

**OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING,
TUESDAY MARCH 12TH, 2024.**

The Annual Meeting of the Town of Grant Valley was held at the Grant Valley Town Hall on the second Tuesday in March 2024, that being the 12th day, beginning at 8:15 p.m. Twelve (12,(1 minor)) residents and One (1) non-resident were present.

The meeting was convened by Clerk Stevens followed by the pledge to the flag.

MODERATOR CHOSEN:

The Clerk asked if anyone would like to volunteer to be moderator or would like to nominate a moderator and Lester Hiltz Jr. volunteered. Lester Hiltz Jr. was given the Moderator's Oath and took the chair.

TELLERS APPOINTED:

Moderator Hiltz appointed Cassie Hiltz, and Craig Westlund to serve as Tellers for the evening.

2022 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES:

Marlys Eckman made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes and accept them. Motion was seconded by Russel Hiltz and carried on unanimous voice call vote.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Gerry Maertens made a motion, seconded by Kelly Lindstrom to waive the Treasure's Report. Motion carried on unanimous voice call vote.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORTS:

Bob Hiltz reported on Animal Control. We belong to BRACO and the current Animal Control Officer is Keith Christianson, he lives in Bemidji Township. He noted that the ordinance is posted on our webpage, if you see a stray cat or dog, please call the animal control officer. The township paid \$7,480 in 2023 for Animal Control service. The major problem that is being faced right now, is stray cats. Officer Christianson would like to ask people to stop kindly feeding stray/feral cats. He is live trapping them and bringing them to Animal Care Clinic, these cats carry disease that is being spread to the Clinic. Officer Christianson can now issue citations. There is discussion of mandatory chipping, the approx. cost is \$65/animal.

Bob Hiltz reported on Covid money, we need to spend this by the end of 2024.

Bob Hiltz reported on mailboxes, during our 2023 Annual Road Tour he counted mailboxes that are non swing arm style, our township has 475 non swing arm mailboxes out of 910 households in Grant Valley. Not having a swing arm mailbox is a hazard to snow plows, graders, four-wheelers, snowmobiles, mailmen and much more..

He also reported on JAYZAB, Airport land use and zoning, standardizing how it is zoned and variances issued for land rights. The mission is to rezone to protect vulnerable populations while being less restrictive so they do not have to issue as many variances. They are in the 2nd round of public comment next step is to submit to local government to move forward.

Marlys Eckman reported that is very nice to see different faces here today. In 1974 she became the Clerk for Grant Valley, she talked about the history of the Township, in 1898 was the first meeting, with more history on our webpage. She reviewed the positions that we hold currently, we have a treasurer, Janelle Slough who is appointed. The Elected positions we have- three supervisors, herself, Bob Hiltz and Russel Hiltz (Russel has been on the Board for approx. 26 years) along with a Clerk, Kayley Stevens. We also have a Road Supervisor, Keith Christianson, she noted the new flag pole we have outside, Christianson has been lowering it when needed and monitoring the flag. The Township is growing have 2187 residents and 1477 registered voters, with this the traffic on the roads is increasing. We have an upcoming Road Tour in May where we will drive every road in the Township, recognize, identify and prioritize what is needed to be done to our roads. She encourages residents to use our webpage (grantvalleytownship.info) there is also a link to contact us. The hall is available for rent, the cost to residents is \$75, contact Clerk Stevens to do this. She would like to assure everyone that we collectively work together and we do our best.

Russel Hiltz reported on roads, in 2023 we put a slurry overcoat on Fern Lake, and Swedmark. Looking into doing this to Hidden Trail but with concrete. Archery, Grant Valley and 15th Street will need work in the future. This slurry mix is half the price of overlay. We added gravel to our shared road with Rockwood Township, Beltrami Line Rd. Gravel was added on Sportsman, Lenard Way, Dorris Ct, Buchannon, Humming Bird, North Carmen and Paul Miller Road. A new culvert was placed on Sportsman Rd along with trees and stumps removed from Huckleberry Rd. The ditch was cut on Division and striping was done on Fern Lake, Swedmark, Archery and Grant Valley Road. We added a new development across from Schroder Rd to the North with new roads, Yellow Rose and Red Rose. We still have issues with the Rose Bush on Birch Lane. The issue with the location of Country View Rd is not resolved yet as well.

