

Minutes
EAGLES NEST TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

Chair Chiabotti called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Sup David Chiabotti, Sup Richard Floyd, Sup Kurt Soderberg, Sup Jackie Monahan-Junek, Sup Frank Sherman, Clerk Keely Drange, Treasurer Mary Beth Monte and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Gwen Potter were in attendance.

Unless otherwise noted, motions carried unanimously.

Agenda

Sup Soderberg moved and seconded by Sup Floyd to approve the agenda for the September, 2024 BOS Meeting as amended. Motion carried.

Additions:

Tower Ambulance Commission to old business.

Tax Forfeiture class action settlement to new business.

Minutes

Sup Soderberg moved, seconded by Sup Floyd to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2024 Board of Supervisors meeting. Motion carried.

Communications List Approval

Sup Monahan-Junek moved and seconded by Sup Soderberg to approve the communications list. Motion carried.

Sup Sherman explained that under state law fire relief organizations are subject to the open meeting law. Sup Sherman asked if the Fire and EMS auxiliary is subject to this law. Sup Monahan-Junek believes that this applies to organizations that have a board of trustees and not nonprofit organizations like the auxiliary. Sup Monahan-Junek explained that a call to the State Auditor's office would help to answer this question.

Citizens' concerns

None at this time.

Reports

Clerk:

Constant contact notification postcards will be mailed out before the next meeting.

Last election notice will be posted in the paper for three editions in October.

Treasurers Report:

Funds have been transferred into Frandsen Bank Money Market fund.

Payroll in the amount of \$7,746.00 check numbers 11569-11589 was submitted.

Claims in the amount of \$20,524.40 claim numbers 4950-4967 and check numbers 11590-11606 were submitted.

The total for payroll and claims was submitted for the amount of \$28,270.40.

Sup Soderberg moved, seconded by Sup Sherman to approve the payroll and claims. Motion carried.

Sup Sherman moved, seconded by Sup Soderberg to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

The State of Minnesota has asked withholding be done electronically like the Federal 941 withholding.

Sup Monahan-Junek moved, seconded by Sup Sherman to pay withholding to MN state electronically. Motion carried.

Building and Grounds:

Smoke detectors have been installed in hall. Sup Chiabotti will fill out smoke detector forms and will look into installing another smoke detector in the fire office.

Fire Report: Report on file.

Mary Beth Monte explains that the fire department would like to hire an experienced grant writer, Dan Mackey, to write a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grant for a new fire truck. This grant writer has had a lot of success writing this type of grant. The cost could be up to \$1,500.

Sup Monahan-Junek mentioned that the IRRRB grant writer reimbursement program may allow the township to get paid back for hiring a grant writer. Mary Beth Monte will look into applying for the reimbursement program.

Roads:

St. Louis County has stated they will not install chevron signs on corner towards the end of Walsh Road. The corner on Walsh does not meet the required specifications for chevrons.

Large timber clearing in right-of-way will be done before snowfall.

The dirt work on Norway Road will be done before snowfall. The survey work has been done a few weeks ago.

Roads have been graded a few days ago by Jeff Schulze.

Land, website and broadband:

Many concerned citizens have called regarding beaver activity. If the beavers are causing damage on private property and with landowners' permission, a beaver may be shot, trapped or dam removed and then reported to the conservation officer. Beaver issues on public land can't be handled by private citizens.

Sup Soderberg visited Mr. Delich's property. Before the Park Land committee makes any recommendations, the platted but unvacated roads may need to be resurveyed.

Frontier has been bought out by Verizon. However, it will take a long time before changes are known.

John Kappenman will assist Sup Monahan-Junek in exploring the needs of Treehouse Broadband by meeting with Isaac Olson.

Emergency Preparedness/water:

Sup Sherman reported the dangers of mercury when consuming fish and explained that people should look to the DNR's website regarding fish consumption from local lakes.

Emergency Management Report on File.

Sup Sherman moved, seconded by Sup Soderberg to pay \$2000 to Austin Van Scoy of Dutchman's Tree Service, subject to receipt of invoice, that was set aside in the budget for dumpsters for brush drop. Motion carried.

For future brush drops the township could look into a tub grinder option.

Outreach and Networking:

Sup Monahan-Junek may attend the October 12 MAT event.

