

Special Meeting
Orrock Township Appointment Committee
Wednesday, January 18, 2023 - 5:00PM

The Orrock Township Appointment Committee met in special session, on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at the Orrock Town Hall, 26401 – 180th St. NW, Big Lake, Minnesota.

In attendance were Chair Bryan Adams, Supervisors Paul Ellinger, Anne Felber, Clerk Chris Weber and Treasurer Janine Arnold. Also, in attendance were three candidates, seven audience members and the Patriot News. Supervisor Goldsmith was absent.

A quorum was present, the meeting was called to order by Chair Adams, at 7:00PM and the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America was recited.

Meeting Agenda Approval

Motion/Second to accept the special meeting agenda by: Ellinger/Adams. In favor: Adams, Ellinger, Felber and Weber. Opposed: none. Abstained: None.

Motion prevailed, and the meeting proceeded in accordance with the presented agenda.

Under the provisions regarding filling town board vacancies in Minn. Stat. § 367.03, subd. 6, the remaining town board members and the clerk form the Appointment Committee. The Committee shall have the authority to select and appoint a supervisor to fill the vacancy until the next township election.

Chair Adams read a letter from Supervisor Goldsmith stating his reason for not being able to attend the meeting and in support of Bob Hassett.

Candidates for Supervisor Position

There were four applicants for the supervisor vacancy. Following is a summary of information that was supplied by the candidates on their applications. (In alphabetical order.)

A. Bob Hassett –

- Bob has lived in Orrock for 31+ years. He believes that his educational background has provided a very good base for understanding and being able to relate with people in our rural community. Bob has served as Township Supervisor for 7 years and has served on all the township committees, including the road committee. Bob wishes to serve as Orrock Township supervisor because he believes the township needs a new Town Hall that our community can afford that ALL people can access and utilize. Our lake community roads must be updated so people can get to work on time while still enjoying the lake experience. Bob believes that the township must continue their well-designed Road Management Plan so they can get the best deal for residents. The township needs a stable levy that people can plan for so they can set their own personal priorities. He stated that his biggest strength is the ability to work with a wide variety of potentially conflicting viewpoints for reasonable outcomes and that he is available 24/7.

- B. David Just –
- David has lived in Orrock Township for 1.25 years. He is currently enrolled at Stayer University for his bachelor's degree and he has an associate degree from North Hennepin Community College. David has been responsible for running all aspects of businesses for 20 years and has served/volunteered as a Reserve Police Officer for the City of Big Lake. He wishes to get involved in local government to learn about the responsibilities, day to day operations, and future planning and believes that his business experience - including his success in growing revenue, reducing costs, and process improvement - gives him an advantage over his competition. David sees too much in the world where things are not going as he would expect them to or as he would do it. The only way to change what is happening is to get involved. David looks to learn, develop, and grow in the role and is excited for the opportunity.
- C. Brenda Kimberly-Maas –
- Brenda has lived in Orrock Township for 32 years. Brenda served as the elected Orrock Township clerk from 2012 - 2020. Having done so, she has some understanding and knowledge on past decisions made by previous boards. Working first as the deputy clerk and now clerk in Big Lake Township (since 2016), gives her additional background in township governance from the perspective of the second largest township in the state. Brenda believes the position of town supervisor should be held by someone who has the interest of the township and it's residents at the forefront of their decision making. The position is a grassroots one where political parties are not - or are not supposed to be - in play. As a non-partisan voter, Brenda believes this is of utmost importance at the level of township and county governance. Brenda has no special interests or groups on which she would base her decisions.
- D. Darwin Kostrzewski –
- Darwin has been an Orrock Township resident for 6 years. He graduated in 1961 and is a foreman for Prestige Drywall. Darwin wants to become an Orrock Township supervisor to make Orrock better.

Introductions – Chair Bryan Adams

Chair Adams told the audience that, per state statute, the appointment committee is tasked with filling the vacancy on the board due to the vacancy left by Gregg Felber. The appointed supervisor will serve until the next election.

Public Comment

Gregg Felber told the board that, having recently had the election where the electorate got to speak their mind and Darwin received the second highest number of votes at the November general election, he is in support of Darwin Kostrzewski. He felt that out of respect for those that voted in the election, Kostrzewski would be the best candidate to appoint.

Don Stauffer stated that objective criteria is important in making the decision. Another consideration would be to look at what skill sets currently exist on the board. He thinks the objective criteria should be what the local populous has chosen to do. He voiced his support of Darwin Kostrzewski.

Anne Felber was given letters by Candidate Kostrzewski. Felber read letters of support of Kostrzewski from Quinten and Shelley Erickson, John Cox, Charlie Schmidt, Zach Kurth and Bev Knutson.

Township Supervisor C Candidates – Discussion/Action

Chair Adams asked the committee if they wanted to advertise for applicants. Supervisors Felber and Ellinger wanted to proceed with the meeting and then decide.

Chair Adams asked the candidates to speak.

