

Vermillion Township

Regular Meeting

December 15, 2020

Opening

Chairman Chris Schaffer opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were:

Supervisor Chris Schaffer
Supervisor Larry Ring
Supervisor Bruce Lohmann
Attorney Dan Fluegel
Clerk Judy Sloan
Treasurer Nick Rueger

Clerk Sloan read the minutes from both the November 17th regular meeting and the December 3rd special meeting. A motion was made by Supervisor Schaffer to accept the minutes as read. Supervisor Lohmann seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried.

Due to the transition to the new clerk and treasurer on December 3rd, no treasurer's report from the November 17th meeting was available. Treasurer Rueger distributed and verbally summarized a prepared document containing financial information starting from December 3rd. Rueger inquired if the format of the treasurer's report was adequate and Supervisor Ring indicated that the proposed CTAS software adoption may dictate the future format. Supervisor Schaffer suggested a column providing a running total so that as spring time road and bridge maintenance activities increased, there would be an indication of the amount available.

The check signing process was discussed and clarified that the three-signature rule applies to all Vermillion Township accounts, including the account reserved for gopher-trapping bounties.

The gopher account was discussed further, with Supervisor Schaffer suggesting that the funds be transferred to the main checking account and the gopher account be closed. Either that or leave a minimal amount in it. It was thought that the gopher account originally had to be separate because the bounty payment fell outside the intent of funds generated by the levy process. It was noted that an unusually high amount (\$52,043.09) is currently in the account and four checks are outstanding. Treasurer Rueger took the action to contact Vermillion State Bank in order to review the account balance and activity.

Claims and bills were reviewed and Supervisor Ring made a motion to authorize payment. Supervisor Lohmann seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried.

The Town building permit process was discussed and a recommendation was made by Supervisor Schaffer to adopt the process suggested by Building Inspector Mark Ceminsky. This would streamline the process by having applicants contact the building inspector directly for an application. Ceminsky would provide an invoice for each permit to the board and the invoice would be accompanied by a check from the permit applicant. Supervisor Ring requested that the documentation also include formulas used to calculate permit fees.

Jeff and Ann Dohmen submitted a completed building permit application to Town Attorney Dan Fluegel, who in turn submitted it to Clerk Sloan.

Jill Scottston and Ben Strehlo discussed their continued efforts to obtain a conditional use permit for the land rented from David Quade for the use of their business The Dream Team Academy (formerly J.J's Equestrian Academy). The Scottstons have been pursuing a signature needed from David Quade in order to establish the conditional use permit. Attorney Fluegel indicated that the conditional use permit is required before the business can go forward and urges the Scottstons to obtain the signature in time for the January 19, 2021 regular meeting.

The board discussed the Brockman parcel and the research performed by Attorney Fluegel with respect to an available building site. Attorney Fluegel reported that there is sufficient acreage to allow a new home to be built, but indicated that the Brockmans would have to split their current tax parcel such that the new home and existing home do not share the same parcel and that both parcels meet township requirements.

The board discussed the recent research performed by Attorney Fluegel with respect to the Jack Siebenaler property. The research confirms that the parcel contains a lot of record and has an eligible building site.

Clerk Sloan gave status on the transition activities starting from the December 3rd timeframe. The following items were discussed:

- The township iPhone is in the clerk's possession and is functional regarding calls and email, but cannot be updated with new apps because the related Apple ID is unknown. Attorney Fluegel will contact the former clerk and request the information. In the event that the Apple ID cannot be obtained, a parallel research path will be pursued involving unlocking or data-wiping the phone and establishing it under a new Apple ID.
- The new township laptop has been setup and is in use, but the only data on it is that going forward from December 3, 2020. The original township laptop is still in the possession of the FBI so the township does not have access to data generated previous to December 3rd.
- The township email (a gmail account) has been secured with a new password and is now in use.

The adoption of the CTAS software for accounting and payroll is recommended. Supervisor Ring communicated with Mark Albarado, an accounting officer with the Office of the State Auditor in order to understand the ordering mechanism. Ring made a motion for the township to purchase the CTAS program for \$300. Supervisor Lohman seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Sloan recommends contracting with an IT service because even if the laptops, phone and email are functioning at the moment, an overall strategy is needed for security, shared data and email management.

Updates to the township website were requested. Supervisor Schaffer requested that the permit section be changed to instruct building permit applicants to contact Building Inspector Mark Ceminsky instead of the Clerk to start the process.

Preparations are underway for the township March 9, 2021 election and Supervisor Ring took the action to develop job descriptions for the clerk and treasurer offices based on examples from Becker township. The appointment of a deputy clerk and deputy treasurer was also discussed as well as location of posted material. There are three places for posted notices:

- Poster box outside of the town hall at 118 Park Avenue, Vermillion, MN 55085
- Power pole at the intersection of Donnelly & 200th
- Power pole at the intersection of Goodwin Avenue and 170th

Notice needs to be given to Dakota County specifying the polling location and time as well as the offices. Supervisor Schaffer made a motion to specify the polling location as Pace Hall, 18970 Goodwin Avenue, Hastings MN 55033. Supervisor Lohmann seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried.

The issuance of burning permits was discussed and who would be a substitute for issuing them if needed. Supervisor Ring indicated that the DNR website does not accept permits applications from Dakota County residents, so in that case, DNR officer Jim Edger would be the person to contact.

The CARES refund was calculated as \$20,270.16. Supervisor Schaffer made a motion to approve the payment of the CARES refund. Supervisor Lohmann seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried. Clerk Sloan took an action to check with Dakota County and the CRA office for any interim reporting prior to December 3rd, 2020 and also find the process and contacts for the return.

Additional items discussed:

- Northfield WIFI payment and gaining control of the account
- Deposits of real estate tax disbursement's will be transitioned to direct deposit
- Clarification that conditional use permits for gravel pit mining expire after a period of non-use
- The Napper septic pumping schedule, compliance and documentation of events
- The accounting firm hired to conduct the audit is awaiting records still held by the FBI.

At 10:10 pm Chairman Schaffer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Lohmann seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried.

Judy Sloan
Vermillion Township Clerk