

Town of Duluth

Town Board Meeting February 9, 2023

Special meeting for Custodial Position: Two applicants were interviewed. Phillip Chatterson 5:15 p.m. and Giovanni Vespa 5:30 p.m.

Call to Order: The regular meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30 p.m. Supervisors Tim Strom, Chair Rolf Carlson, Penelope Morton, and Jim Ward were present. Fire Chief Bob Engelson, Ken Peterson Fire Fighter, and Police Chief Mark Haselow were present. Deputy Clerk Hannah Jurek, and Clerk Nicole Chatterson were also present. Absent: Treasurer Melinda Peulen, Planning Director Liz Strohmayer. There were four community members in the audience.

Approve Minutes: Tim moved to approve the minutes as written. Penelope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Agenda: Correct ARPA meeting date to February 21, 2023. The agenda was approved with that one change.

Finances: Treasurers provided a report with a beginning balance of \$878,243.16 with deposits of \$5,617.16, Expenses of \$23,502.45 and an ending balance of \$860,357.87. The Treasurer provided an adjusted financial report for the reported month of January, as follows: Beginning Balance: \$916,801.32, Deposits \$8,538.27, \$47,096.43, and an Ending Balance of \$878,243.16. Melinda had started a conversation with Mr. Witty regarding the North Shore Community Rink claim request. The Treasurer shared an email with her and Mr. Witty. Tim stated that he also spoke with Mr. Witty regarding this topic and explained his understanding of this topic. It was determined that the Board will continue this conversation at the next Board meeting that Melinda is in attendance. Melinda provided the Board with a quote for a new computer to be purchased through Jaws Computer. The Clerk spoke for Melinda as she was not present. The Clerk stated that Melinda's *"laptop is over 8 years old and has started to process things really slowly and not hold a charge to the battery anymore"*

Motion: Penelope moved to spend up to \$1,000.00 on a new computer for the Treasurer. Tim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: Sue Lawson was in the audience this evening to discuss a collection of proposals she has for the proposed use of the ARPA funds as she will not be able to attend the February 21, 2023, meeting. She explained her proposal for eight different potential projects including a proposal to purchase 160 acres of land along the Sucker River for a community park and completing part three of Duluth Township Long Range Facilities Plan. The Board thanked her for her input and will include her ideas at the next ARPA meeting.

Molly Tillotson presented a proposal for the Cemetery with some accompanying information. We previously discussed having the local non-profit, Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps (NBHPC) come to the Cemetery and perform some much-needed infrastructure work, from interior/exterior building repair, fence repair, ground leveling to include flat marker lifting, and monument cleaning to ensure legible and lasting markers. All of which needs to be done within the near future. NBHPC is an Ameri-Corp organization with solid experience restoring cemeteries and specializing in working at historical sites and on historic buildings. Molly is asking the Board for approval to engage NBHPC for a nine-day hitch, June 13 through June 21, 2023. This project will cost \$12,000.00 plus the price of materials. Molly reached out to a carpenter to consult on the building and fence improvements to ensure the Township's investment is reasonable. The estimated cost of materials would most likely be in the ballpark of just under \$5,000.00.

Motion: Penelope moves engaged Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps for \$12,000.00 for their team and \$5000.00 on materials. Tim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Nathan Nesgoda, Torgeson Road: Nathan first came to the Board in 2016 and spoke with Coriolis West regarding water on road. In 2018, Nathan spoke with Mike Kahl, at that time there were discussions regarding a potential turnaround. Then this past fall Nathan and some of his neighbors spoke at a Board Meeting regarding their concerns, specifically

regarding the standing water on the road. It was discussed that Jim would reach out to Mr. Rodda to have some ditch work completed by winter. Unfortunately, Mr. Rodda was unable to complete this project before winter. With that said, this will be Mr. Rodda's first projects that he will complete in our Township this spring. Since the last time Nathan and his neighbors attended a Board Meeting, Nathan stated the County has quit plowing to end of the road. Nathan reached out to Mr. Rodda to see what an anticipated cost to install a turnaround for material and labor. Nathan noted that he feels this comes down to a safety issue. He also noted that we are responsible to maintain that part of the road since we have been plowing for the last 15 years. Jim will follow up with Mr. Witty.

Department Reports

Police: Chief Haselow reported that one of the citations written last month was for a person who passed a school bus. Otherwise, quiet within the Township.

Fire: The Fire Department would like to purchase a new fire truck. Let it be noted that there are three trucks that need to be replaced. The first truck they would want to replace is the refurbished gold cross ambulance. The rig they would like to replace that with is 2007 heavy rescue fire truck with approximately 10,000 miles. The city selling the truck would like \$10,000 earnest money which is refundable after final inspection if the Fire Department decided the rig is not worth purchasing. If they do purchase the rig, the \$10,000.00 earnest money will apply to the purchase. They have had many conversations with the Mayor and Fire Chief regarding this rig for sale. Bob reached out to Mr. Witty regarding MN § 471.345 subd 4, to discuss what the best course of action to be taken and whether we are going to be required to get a second written quote on a comparable rig. It was suggested that the Fire Department go online and find something comparable for a bid and keep that on file. This should satisfy the requirement for having a secondary bid. The purchase of this rig will replace a current vehicle in the fleet. We would presumably sell the current rig with the rig that will be purchased. Previously, we have donated some of the rigs that we replaced. Bob is seeking approval from the Board for making the purchase of a new (used) rig for the Fire Department. He noted that the new truck has a hydraulic system for the Jaws of Life tools, he will reach out to the selling city to see if they can be included in the purchase of the truck. If not, they will investigate purchasing a set.