Old Business:

ATV trail recommendations:

Sup Soderberg, Sup Monahan-Junek, Ren Graham, Greg Junek meet with St. Louis County representatives Julie Marinucci, Victor Lund, County Commissioner Paul MacDonald, State Representative Roger Skraba and ATV group officials, Nick Wognum and Ron Potter.

Eagles Nest Township continued to express interest in pursuing the northern route for the ATV trail. However, the township has received no reply back from ATV group.

During the meeting officials did not seem enthusiastic about considering the northern route exclusively. The group wanted to explore other routes, in addition to the northern route, including the Taconite trail through Bear Head State Park. Nick Wognum explained that it does not take legislative authority to use the Taconite trail and that use by ATVs could be granted by the DNR commissioner.

Vic Lund described a planning process to step back and look at all options available. All parties agreed the current route is not ideal. It was asked if the Township was interested in entering into a process to utilize a 3rd party mediator or facilitator but all routes would need to be explored. Sup Soderberg was prepared to recommend that the Township should enter into process this evening. However, Sup Monahan-Junek has another option she would like to explore first.

Sup Monahan-Junek has asked to defer that recommendation to explore other options for additional support for the township. Sup Monahan-Junek will seek help from a professional project planner and will have the proposal for the next board meeting. The professional project planner will present via zoom to present his proposal.

Tower Ambulance Commission:

The Ambulance Commission met again and everyone signed on to the agreement. Eagles Nest will be sending the signed agreement along with our check to Tower. Greenwood has paid for the current year towards this agreement but not for the back years and have so far refused to pay.

Greenwood will now call for advanced life support, which comes from Virginia, before Tower Ambulance can arrive on scene. This happens even if advanced life support is not needed and costs Tower Ambulance several hundred dollars each call. Greenwood does not have the authority to do this. Tower will attempt to speak with Greenwood about this to try and get it resolved.

New Business:

Emergency Management Position Descriptions:

Michael Ostlund has stepped down as Eagles Nest Emergency Manager and has suggested that his former position be split into two positions. Assistant Fire Chief/Emergency Manager and Deputy Emergency Manager/Firewise Coordinator. Sup Sherman met with Chief Kruger, Michael Ostlund and Keely Drange to draft the position descriptions as presented at this meeting.

Sup Sherman moved, seconded by Sup Soderberg to approve the job descriptions drafts as written for Assistant Fire Chief/Emergency Manager and Deputy Emergency Manager/Firewise Coordinator with minor clerical alterations made as necessary. Both positions will be within the fire department and the Deputy Emergency Manager position reports to the Assistant Fire Chief/ Emergency Manager. Motion carried.

Sup Sherman moved, seconded by Sup Floyd that the board approve the position of Deputy Director of Emergency Management/Firewise Coordinator be paid on an hourly basis at the standard hourly rate of \$21 per hour. Supervisors Sherman, Floyd, Soderberg and Chiabotti Aye. Sup Monahan-Junek Nay.

Sup Monahan-Junek moved, seconded by Sup Floyd to approve Keely Drange as the Deputy Director of Emergency Management/Firewise Coordinator. Motion carried.

Hiring a FEMA AFG Grant Writer:

The fire department would like to hire an experienced FEMA AFG grant writer to help write a grant for a new fire truck. Dan Mackey is the grant writer who is from the Biwabik fire Department.

Sup Soderberg moved, seconded by Sup Chiabotti to hire Dan Mackey at the cost up to \$1500 to write 2025 FEMA AFG grant. Motion carried.

Tax Forfeiture of class action lawsuit:

The township received notice of a settlement in a class action lawsuit Tyler v. Hennepin County. This settlement is based on what happens with the proceeds of tax forfeiture sales when there is a profit beyond the past taxes due. The county had been keeping all the proceeds rather than giving the amount over the past due taxes to the owner of the property. The supreme court decided that a portion should go back to the property owner.

It was most likely a generic notice sent out. The lower hall lot was purchased from Breitung Township and was not a tax forfeiture. The Township most likely does not have a claim.

Supervisor Concerns:

Sup Soderberg will zoom next meeting.

Sup Sherman asked if there is anyone willing to be a write in candidate for the open supervisor seat that no one filed for.

Sup Chiabotti thanks everyone involved in the dinners and coffee for their time and efforts. Those events turned out to be very nice for the community.

Adjournment:

Sup Soderberg moved, seconded by Sup Chiabotti to adjourn. Motion carried.
The meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Keely Drange, Clerk