

Town of Duluth

Town Board Meeting July 13, 2023

Call to order: The regular meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:31 p.m. Supervisors Rolf Carlson, Penelope Morton, ArMand Nelson, and Jim Ward. Supervisor Stacia Grayson was absent. Treasurer Melinda Peulen, Planning Director Liz Strohmayer, Police Chief Mark Haselow, Fire Chief Robert Engelson, and Fire Department Secretary Sherry Rogiv. Deputy Clerk Hannah Jurek, and Clerk Nicole Chattersson were also present.

Approve Minutes: Penelope moved to approve minutes from the June 8, 2023, Board Meeting. ArMand seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Agenda: Add Torgeson Road under Roads. With that addition, the agenda was approved.

Finances: Treasurers provided a report with a beginning balance of \$613,494.92, Deposits of \$19,559.87, Expenses of \$45,834.65, and an Ending Balance of \$587,220.14. Penelope informed the Board that she spoke with the attorney who wrote the article in the MN Township magazine regarding uncashed checks. Moving forward from this meeting on, we will be keeping track of all uncashed checks. ArMand moved to approve the claims list and payroll. Penelope seconded the motion. The motion carried. The payroll net pay account distributions and the claims list for approval were approved and signed.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Department Reports

Police: There will be a charge on the credit card of \$500. A rock broke the squad window and needed to be replaced. This will be reimbursed through insurance. Mark also informed the Board that when we purchased the squad the Town paid sales tax and registration tax which we are not required to pay. Mark was able to get that reimbursed from the state.

Fire: Two of the fire engines need to have their pumps repacked as they failed their annual testing. They have not been repacked in twenty-six years. The estimate for engine one is \$8,000.00 and engine two will be \$9,000.00. Bob stated they will try to have engine two repacked in August and engine one after the first of the year.

Motion: Penelope moved to authorize \$20,000 from ARPA fund to Fire department to repack the pumps on two fire trucks. ArMand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Fire Secretary Report: Chipper Days was successful. However, the cost of getting the brush chipped increased. It used to take one day to chip the brush, this year with so much brush, it took two days. Sherry will reach out to the DNR to see if we can get additional funds to cover this overage. It is approx. \$1,800.00 short. Each event was granted \$3,400.00. This first event cost \$5,220.00. In order to continue receiving these grants, the Township needs to become a Certified Firewise Community. Sherry, ArMand, Nicole, and some others from the community including a supervisor from Alden have been attending some meetings in correlation with St. Louis County Firewise Coordinator Gloria Erickson to work towards this goal. 11On August 27, 2023, the Emergency Preparedness Committee will be hosting a booth at an event the Clover Valley Farm Trail is having, sharing Firewise information.

Motion: ArMand moved to take \$1,800.00 for the Firewise event from emergency operations budget to cover the difference. Penelope seconded. The motion passed.

With the upcoming sale of one of our retired fire department vehicles, the Board needs to discuss who is authorized to sign the title of the truck.

Motion: Penelope moved to give the Fire Chief and Police Chief the ability to sign titles documents for their departments respected vehicles. ArMand Seconded. The motion passed.

Point of order: The previous motion made for the repacking of the fire engines need to be changed.

Motion: ArMand moved to remove the first motion of spending the \$20k on the fire truck. Jim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: ArMand moved to spend up to 10k from the ARPA funds for the repairs on fire engine #2 Jim seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: ArMand moved to spend up to 10k for repacking of the pumps from the ARPA funds for the repairs on the fire engine #1 Penelope seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Planning and Zoning: Three major things. This summer we have had very complicated permits this summer. MAT lawyers have been very helpful. St. Louis county has not. There are five public hearings scheduled for July. There was a resident report that there is a location along the shore where a resident built a road to the lake. The individual has been dodging contact from the Planning Department. The landowner is required to have a storm water plan first and foremost, which is an expensive process. The MPCA is involved with this issue at this point since the proximity to the lake and the number of violations. Liz presented a letter to the board requesting a wage increase for both Liz and Beth as the amount of work has increased drastically over the last few years. The number of complicated permits the department has worked on is increasing. Liz proposed an increase of \$9,360 annually for herself and an increase of \$1,200.00 annually for Beth. Liz stated that the Board can review this at the end of the year to see if this is still a valid increase and will be willing to take a reduction if the work demand does not support this.

