can do so at their discretion and will pay the Dust Control company directly for the application.
 - It was noted that this information will go in the next Newsletter.

Planning & Zoning-

- Dundas Planning Commission – names for consideration for appointment
 - It was noted that Glen Castore spoke with Frances Boehning and she was willing to have her name submitted for consideration for appointment. The Clerk will send this information along to the City of Dundas.
- Mark Thompson Property
 - Glen Castore stated that Cindy Nash is working with Peter Tiede to remedy this situation. The main issue is that previously the CUP was not recorded with the County.
 - The situation will be reevaluated at the March Meeting.

Old Business

- CORE X Partners Project Update
 - Glen Castore noted that the Escrow Agreement still has not been signed.
 - It was shared that CORE X Partners investment group is to hold a meeting within the next week to release money for the first phase of the project.
 - It was noted that they would not break ground until at least March, but more realistically it would be June at this point.
 - It was noted that there was a hearing of the Public Utilities Commission on January 18th in which an expedited process was requested and granted. A hearing could be around May 29-31st and could be held at the Bridgewater Township Hall with a probable decision from a judge by July 31st. This would then go back to the PUC for a final decision.
 - It was noted that there was an email with the lead attorney for Xcel asking to possibly settle the request with a territory swap.
 - It was discussed for the need to start the process of having a development agreement drafted with CORE X now.
- Jessica Green (Northland Securities) – Bonding Options
 - Glen Castore discussed the need for the Township to bond to build infrastructure in the amount of approximately \$1M.

- Jessica Green of Northland Securities provided inciteful information on how a Township would bond for such money. She provided a 20-year schedule to the Board for review.
 - It was noted that the Township does have a few options. A short term and long-term bond.
 - It was noted that using a local bank there is the possibility for more flexible terms
 - Discussion was held and noted that a 20 year schedule the Township could handle the debt with minimal increase to the levy.
- It was noted that the Bond that was discussed would be for the Rural Industrial District Infrastructure. If money was needed for the railroad or streets a different bond would be needed.
 - It was noted that there are multiple options for this type of bonding.
- It was discussed as to how the money is dispersed and used. There was a notation that if the Township does not use the entire amount of the bond, the remainder of the balance can be used to pay the bond down.
- It was noted that the bond process takes approximately 2 months, and once awarded an additional 3-4 weeks to have the money in the bank account.
- It was decided that Glen Castore will remain in touch with Jess Green on the process of bonding and a decision will be made by the March or April meeting to be able to stay on top of the CORE X Project.
- Facility Improvements
 - It was discussed that a quote was to be obtained for replacement insulation in the new shed. Mike Groth was to do so; he was not in attendance at the meeting so the Clerk will reach out to see if that was completed.
 - Kathleen Kopseng stated that she emailed Knecht's regarding landscape and noted that the Township will be on the schedule once ready.

New Business

- Fee Schedule Public Hearing
 - The Public Hearing was opened at 8:10pm and closed at 8:12pm.
 - Thomas Hart made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-01 2024 Fee Schedule. Andrew Ebling seconded the motion. All approved.
- Motion to recommend resolution for Levy
 - It was discussed that there is a need to increase the levy for 2025
 - It was approved to increase the levy by 7%.
 - Andrew Ebling made a motion to recommend a Resolution for a Levy increase at the Annual Meeting. Kathleen Kopseng seconded the motion. All approved.
- Agenda for Annual Meeting
 - The Board reviewed the 2023 Annual Meeting Agenda with some changes for 2024.
 - It was discussed that Road Infrastructure investment be a topic at the Annual Meeting, and that the Township is considering bonding for said improvements. It was decided that this topic will be added under Roads & Rural Industrial District.
 - It was discussed to create a slide detailing what a 7% levy increase looks like for the residents of Bridgewater Township as well as provide some comparables of the surrounding areas levy increases.

- Bridgewater Twp to hold Intergovernmental Meeting – Wed., February 21, 2023
 - Glen Castore noted that he has asked Alan Kraus from CRWP to come and speak at the Intergovernmental Meeting. He stated that he may not be able to attend, but he should be added to the agenda and if he is not there, he can explain the reasoning.

Issues for future meetings

- Resolution on NAFRS authority
 - It was noted that this will be addressed at the March meeting.
- Letter on possible turn back of 246
 - It was noted that Ron Sommers has written a letter to the Northfield City Council and will be sending it to the surrounding Townships to support.
 - It was noted that Kathleen Kopseng has drafted a letter and is ready for use if the Township decides not to support Ron Sommers letter.
- Barndominiums
 - Mike Little asked to begin discussion of allowing “Barndominiums” in the Township. A barndominium is a building that is a home attached to a large “garage”/shed.
 - It was decided to have this topic brought up at the next Planning & Zoning meeting so that the Township would comply with Rice County’s allowance of said type of building.

Adjourn