

TOWN OF FALL LAKE
BOARD MINUTES – Wednesday May 8, 2024
Regular Board Meeting

Chairman Eric Hart called the Regular May meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Pledge recited.

Present Supervisors: Craig Seliskar, Eric Hart, Sheila Gruba, Treasurer Stocks, Clerk Cheri DeBeltz, and 29 citizens

Minutes:

Minutes of the previous meeting approved with motion by Supervisor Sheila Gruba, second by Supervisor Craig Seliskar, support Supervisor Eric Hart.

Treasurer's report:

Read and approved as read with motion by Sheila Gruba 2nd by Supervisor Craig Seliskar and Supported by Supervisor Eric Hart. Receipts of \$1,303.08 were received and disbursements totaled \$48,309.08. The recreation fund balance is \$7,305.40. Funds available to run the township are \$253,978.38.

Chairperson Hart decided to start the New Business portion of our agenda at this time due to the citizens in attendance and for the sake of moving the meeting forward.

New Business

Power Dam Road – MN Power and Citizens - Minnesota Power Representative Deb Kellner. She explained that the Power Dam Road has had attorneys looking at this road. They are wanting to develop the 10 platted lots on the end of the road. She stated that MN Power has an easement on that road. The attorneys have not been able to find anything legally on file that declares or memorializes the road as a "public" road. Clerk DeBeltz will contact the MATS attorney and work with the county to determine how to memorialize the road as a public road. Ms. Susan Wold also said she is the property owner of Power Dam Rd. She has concerns if MN Power is going to sell the lots. There is an outfitter/campsite business there with a bunkhouse on the west side of road and then a shower and restroom facility on the east side. Her concern is the safety of her guests with the additional traffic selling those lots would create. A discussion was had about possible moving of the road to access the back lot. The township in 1994 started a Road Vacation Hearing for 300 feet of the Power Dam Road. The hearing was held and follow-up at the time was needed from MN Power. Those documents were received. Upon further follow up with Lake County & MN Power the 300 ft road vacation was never filed with Lake County. Clerk DeBeltz will follow up and see if this can still be filed with the documentation we have on file.

Cloquet Line Road problem Currently there is a large area on the Cloquet Line that has become very soft and, in some spots, timbers are coming up through the road surface. A group of citizens from the Cloquet Line were there to speak about the nearly impassable portion of the road. The Cloquet line is currently too wet right now to fix anything. Supervisor Craig Seliskar also stated that he has received permission from a property owner on a portion of the road to cut brush along the sides to help with getting the sun onto the shady parts of the bad section. One idea that was talked about was to put a lift on the road. Other options were talked about, one of them was a complete overhaul of the road. Supervisor Sheila Gruba pointed out that the Cloquet line had a major overhaul done not that long ago. The engineers on the project at that time were TKDA and we should research what the specks were for that project and did the contractor drop the ball. We should also find out what the boring samples showed at the time of the last overhaul. Concerns are

if the current road can withstand additional weight. Supervisor Craig Seliskar made a motion to put a temporary cover on the Cloquet line to keep traffic moving forward. Supervisor Eric Hart 2nd the motion and Supervisor Sheila Gruba supported. Supervisor Craig Seliskar made a motion to get estimates from the 3 road contractors to cut trees in the fall. Supervisor Eric Hart 2nd the motion and Supervisor Sheila Gruba supported. One citizen stated that one other thing that also needs to be addressed is the water on the road we need to have ditching and culverts. Tom Erchul from St. Louis County stated that they next portion of the road that is on St. Louis county land is on taxed forfeited land and he marked where some brush removal could be done to help with these issues. Supervisor Seliskar made a motion to reach out to the contractors to get the ditches cleared Supervisor Eric Hart 2nd and Supervisor Sheila Gruba support. Another suggestion was made to reach out to Lake County for additional help. Clerk DeBeltz will look through the files and see what she can find regarding the Cloquet Line project with TKDA and any other emails we may have.

Commissioner Joe Baltich advised the board he had sent an email to Jason Dipiazza at Lake county Highway department for assistance with the Cloquet Line road.

Cloquet Line Chloride - Supervisor Seliskar stated that we have the opportunity to work with St. Louis county and Envirotech to put Sodium Chloride down on the Cloquet line again this year. The price is \$1.37/per gallon and typically the road uses 1 full tanker load of 4,200 gallons. Approx. price total would be \$5,754. Supervisor Craig Seliskar made a motion to go work with Envirotech and St. Louis County to apply the Sodium Chloride on the Cloquet line again. Supervisor Eric Hart 2nd the motion and Supervisor Sheila Gruba supported.

Lake County & Fall Lake Township MOU - Cindy Smyka, Executive Director for The Ely Area Tourism Bureau to speak. She explained the updated MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) The MOU addressed the Lake County's collecting of the 3% lodging tax and 1% event tax. Fall Lake Township contributes greatly to the 1% event tax, but citizens and groups have had limited success accessing the grant funds back to hold events here. Due to restrictions of events must be held in Fall Lake Township and there are very few event spaces large enough. Trying to push and get Lovin Lake County to promote the whole county not just the North Shore area. Another issue they are facing is a lot of Airbnb and VRBO's are paying the taxes, but it is not marked or categorized as Fall lake Township. There is new tracking software called GRANCUS that will look at all reservations and what we could be getting. Also, will track who should be compliant with paying taxes, since a lot of short-term rentals are operating under the radar. Cindy recommended that we DO NOT budge on the 3% lodging tax, fight for representation on the board – "if they can't tell you what is marketable up here than they are not going to market us"