Motion: ArMand moved to approve the increase proposed \$9,360.00 for Liz and \$1,200.00 for Beth. This will be reviewed at the end of the year this will be in effect July 15. Penelope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Legal: The Township received a Letter from Sheriff's Office seeking information on a current investigation. Nicole compiled the information requested and mailed this to the requesting officer. Penelope attended the Town Law meeting hosted by the Minnesota Association of Townships. She informed Planning and Zoning that there is a lawyer who will come and train the Planning Commission. Liz will discuss this with the Commission to determine if this is something they are interested in and when they will invite the lawyer to one of their meetings for some training. The state legislature introduced two new paid leaves for employees in the state of Minnesota. There will be Paid Family and Medical Leave beginning January 1, 2026, and Earned Sick and Safe Time starts Jan 1, 2024. This will cover all our employees. Other topics discussed were hostile work environments, data practice act where Board members and township employees need a separate email account, and the new cannabis law. Penelope noted with the new cannabis law there could be a need for a moratorium. Liz stated that the Commission discussed this earlier this year and felt that the Township does not need to put a moratorium in place as the potential areas for a cannabis type business, per zoning, and is limited as most commercial properties are occupied with a current well-established business. If there was an individual who would like to start a cannabis-based business, they would have to file for a conditional use permit and possibly a variance.

Roads: The chloride project for this year has been completed. Most of the roads that had contacted the office and the Road Supervisor, have had a chloride application. This year we applied more chloride than normal due to the abnormally dry summer. Bob Rodda helped by bowering a water truck and watered a road that did not receive chloride on the first application since it was Grandma's Marathon weekend, and that particular road is heavily traveled for spectators. Residents from the Torgeson Road provided a draft of the dedication of land for Town road use. It was decided that the Town will contact their lawyer to follow up and to make sure everything is in order before the Town accepts the dedication. We will revisit this at the August meeting.

Town Hall: The custodian reported that the vacuum broke during his last cleaning of the Town Hall. He is requesting that we purchase a new vacuum. The Clerks office provided some information about potential vacuums the Town could purchase to replace the broken one.

Motion: ArMand moved to spend up to \$300 to replace the vacuum. Penelope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Clerk reminded the Board that during the 2021 budget meeting they had included funds in the general account to update the Clerk's Laptop. The Clerk requested a quote from Jaws computer for the replacement and provided that information to the Board.

Motion: Penelope moved to purchase a new laptop proposed to spend up to \$700. ArMand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Town requested bids for electrical work to install the new coffee brewer, dishwashers, and moving the data rack from the custodian closet to a secure area.

Motion: ArMand moved to accept the bid for the electrical work for the coffee maker, dishwashers, and moving the data rack provided by Holden/Agate electric from the general fund. Penelope seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: Penelope moved to remove the Clover Valley Room from the hall rental agreement to provide a secure room for the data rack and other sensitive equipment. ArMand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): The Board requested bids for HVAC, dishwashers, windows, handicap ramp replacement and a construction manager, in order to determine where the Town will spend the funds received from ARPA. It was

determined that the Board will have another meeting to discuss the bids received and possibly accept some of the proposed bids. This meeting is scheduled for Thursday July 20, 2023, 6 p.m.

Materials Management: WLSSD will be hosting a public comment period for their Solid Waste Management Plan that is currently being updated. They will have a public hearing on July 24, 2023. We are still waiting on Waste Management to deliver the new larger canisters. There was an issue with the locks for our canisters and we are working on getting them all keyed the same to prevent further issues.

Cemetery: The work by Northern Bedrock is completed. Molly is content with the work performed. The cemetery looks wonderful!

Communications: Bob Sundstrom sent a letter informing the Town of his retirement and will no longer be able to print the Newsletter for the Township. The Town needs to find a new printer for the Newsletter. Hannah reached out to some companies for quotes for both printing and mailing services. The Board decided that the Clerk's office can choose a new vendor from the ones that were provided to the Board, for printing and mailing since these options would be less than what we are currently spending on both services provided by BB&K and Twin Ports Mailing.

Personnel: Nothing to report.

Old Business: Last month there were some residents who raised concerns regarding the amount of dog waste on Greenwood Road. The Board discussed that they would purchase some signs reminding people to pick up after dogs. The Clerk provided the Board with two sign options. The Board would like the Clerk's office to purchase four signs for Greenwood Road and ArMand will install. Rolf invited Sue Lawson to attend our next meeting to discuss Stoney Point/Congdon trust. Mike Gustafson shared with ArMand information regarding Stoney Point and had stated that the County is taking ownership of that land. He will pass along his contact and ArMand will be reaching out to them for further information.

New Business: No new business.

Correspondence:

- Duluth Township Newsletter
- Gnesen Township Newsletter
- Canosia Township Newsletter
- WLSSD Field Green Letter
- J & H Paving
- MPT Magazine
- Carrot-Top Industries Inc
- Couri & Ruppe, P.L.L.P: Town Law Event
- Enbridge Pipeline Safety
- CLP Power Lines
- Lake Gas
- U of M Tech Exchange

Calendar Events and Meeting Schedule

- July 20, 2023, 6:00 p.m. ARPA Meeting.
- August 10, 2023, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting
- August 12, 2023, 1:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m. Come on Home Party
- September 14, 2023, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting

Adjournment: ArMand moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Jim second. The motion passed unanimously.

