

Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Board of Supervisors

February 3, 2021

Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN)

Call to Order: Chair Mike Linn called the meeting of the Avon Township Supervisors to order at 7:04 P.M. in the Main Chamber of the Avon Township Hall.

Pledge: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Present – Mike Linn, Kelly Martini, Ken Mergen, Rich Sanoski, and Stephen Saupe. Also present – Leroy Gondringer (*PC Chair*), Marion Gondringer (*Deputy Clerk*), Paul Buttweiler (*Deputy Treasurer*) and Joe Koopmeiners (*Maintenance*).

Approval of Agenda: A discussion concerning tax forfeiture properties was added to the agenda. Mergen moved to approve the agenda as amended. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes: Sanoski moved to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2021 meeting. Mergen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Planning Commission (PC) Report

- Blonigen Variance** – The PC held a public hearing to consider a request by Craig & Colleen Blonigen for a variance to construct a storage building closer to the road than currently allowed. The PC recommends approval. The Supervisors discussed the request and agreed that the variance was consistent with Township policies. Mergen moved to approve a variance for Craig Blonigen & Colleen Blonigen to construct a 28 x 32' storage building on their property at 18733 368th St., Avon (MN) that would be no closer to 188th Avenue, Avon (MN) than 45 feet to the center-of-the-road (or 35 feet from the edge-of-the-road; variance of 18 feet); and no closer to 368th Street, Avon (MN) than 40 feet from the center-of-the-road (or 35 feet from the edge-of-the-road; variance of 23 feet). Linn second. All in favor. Motion carried. The Blonigen's will also require a County variance.
- Voit Rezoning** – Roger & Ross Voit inquired about constructing a 48 x 190 self-storage unit at 37647 Riley Court (Avon, MN). This proposal would require that the parcel be rezoned from Residential to Commercial. The Planning Commission doesn't recommend spot zoning parcels from Residential to Commercial. The Supervisors agreed.
- Application for PC** – An application was received from Ms. Lori Yurczyk to fill an open position on the Planning Commission. The PC supports the application. The Supervisors agreed that Ms. Yurczyk has considerable experience and would be a great addition. Linn moved to appoint Ms. Lori Yurczyk to the Planning Commission. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried. An application submitted by Mr. Craig Blonigen will be considered next month.
- Road Maintenance Plan** – The PC recommends the following roads for resurfacing: Narnia Lane, Lower Spunk Lane, Spunk Tree Circle, Noble Oak Circle, Kopyy Lane, and Nob Hill. The PC recommends receiving bids for these roads and if we cannot afford to do all of them, then we should focus on the SW corner of the Township, especially Narnia Lane and the Blattner Addition (Noble Oak Circle, Nob Hill Drive). The Supervisors authorized Koopmeiners to examine these roads and make a recommendation at the next meeting. Koopmeiners may be accompanied by a representative from StanTec. Depending on what is necessary, we should contact Collegeville Township since they share an interest in parts of some of these roads.

5. **LRIP Grant** – Ms. Jodi Teich, Stearns County Engineer, attended the meeting (virtually) to provide feedback about the LRIP process. Applications close on March 3rd. The maximum amount is \$1.25 million. She stated that priority is given to roads that are of regional significance (serve local industry, tourism, agriculture), is vital to the economy, and are connectors with other major roads. An MN DOT committee makes final decisions. They consider all aspects of a proposal and try to spread the projects around the state. Stearns County townships have been especially aggressive in applying for funding. She said that joint proposals are especially good and that we would need a strong proposal since we recently received funding for Norway Road. She said it helps to get letters of support from users of the road (truckers, businesses, farmers, gravel pit owners and so on) as well as legislators and others. She is willing to help the Township draft the proposal. She must know by February 12th in order for the County Commissioners to pass a resolution of support. She mentioned that the City of Avon is applying for a grant for 1st St. SE. If they receive funding we could perhaps negotiate a change order directly with the contractor to complete the section of the road in the Township, too.

The Supervisors considered Township road needs and identified Queens Road as an ideal candidate for LRIP funding. This road is in need of repair, is a major artery between County roads, serves as a ‘bypass’ around Avon, is a major thoroughfare for residents to St. Cloud, and should be upgraded to a 10-ton road to provide a corridor of 10 ton roads all the way from Albany to St. Wendel. The Supervisors drafted a resolution to apply for LRIP funding for Queens Road. Mergen moved to approve Resolution 02-03-21-3 – Resolution for LRIP Funding for Queens Road, Avon, Stearns County, Minnesota. Linn second. All in favor. Motion carried. We will work with Ms. Teich to complete the application. Letters of support will be recruited from local farmers, businesses, the Eichers, and legislators.

