



Fish Lake Township

2170 Brunswick Road
Harris, MN 55032
(651) 674-7709
www.fishlaketownship.com

Town Board Meeting Minutes October 9, 2023

Board Members Present

Chair Bruce Fitzwater, Vice-Chair Jim Thill, Supervisor Donna Ferguson, Treasurer Sharon McAndrew, Clerk Andrea Nekowitsch

Board Members Absent

None

Others Present:

Gary Guse, Road Superintendent.

Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Fitzwater called the Regular Monthly Fish Lake Town Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Township Office at 2170 Brunswick Road, Harris, MN. The pledge of allegiance was recited by all. Motion made by Thill and seconded by Fitzwater to approve the agenda as presented. Approved unanimously.

Road Report

Gary Guse presented the road report.

City of Harris: Randy Carlson, who serves as the Mayor of Harris, and Shannon Geier, the Clerk of Harris, attended the Township meeting to inquire about the Township's interest in collaborating on a joint LRIP grant application. The purpose of this application would be to secure funding for the repaving of several roads, including Falcon Ave, 450th, Evergreen, and 455th up to CSAH 60. Notably, 455th is in Fish Lake and comprises roughly 30% of the entire project. A recent traffic count on 455th revealed an average of 50 cars per day.

Regrettably, the Town Board opted not to participate in the grant application and cost-sharing initiative. This decision was made due to concerns that the financial burden imposed on Fish Lake, considering its relatively low daily traffic volume of 50 cars, was deemed excessively high.

Employee CDL Training. Anna Peltier, a part-time employee, has expressed an interest in acquiring her CDL (Commercial Driver's License) to assist with snow plowing for the township during the winter season. It's worth noting that CDL training expenses in Minnesota are notably high. To address this concern, it has been determined that undertaking the training in Iowa would be a more cost-effective option.

The board has agreed to provide financial support to subsidize Anna's CDL training journey, covering expenses such as travel, lodging, and the training itself, with a maximum allocation of \$1,000.

Furthermore, Anna will receive her regular hourly wage while she is undergoing training, and the board will also cover the \$50 fee for her DOT (Department of Transportation) physical examination. *Motion made by Fitzwater and seconded by Ferguson to reimburse Anna Peltier \$1,000 for CDL training expenses and \$50 for DOT physical plus hourly wage for time spent in training. Approved unanimously.*

Post Pounder Purchase. Gary Guse asked the board for approval to purchase a post pounder for the installation of signs and posts. *Motion made by Thill and seconded by Ferguson to purchase a post pounder from MJC Equipment, Inc. for \$2272.06 Approved unanimously.*

Treasurers Report

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report.

Bank Balances as of: September 30, 2023

Checking	\$15,583.14	Broadband Debt. Service	\$77,6505.28
Savings (Camb. State)	\$840,886.91	Anchor Ave. Debt Service	\$38.762.68

Motion made by Thill and seconded by Fitzwater to accept the Treasurer's Report, approve payment of check #14465 to #14486, for the amount of \$324,829.07, authorize up to \$4000.00 in operating disbursements for the upcoming month, approve the claims list as presented and transfer \$316,000 from Savings to Checking fund. Approved unanimously.

Minutes

Motion made by Thill and seconded by Ferguson to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023 monthly meeting. Approved unanimously.

Schedule Appointments

Rand Estates Mylars: The mylars for Rand Estates were prepared and presented by Mark and Carrie Rand to the town board for signing. It's important to note that no modifications were made to the preliminary plat that had been initially presented to the board in July 2023.

IUP Application for a dog kennel and breeding operation at 450 Badger Blvd: The Board met with Sheryl Bearhart to discuss her IUP application for a dog kennel. During the interview, there were concerns raised regarding her ability to effectively manage the business. Sheryl struggled to provide satisfactory answers to fundamental questions about the kennel's operation. Additionally, she appeared to lack essential knowledge about the requirements for managing a dog kennel that offers the services outlined in her application.

Sheryl's responses during the interview failed to address crucial aspects of running a breeding kennel, such as breeding practices, public safety measures, and animal welfare. These are essential considerations for anyone operating such a facility.

Based on the information provided, it appears that Sheryl is operating a commercial kennel, which typically requires licensing from the MN Animal Control Board. She was advised her to promptly reach out to them to address this matter.

During the discussion, Sheryl mentioned that she is not the owner of the business, and the owner, does not reside on the property. She and Richard Carter rent the property located at 450 Badger Blvd. from Jordan Waggoner. When asked about the number of people involved in managing the kennel, she eventually mentioned Richard Carter as someone on the lease who provides assistance. It's worth noting that this research uncovered troubling information about Richard Carter, who is residing at the Badger Blvd. property and involved in the business. Richard Carter, who has several aliases, has a criminal record dating back to 2004.

Considering the issues outlined above, the Town Board is recommending denial of Sheryl Bearhart's IUP request for a dog kennel at 450 Badger Blvd., Stanchfield, MN 55080.

Motion made by Fitzwater and seconded by Thill to deny the Interim Use Permit for a dog kennel at 450 Badger Blvd. due to providing unsatisfactory answers to fundamental questions about the kennel's operation and appearing to lack essential knowledge about the requirements for managing a dog kennel that offers the services outlined in the application. Approved unanimously.

Clerk Report

Rural Village Center (RCV) Zoning & Uses Feedback. The board was reminded that any comments or feedback about RCV by October 31, 2023

The Board was presented with the requisite biosolid notice from J. Rettenmaier, USA LP.

The Board was reminded the nominees for a township representative on the East Central Regional Development Commission are due by October 16, 2023.

Board Member Reports

None.

Old Business

Cooperative Road Paving Policy. The Board has decided to reschedule this meeting to October 16, 2023, with the purpose of continuing their efforts to finalize the Cooperative Road Paving Policy.

Modifications to Ordinance #4. Upon closer examination of Ordinance #4, it was concluded that there was no necessity for any modifications.

New Business

None.

Citizen Comment

None.

Reconvene: *Motion made by Thill and seconded by Fitzwater to reconvene on October 16, 2023, at 6:00 pm to finalize the Cooperative Road Paving Policy. Approved unanimously.*

October 16, 2023

The October 9, 2023, meeting was reconvened and officially commenced at 6:00 pm. In attendance were Members Fitzwater, Thill, and Ferguson, along with Clerk Nekowitsch and Gary Guse, Road Maintenance.

The board conducted a comprehensive review of the draft Cooperative Road Paving Policy and incorporated several amendments. It was noted that this policy conflicts with Ordinance #4, and as a result, an update to the ordinance will be necessary.

Adjourn

Motion made by Thill and seconded by Ferguson to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Approved unanimously.

Bruce Fitzwater, Chair

Date

Andrea Nekowitsch, Clerk

Date

APPROVED