

# *Town of New Independence 2017 Annual Meeting*

## *MINUTES*

**March 14, 2017**

**7:00 P.M.**

**Town Hall**

The 2017 Annual Meeting for New Independence was called to order at 7:00 pm by Clerk, Sandra Lee Olson.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Sandra Lee asked for nominations for moderator. Once Jay Tremblay volunteered to serve as moderator, Jon Olson made a motion to have Jay serve as the moderator. Kurt Johnson seconded the motion, and a unanimous vote was cast in favor of the motion.

Minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting were read into the record by Clerk Sandra Lee Olson. Kurt Johnson made a motion to accept the minutes as read. Mike Ruhland offered a second to the motion, and a unanimous vote in favor of accepting the motion followed.

The Financial Report was the next order of business for the township residents. Kurt Johnson made a motion to dispense with reading of all checks. Following a second by Mike Ruhland, the motion was passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

The second portion of the Financial Report included a Summary of Finances, which was presented by the Clerk and is shown below:

### Summary of Finances

CASH BALANCES FOR 2016 (This represents money in checking accounts only)

Name of Fund	Beginning Balance	Ending Balance
General Fund	(\$7,459.57)	\$13,080.53
Road and Bridge Fund	\$29,450.41	\$15,238.14
Sowle Fund	\$500.00	\$500.00
Total	\$22,490.84	\$28,818.67

INVESTMENT BALANCES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016

<i>Investment</i>	<i>Beginning Balance</i>	<i>Ending Balance</i>
<b>Certificate of Deposit</b>	\$25,916.10	\$26,033.30
<b>Certificate of Deposit</b>	\$25,916.10	\$26,033.30
<b>Certificate of Deposit</b>	\$25,427.41	\$25,568.03
<b>Business Premium</b>	General Fund \$21,980.73	General Fund \$4,907.55
<b>Market Rate Public</b>	Road & Bridge Fund \$6,919.93	Road & Bridge Fund \$6,919.93

Sandra Lee informed the voters that the books of the clerk and treasurer had been audited by the Board of Supervisors and were in complete agreement. Kurt Johnson, then, made a motion to accept the Summary of Finances. Jon Olson offered a second to the motion, which was passed with a unanimous vote in favor of acceptance.

The date for the Annual Town Meeting is set by law as the second Tuesday in March. Voters determine when the meeting will convene. New Independence holds the election of officers in November to coincide with the Federal and State elections and is not bound by the law restricting townships from holding its meeting between 6:00 and 8:00 pm. Because New Independence does not hold an election in its jurisdiction on the day of the Annual Meeting, Kurt Johnson made a motion to convene the 2018 Annual Meeting at 7:00 pm. Following a second by Mike Ruhland, the motion was passed with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

New Independence does not have any township, State, or Federal elections scheduled in 2017 but a special election is always a possibility. Kurt Johnson made a motion to open the polls from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm for any special election during the year. This would enable voters to vote on the way to work. Jon Olson offered a second to the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

Voters are responsible for setting the levy at the Annual Meeting. If a change is needed, a Special Town Meeting may be called to change the levy before it is submitted to the County Auditor in September. To aid voters in setting the Levy for 2018, the Clerk presented a summary of levies from 2008-2017:

#### Levy from previous years

Fund	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012-2014	2015	2016-2017
General	\$22,224	\$22,224	\$23,120	\$23,582	\$24,054	\$31,753	\$40,153
Assessor	\$ 7,116	\$ 7,116	\$ 7,400	\$ 7,548	\$ 7,699	_____	_____
Road & Bridge	<u>\$12,394</u>	<u>\$14,431</u>	<u>\$15,764</u>	<u>\$16,079</u>	<u>\$16,400</u>	<u>\$16,400</u>	<u>\$8,000</u>
<i>Total Levy</i>	<i>\$41,734</i>	<i>\$43,431</i>	<i>\$46,284</i>	<i>\$47,209</i>	<i>\$48,153</i>	<i>\$48,153</i>	<i>\$48,153</i>

The Clerk noted that the major increase in expenditures is typically due to fire protection, which will increase by 3% for 2018. Even though the fire protection agreement with Albion will increase, the Board recommended a 0% increase for the 2018 Levy.

Possible Levy Options for 2018 to consider would be:

	0%	1%	3%	5%
General Fund	\$40,153	\$40,555	\$41,360	\$42,160
Road & Bridge Fund	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,080	\$ 8,240	\$ 8,400
<i>Total Levy</i>	<i>\$48,153</i>	<i>\$48,635</i>	<i>\$49,600</i>	<i>\$50,560</i>

Jon Olson made a motion to set the 2018 Levy at the 2017 Levy rate, which would follow the recommendation of the Board of Supervisors. Mike Ruhland seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote in favor of the motion. The Clerk will submit the 2018 Levy as determined by the motion (General Fund: \$40,153; Road & Bridge Fund: \$8,000; Total Levy: \$48,153).