6. **Vacation Home Rental IUP Update** – The Supervisors received a letter from the Hentges’s concerning their IUP. The Stearns County Commissioners voted to approve an Interim Use Permit for three years when it would come due for renewal.
7. **Tower CSP** – A Construction Site Permit was signed for T-Mobile, which is replacing equipment on the tower on Tower Road.
8. **Roadwork in Town ROW** – An inquiry concerning permitting for work in the Township road right-of-way was received from Telecom, a company that works with CenturyLink. They were alerted to Resolution 08-05-20 that outlines Township policies.
9. **Website Transition** – the Township has a new web provider, BigGroovy (Grand Rapids). The previous hosts retired. The transition to the new provider went smoothly.
10. **Fire Board** – the Fire Board meeting has been scheduled for February 11, 2021 at 7 PM. Linn is the Township representative. It is still not know if the meeting will be virtual or in-person. One item on the agenda is raising the retirement amount for firefighters.

Sanoski moved to approve the PC report. Mergen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: Martini read the Treasurer’s Report and presented the Cash Control Statement for the period 1/01/2021 to 1/31/2021 (*below*). CTAS didn’t carry balances correctly so corrected amounts were written in by hand on the document provided at the meeting. The Fund totals for Road & Bridge and General Revenue don’t match those from last month because one item (Kotzer claim) was coded in General Revenue instead of Road & Bridge. Martini completed the 2020 Report of Outstanding Indebtedness (the Township has no debt). The annual Audit Board meeting will be tomorrow evening and we are ready; the

agenda was provided, Martini has provided a budget, and the Clerk and Treasurer will be ready with necessary documents. Sanoski moved to approve the Cash Control Statement and Treasurer’s report. Mergen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

For the Period : 1/1/2021 To 1/31/2021

<u>Name of Fund</u>	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Total Receipts</u>	<u>Total Disbursed</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
General Fund	\$179,204.07	\$3,059.00	\$6,803.71	\$175,459.36
Road and Bridge	\$320,622.26	\$7,131.44	\$5,737.65	\$322,016.05
Demolition Escrow	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
Road Damage Deposit	\$4,150.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$3,650.00
Fire Fund	\$35,886.15	\$1,582.74	\$36,225.00	\$1,243.89
General Capital Projects	\$47,087.86	\$48.00	\$0.00	\$47,135.86
Total	\$588,950.34	\$11,821.18	\$49,266.36	\$551,505.16

Claims & Payroll: Martini presented the January PERA claims (3956 & 3957), which totaled \$525.24. The January payroll was \$2,819.19. The February claims (3958 – 3972) totaled \$16,647.97. The February payroll was \$1,990.14. Checks #10160 (Roiger damage deposit will be held until work is completed) and #10154 (written for wrong amount) were voided. The final pay application for Knife River was approved and signed. Our credit with Central Hydraulics was used this month. Mergen moved to approve the claims and payroll. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Town Hall Maintenance Report – presented by Joe Koopmeiners

- Internet** – CenturyLink replaced the modem to increase the speed of our internet service. Martini also was able to negotiate a lower rate for service. EPA, Inc returned to run a hard wire from the modem to the AV rack. The internet speed and AV projection system performance are both markedly improved.
- LP** – the tank is currently at 42%. Koopmeiners was authorized to call for a fill.
- The tank in the shop was pumped. The float system may need to be repaired; it will be checked in the spring.

Sanoski moved to approve the Town Hall Report. Linn second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Road Report – presented by Joe Koopmeiners

- Road/Maintenance Report** – Among the work completed this month was maintenance on the Red Plow.
- Snow** – roads were plowed and/or sanded on five occasions. Some residents are plowing snow across the Town road. The Supervisors authorized the Clerk to send letters ordering the individuals to stop. Several individuals were observed to have non-compliant/illegal mailbox posts that are a hazard to the plow, as well as passing motorists. The Supervisors authorized the Clerk to send letters requesting that these be replaced. Residents are parking on Orchid Court after a snow, which makes it impossible to plow; these residents will be sent a letter requesting them to not park on the road after a snow.
- Tree Removal 186th** – A quote from Weaver’s Tree Service to remove five trees on 186th was approved.