Bob Hassett told the audience that Darwin Kostrzewski did not run against him but against Gary Goldsmith and that he and Darwin Kostrzewski did not discuss the issues, therefore the general election vote counts should not be the deciding factor. Township government is about roads and not about partisan politics. The township needs a town hall and he would like to ensure that all people within the township have access to the building. Hassett told the board that he is retired and is on call 24/7 and can be available within the hour if an issue comes up. He has always treated residents'

concern with respect. As a board member, it is important that all express their different opinions and that it is extremely important to come together in making a decision.

David Just withdrew his application in support of Darwin Kostrzewski.

Darwin Kostrzewski told the board that he has been in the construction trade for 40+ years and would be a big help with the town hall building project. He will be retiring in less than a year and would then be available at most times. Until his retirement, Kostrzewski would be available after work to assist with township items.

Supervisor Felber stated that, in her opinion, the board has the right candidate in the room. Darwin went out and got the support of the people and people were at the meeting in support of Kostrzewski. If the board does not support Darwin, she does not think that is the best for the health of the township. She believes Kostrzewski should be on the board for his construction experience. Felber would like have citizen representatives on town board committees.

Supervisor Ellinger stated that he had never met two of the candidates. Ellinger noted that Darwin did not apply until 4PM this afternoon and asked Kostrzewski why he did not apply for the position until 4PM this afternoon. Kostrzewski stated that he did not have time to apply until he got off work. Ellinger asked Darwin about the construction business that he is in. Kostrzewski stated that he works in the commercial industry. Ellinger asked Kostrzewski what roads background he had. Kostrzewski stated that he is willing to learn but that it can't be much different that commercial construction and that experience would help in the town hall project. Supervisor Ellinger stated that the town hall project is a one-time issue but the township road construction is almost \$800,000 a year and ongoing. Ellinger asked Hassett his background with roads. Hassett stated that he has questioned the engineers at length on techniques that are used and has reviewed the road management report. Hassett stated that the roads around the lakes need attention and that the township needs to be careful in planning road drainage in those areas.

Supervisor Felber asked Bob Hassett what road experience he had when he started on the board. Hassett stated none. Hassett learned by questioning the engineers and doing research.

Supervisor Adams asked Darwin Kostrzewski what trade he worked in. Kostrzewski stated that he was a carpenter by trade. Adams asked Kostrzewski why he has not attended meetings to understand the process. Kostrzewski stated that he knew what was going on and that he knew the process from talking to Gregg Felber. Kostrzewski replied that he works full time, has family out of state. Kostrzewski's big concern is all of the complaints from residents regarding the roads.

Clerk Weber stated that, she understands that Kostrzewski was busy, but before she decided to run for the board she attended meetings, while working full time and taking care of grandkids, to understand the process before deciding to run for office. Adams stated that his concern is that Kostrzewski had not attended meetings. He also stated that Kostrzewski ran against Gary Goldsmith, not Bob Hassett and does not feel that the vote count is a relevant fact.

Supervisor Felber stated that people are calling for more citizen involvement and that by appointing a new supervisor it would be a way to get a new citizen involved in the township. Felber's opinion is that not coming to a meeting does not mean that you are not interested in serving. She also stated there were multiple conversations between Kostrzewski and Gregg Felber. Supervisor Felber's opinion is that there should be new blood on the board. She has concerns of behaviors of Hassett's at the county that she feels do not reflect well on Orrock Township.

Clerk Weber stated that, when she has attended MAT trainings and sat with other boards, comments have been made that Orrock Township's board history is very young as far as the years served by board members. Weber feels that the board does not want to lose the history of the board. Adams said that you do want some continuity on the board. Ellinger stated that, while they were not running against each other, the vote difference between Kostrzewski and Hassett was a very small margin. Kostrzewski received 628 votes and Hassett received 609 votes.

Motion/Second to appoint Darwin Kostrzewski to the Interim Supervisor "C" position by: Felber. Motion failed for lack of second.

Motion/Second to appoint Bob Hassett to the Interim Supervisor "C" position by: Adams/Ellinger. In favor: Adams, Ellinger & Weber. Opposed: Felber. Abstained: None. Motion Prevailed.

The board encouraged Darwin Kostrzewski and David Just to continue to stay involved in the township and to run for office in 2024.

Adjournment

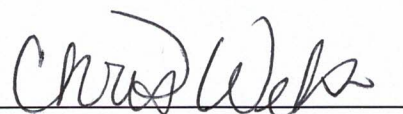
Motion/Second to adjourn the special meeting of the appointment committee by: Ellinger/Adams. In favor: Adams, Ellinger, Felber & Weber. Opposed: none. Abstained: None.

Motion Passed, adjourning the Special Meeting of the Appointment Committee, on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 5:37PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Weber
Town of Orrock, Clerk

Accepted this 27th day of February 2023 by the Orrock Township Board of Supervisors.


Bryan Adams, Chair

Attest: 
Chris Weber, Town Clerk