The Voyageur (Portage News) has served as the official newspaper for several years. Jon Olson made a motion to continue using the Voyageur for legal township notices for the township. Mike Ruhland seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

The Clerk posts meeting dates so residents are informed. The Annual Meeting is also a venue to inform residents so she included the following list of upcoming meeting dates for 2017 that New Independence officers might attend. The inclusion is not required by law but serves to keep residents informed.

**Board of Supervisors' Meetings for 2017**

Meetings for New Independence Board of Supervisors are scheduled for the first Monday of each month unless it is a holiday. Meetings are held at the Town Hall and commence at 7:00 PM

April 3	July 10	October 2
May 8	August 7	November 1
June 5	September 11	December 4

**2017 Board of Appeal and Equalization (set by County)**

April 19, 2016	6:00-7:00 pm
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**2017 SLCAT Calendar**

February 22, 2017	Cotton Community Center	6:30 pm	(Philip Lobb-Speaker)
March 22, 2017	Cotton Community Center	6:30 pm	(Sue H. – Speaker)
April 26, 2017	<i>WHITE TWP.</i>	6:30 PM	<i>(White Twp – Speaker)</i>
May 24, 2017	Cotton Community Center	5:30 pm	Socializing
		6:00 pm	Meeting & Election of Officers
		6:30 pm	Dinner
		7:00 pm	Speaker

The Clerk noted that Minn. Stat. 365.10, subd. 14 provides that the electors may authorize the town board to contract with a non-profit organization for health, social, or recreational services not to exceed \$10,000. If approved, however, the town board is not mandated to enter into such a contract, and if the donation does not meet the actual criteria of the statute, the board needs to say “no” even if it contradicts the desires of the electorate. The following is a list of monies that have been given to various non-profit organization for the health, social, or recreational services for New Independence residents:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
• Tester Niemi Post	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	-----	\$350
• AlBrook All-Night Grad	\$200	\$500	\$300	\$250	\$250	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
• South Ridge All-Night Grad	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250
• AlBrook Academic Boosters	\$200	\$200	\$250	\$250	\$250	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
• South Ridge PTSO	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$250	-----	-----	\$250	\$200
• AlBrook Band	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
• South Ridge Band	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$100
• Alborn Little League	\$300	\$300	-----	\$200	\$200	\$100	-----	-----	-----	-----
• St. Louis County Fair	-----	-----	-----	\$100	\$100	-----	-----	\$100	\$200	-----
• Burnett Winter Fest	-----	-----	-----	\$150	\$150	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
• South Ridge Nature Club	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$250	\$250	\$266.64	\$300	-----	\$350
• South Ridge Science Club	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$300	-----	-----
• Brookston Youth Baseball	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$200	-----	\$150
• Brookston Legion Ball	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$150
• South Ridge Elem Football	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$250	-----
• South Ridge Soccer	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$200

As of the date of this Annual Meeting, New Independence has received requests from:

- St. Louis County Fair
- Brookston Youth Baseball
- Tester-Niemi Post
- South Ridge All-Night Grad

Mike Ruhland made a motion to give \$250 to each of the organizations that are listed above. Kurt Johnson offered the second, and the motion carried with a unanimous vote.

By law, a Road Report must be given at the Annual Meeting. Road Foreman Peter Olson gave a summary of the work that was completed since he took over the position in July.

1. The turnaround was built on South Johnson Road
2. A culvert was installed on North Johnson Road
3. Gravel was applied to all roads.
4. Various issues with South Schelin have been addressed with a landowner on that road. Signs will be installed.

New Independence operates with a Joint Powers Agreement with Alborn and receives fire protection from the Alborn Fire Department. Jay Tremblay gave a report to the Annual Meeting on behalf of the Fire Department. New Independence's portion of the 2017 Alborn Fire Department budget will be a total of \$18,777, which represents 40%. Alborn is responsible for 60% of the budget. Half of the amount (\$9,388.50) will be due on June 1 and the other half will be due on November 1. Jay noted that Alborn has had 29 calls in 2016 and New Independence had 23 calls. This is significant because Alborn has suggested going to a 50/50 split. The Fire Department is looking into purchasing a new engine. Currently, Alborn has 10 volunteer fire fighters, and New Independence has 7. New members are always welcome.

The Alborn Fire Department has moved into the new addition and is planning an Open House. There have been some minor issues but the project overall was an improvement and offers more space for trucks and meetings.

Reports from Supervisors from all supervisors. Kurt Johnson and Jon Olson presented written reports and Mike Ruhland gave an oral report. Each report covered meetings and activities the supervisors did during the previous year.

Because there were no other items from the floor, Jay asked for a motion for adjournment. Mike Ruhland offered the motion, which was seconded by Kurt Johnson and passed. Jay declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Unofficial