4. **Noble Oak Circle** – a complaint was received about the quality of this road. It was examined and the Supervisors decided it will be included in a list of roads for resurfacing in the near future.
5. **LRIP Grant & Meeting with County Engineer** – see Planning Commission report, #5.
6. **Snowplow Driver Wages** – drivers have inadvertently been paid \$1.00 less per hour than Township policy. Sanoski moved to give the drivers the backpay they are owed and set the minimum plow driver wage at \$25.00 per hour. Mergen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mergen moved to approve the Road report. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Hearings: *none scheduled*

Business:

1. **Resolution 02-03-21-1** – The Avon Lion’s Club donated a variety of kitchen items to the Town Hall. Mergen moved to approve Resolution 02-03-21-1: Accepting donation from the Avon Lion’s Club. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.
2. **Resolution 02-03-21-2** – Due to COVID-19 and lack of a space that could safely allow for social distancing of the expected turnout, the Supervisors decided to hold the Annual Meeting via Zoom. Linn moved to approve Resolution 02-03-21-2: Conducting the Annual Meeting Remotely. Mergen second. All in favor. Motion carried.
3. **Annual Meeting Planning** – The meeting will be remote. Residents will be alerted about this change and how to participate via the usual publishing and posting locations and on the Town website. Signs will also be posted at various places at the Town Hall. Voters at the Township Election will be alerted by Election Judges and given a handout with information how to access the meeting. The first portion of the meeting will be held remotely but then the meeting will be formally continued until the summer when residents can meet outside in person. We will encourage all reports be written and post them prior to the meeting for residents to view.
4. **Computer Backups** – Annual backups have been completed.
5. **Inventory** – in progress
6. **Wohletz Variance** – The County will hold a variance hearing for Frank & Sandra Wohletz (32883 Spunk Tree Circle) to consider a setback from the ordinary high water level. The Town will not provide a response.
7. **Forfeiture Properties** – Mergen spoke with a County Commissioner concerning what happens when a property is sold. As we understand at this time, all proceeds return to the County, though there was general agreement that the Town, School District, etc., should first receive their payment of any back taxes that are due.

Other/Old Business: *Permitting to County; Maintenance Shed insulation*

Signatures / Documents / Treasurer: *none*

Recurring Reports:

1. The Town was alerted to an incorrect address for the tower parcel on Tower Road. There is no 911 presently. The County will alert the owners to the need to purchase a **911 sign**.
2. **Construction Site Permits** were issued to Klocker (35389 Co Rd 155; pole shed addition); A&K Blinking Light (replace antenna); and Janssen (32915 Spunk Tree Circle; additions, garage, porch, deck);
3. No **Feedlot Permits** were received.
4. **Special Assessment Searches** were completed for Jarnot (18795 Two Rivers Road) and Kompelien (34814 Co Rd 155); Heying (17823 Upper Spunk Lake Road); Tschida (37014 Sara Lane); and Dincau (14797 370th Street).
5. There will be a **County Hearing** to consider “What’s New with Stearns Shape 2040” on February 22, 2021, at 3:30 PM.

Announcements & Brief Reports:

1. Nancy Scott reported that the Hennen project is nearly complete.
2. The Township received an ORI number, which is the next step in the process to recover some fine fees.

Announcement of Next Regular Supervisor Meeting: The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 7:00 PM.

Announcement of Other Town Meetings:

- Planning Commission – February 24; 2021
- Public Accuracy Test – March 6, 2021; 9:00 AM
- Town Hall open to accept absentee ballots – March 6, 2021; 10 AM – 12 PM
- Annual Township Election – March 9, 2021; 2 – 8 PM
- Board of Canvass – March 9, 2021; 8:15 PM (*virtual meeting*)
- Annual Township Meeting – March 9, 2021; 8:30 PM (*virtual meeting*)
- Organizational/Qualification Meeting – March 17, 2021; 7:00 PM
- Planning Commission Meeting – March 31, 2021; 7:00 PM
- Supervisor’s Meeting – April 7, 2021; 7:00 PM
- LBAE Meeting – April 19, 2021; 7:00 PM
- Annual Meeting (*planned continuation date*) – June 8, 2021

Adjournment: Sanoski moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. Mergen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen G. Saupe, Clerk

Clerk signature: _____

date: February 5, 2021

Supervisor Signatures:

date: _____

Mike Linn, Chair

Ken Mergen

Rich Sanoski