In Grant Valley we have 1390 parcels, 39 trailer houses, 138 tax exempt and 13 State properties. Approximately 4 million in new construction, taxes will be increasing by approx. 5% for buildings, and 40 % for bare land. The value for 2023 is \$249,435,000 and this year is estimated at \$276,820,000. The Levies are predicted to be increasing.

Russel Hiltz also reported on the Fire Association, this includes 18 units of local Government, he has been with them for over 20 years, he talked about the new pumper truck received and in May we receive a tanker truck, approx. cost is \$1.1 million Rural Fire bought these. The next truck is 3 and half years out and will cost approx. \$1.365 million, the budget will be going up to keep up with trucks and equipment costs. The fire department received 1274 calls, 90 were fire (40 buildings) in 2023. The firemen received 7590 hours in training in 2023, the Fire Chief is pushing for this training, POC trained for 120 hours each with full time firemen training for 270 hours. Grant Valley had 22 total calls, 4 fire, 6 rescue, 1 hazard, 3 service, 4 good intent and 4 false alarms. The Fire Chief raised the budget up 13.9% for 2024 but the contract is max of 5% a year, work on contract starting next week. He also wants to add 4-7 more full time firefighters, which could cost \$735,000. Hiltz is pushing for other options are being looked at like having POC firemen do shifts so there is always a fireman at the station, this would only cost \$55,000. Hiltz would like to have about 4 dormers stay there and pay them \$10,000-\$15,000-year, SAFER Grants are also an option. The Fire Chief would like a new Fire Station, this is approx. \$7 million. Our ISO rating changed from a 3 to a 4, this will affect residents some but mostly businesses (insurance wise).

Board of Review April 26th, 9:00 AM Grant Valley Townhall.

DONATIONS:

There was \$1500 set aside for donations. Many letters were received from organizations that did not have anyone to speak here on their behalf.

Caden Rolfes spoke on behalf of Let's Go Fishing, Gerry Maerters spoke on behalf of Bemidji Senior Center and, no one spoke on behalf of Beltrami County Historic Society. Russel Hiltz made a motion that funds will be disbursed evenly before the two organizations that are represented tonight, the motion was seconded by Cassie Hiltz. Paper ballots were used, and the vote was approved 11 yes and 0 no.

ELECTION RESULTS:

The Moderator read the election results- Supervisor- Russel Hiltz with 29 votes and Clerk- Kayley Stevens with 28 votes. No write in's.

SETTING OF LEVIES:

Lester Hiltz Sr. made a motion to set the General Fund Levy at \$65,200.00. Kelly Lindstrom seconded the motion. Paper ballots were used, the vote was approved with 11 yes and 0 no.

Marlys Eckman made a motion to set the Road and Bridge Levy at \$339,000.000, Lester Hiltz Sr. seconded the motion. Paper ballots were used, the vote was approved with 11 yes and 0 no.

Gerry Maerters made a motion to set the Fire Levy at \$140,000, Lester Hiltz Sr. seconded the motion. Paper ballots were used, the vote was approved with 11 yes and 0 no.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Swing arm mailboxes, we are adding this to the next annual meeting agenda. Non swing arm mailboxes are a hazard to the roads and residents. It is all around safer to switch to swing arm mailboxes. According to the State law we can deem them a public hazard at an annual meeting, 169.072 MN State Statue. Ridges left from the plow or grader not being able to get close to them is a huge issue, along with this issue is garbage cans, when residents put them out too far on the road the plow and grader need to go around them creating ridges in the roads. The township abides by the rule for sign posts (they need to be breakaway) we should abide by the mailbox rule as well. The Board will need to decided if the Township will pay for the replacement of mailboxes or have residents pay. This will be safer for everyone. In the Spring of 2023, we moved many mailboxes will approval of the Post Office to make them safer. Again, this will be on the agenda for 2025.

2025 ANNUAL MEETING:

Russel Hiltz made a motion to set the 2025 Annual Meeting at 8:15 p.m. at the Grant Valley Town Hall on the 11th day of March, that being the second Tuesday. Marlys Eckman seconded the motion and it carried on unanimous voice call vote.

Bob Hiltz made a motion to adjourned. Kelly Lindstrom seconded the motion and it carried on unanimous voice call vote. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayley Stevens, Clerk

Lester Hiltz Jr. , Moderator

03/12/24