Motion: Tim moved that the Town Board authorize the Fire Department to acquire the heavy rescue fire rig we discussed, out of Fire Department funds, for an amount to not exceed \$150,000.00. Penelope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The brush truck will be the next truck to be replaced. It would be replaced with a larger rig that has a crew cab. It is possible that we may get a donation from MN Power. The Fire Department would continue to shop for a used truck. The Fire Department also spoke on the topic of the ARPA funds. They would like to have \$100,000.00 for the purchase of the next rigs to purchase new rigs. After the replacement of the brush truck, the next truck to purchase is a mini pumper truck. This is smaller than a full-size engine which would allow the Fire Department to get down smaller roads. Bob would also like to announce that Mark Herman is the new Assistant Chief.

Planning and Zoning: There is an opening on the Planning Commission as of March. A posting will be included in the March Newsletter, it will also be added to the a blast email, posted to the website, and Facebook. The Town received a letter from St. Louis County regarding legal cannabis sales. Tim encouraged the Board to request the Planning Commission to investigate this topic and report their findings. There has been no applicants for the Hybrid Planning Position.

Legal: Follow-up on the fee increase. Nicole shared information from the last fee increase to the Supervisors.

Roads: The roads contract with Rodda will expire at the end of March and we will need to seek bids for the next contract. It was noted that we should reach out to Mr. Witty to make sure that the ad is written so it doesn't lock us into a low bid situation. Jim will reach out to Rodda.

Town Hall: During the November election cycle it was noted that the Town should consider purchasing additional ballot booths. Nicole reached out to Ann for information regarding who made the ones the Town currently has. Ann informed Nicole that we use Northern Acrylic. Nicole received a quote for six additional booths \$825.60. We discussed the quote received and someone mentioned that Larry Mattson may have been the one who made the original booths.

We will reach out to Larry Mattson for an additional quote. There was a water issue at the Town Hall. Rasmussen Well Drilling came to address the issue. The water issue was fixed but while Rasmussen was on site, they noted that the pressure tank is starting to fail and recommended that the Town replace the tank. They provided a quote for the replacement of that tank.

Motion: Tim moved that the Clerk is authorized to move forward with the quote from Rasmussen to purchase and install two new pressure tanks. Jim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

In preparation for the ARPA meeting, Les Grumdahl came to provide a quote for replacing the window in the main hall. That quote will be available next week. This will be included in the March packet for Supervisor review.

ARPA- American Rescue Plan Act: There is an open house style meeting scheduled for February 21, 2023. The Board discussed how to organize this meeting. Tim stated that he was planning to have poster board or flip charts around the room, he noted that he will not be able to help or attend this meeting. It was decided that Penelope will create the charts for the meeting with the help of the Clerk's office.

Materials Management: There are new bins coming soon. Roger reached out to Lori Blais for the replacement of those bins. Carolyn is working on completing the grant paperwork for 2023.

Cemetery: Northern Bedrock proposal was discussed during public comment.

Communications: Newsletter to be mailed next week.

Personnel: The Board interviewed two candidates for the open custodial position.

Motion: Tim moved to hire Phillip Chatterson for the custodian position. Penelope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Special Thanks: The Board thanked Jodi for her dedication to the Town and appreciates all the work she has done over the years.

Resolution 02092023.01 Absentee Ballot Board appointment Tim moved that we approve the Resolution 02092023.01 appointing absentee ballot board. Penelope seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 02092023.02 Election Judge List. Tim moved to approve the Resolution 02092023.02 appointing election judges. Jim seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business: No old business.

New Business: No new business.

Correspondence:

- Gnesen Township Newsletter
- Canosia Township Newsletter
- CLP Powerlines
- Modern Pumping Today (Tim)

Calendar Events and Meeting Schedule

- February 14 6:00 p.m. Annual Budget Meeting; Budget are due February 1, 2023
- February 21, 2023, ARPA Open house 6:30 p.m. Town Hall 6092 Homestead Road Duluth
- **February 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m. Board of Audit** (Rescheduled from February 9, 2023, 6:00 p.m.)
- March 9, 2023, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting
- March 14, 2023: Township Election 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. and Annual Meeting 8:15 p.m.
- March 16, 2023, 6:00 p.m. Board of Canvass
- March 21, 2023, Alternate bad weather date for Election 7:00 a.m-8:00 p.m. Followed by the Annual Meeting 8:15 p.m. Board of Canvass to immediately follow the Annual Meeting.
- April 13, 2023, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting
- April 18, 2023, 4:00-5:00 p.m. Local Board of Appeal and Equalization (Tentative)

Adjournment: Tim moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Jim seconded. Motion passed unanimously.