Community Center Update: a few citizens met on April 24, 2024, and talked about potential to build or improve the community center. Ideas of potential needs and wants were discussed and it was determined that the next step would be to take a tour of some area community centers and see what others have. Possibly speaking with people at them and finding out what has worked and what is NOT working for them. Clerk DeBeltz has a phone call to the Clair Nelson Community Center and is waiting to hear back from them regarding a possible tour on Monday 5/13 @ 4:30. If that one is not available the other option could be to tour Loon Lake Community Center. Commissioner Joe Baltich advised he was at a recent meeting and was talking about this with Ida Rukvina and she advised that USDA has funding available to help rural communities build community centers. We all agreed that we need to have more of a plan of what we need and want. No other meeting for this group has been scheduled. Supervisor Craig Seliskar asked the board if the Township would be willing to pay for advertising in the paper for any future meetings to help attract more community members. A discussion followed that we could be breaking open meeting laws by having more than one supervisor in attendance at the meeting. Even if that supervisor is there just as a citizen. Some further clarification from MATS legal counsel will be needed for follow-up before we determine how we move forward with these meetings. Clerk Cheri DeBeltz will follow up.

Seal Coating We have received a bid from RC Seal Coating to do crack sealing and Seal Coating for the Summer of 2024. The amount of the bid is \$9,120.00. Supervisor Eric Hart made a motion to accept the bid from RC Seal Coating, Supervisor Sheila Gruba 2nd and Supervisor Craig Seliskar supported.

Mike Sarazine Parcel ID – 28-6382-38160 – The township has received a message from Mike Sarazine asking about an undeveloped road leading to the property he has purchased and how he would go about accessing the property. Clerk Cheri DeBeltz had reached out to Steve Fenske, the MATS attorney before the meeting regarding the legal requirement by the township to build or open the road. The response from him was

1. A town is never required to open or build a platted roadway merely because a right of way is dedicated to the township. Usually a platted roadway is held in trust for the town until the town wants to accept it. The platted roadway is open to and for the use of the landowners within the plat, so any of the owners could open and develop the road. The town is not required to open or build a road there. Its possible that the town may be expected to contribute to the cost as an owner within the plat, though. That question should be referred to the township attorney for review.

The board advised Mr. Sarazine will need to work on getting the road opened on his own, we are not legally required to do so. Clerk Cheri DeBeltz will follow up with Mr. Sarazine.

Lucky Boy we received an email from Lucky Boy services advising us that their prices for 2024 have not changed. They have also sent a copy of their current insurance information for our records.

T-Mobile Tower We received notification that a new T-Mobile Tower is planned to be built at 2958 Fernberg Road. There were maps and project summary information in the packet received.

Conflict of Interest Resolution – 2024-02 Supervisor Sheila Gruba found out at Spring Short courses that we need to have a Conflict of Resolution C-6000 form on file for each of our supervisors for any work they do around the township that is not the regular scope of their position. Once they do or complete the work, they will need to fill out an affidavit of work completed. Supervisor Eric Hart made motion to support resolution 2024-02 (C-6000), Supervisor Sheila Gruba 2nd and Supervisor Craig Seliskar supported.

Mary Tome Celebration of Life. There will be a celebration of life held for past supervisor Mary Tome on June 8th at 2pm at the Longbranch in Winton. Clerk DeBeltz will order a plant in remembrance from the township. Spend up to \$250.00.

Transfer Site:

Transfer Site Attendant Dean Barrett stated that Jerry Jussila will not be able to work out at the Transfer Site. Doug Scheibe and Dean will be trading off Monday's come summer. Dean showed the board a new sign holder he made that hangs on the dumpsters, Startup of the summer hours has begun, and things are going well. A bear visited last night at the Transfer site; some trash was on the ground due to the bar not being placed on the dumpster. Bag sales have been going well. There is also a resident wood chuck under the shed. The Brush pile is growing. The oil filter barrels leaked water into the barrels. But nothing has leaked out of the barrels.

Correspondence:

Received a letter from Lake County Chamber of Commerce. Asking for a sponsorship for \$250.00 toward a breakfast to honor the men and women who provide our communities with emergency services. With the sponsorship we would receive 2 tickets to the event being held on Monday May 9th. NO donation was made at this time.

Clerk Cheri DeBeltz received a pack of popcorn and a card from MSA with a note Happy Municipal Clerks Week. Thank you for all you do!

Old Business:

- Sunset Road – Supervisor Sheila Gruba and Clerk Cheri DeBeltz will be attending a LRIP kick off zoom meeting on Tuesday May 14, 2024. This is to discuss the requirements and the process to the LRIP. After that meeting Supervisor Gruba and Clerk DeBeltz will meet with Jason DiPiazza on Zoom to go over anything additionally with Lake county specially. This project will most likely not be completed until 2025. The land issue still needs to be addressed.

- Locust Lane – A discussion was had regarding the access and development of the platted road “locust lane” Supervisor Gruba advised that her understanding of legal advice from MATS attorney Madeline Cash, was that the property owners that want to open the plate to start a new road application because the plat was over 40 years old. Clerk DeBeltz had reached out in email to MATS attorney Steve Fenske and was advised in writing –

1. A town is never required to open or build a platted roadway merely because a right of way is dedicated to the township. Usually a platted roadway is held in trust for the town until the town wants to accept it. The platted roadway is open to and for the use of the landowners within the plat, so any of the owners could open and develop the road. The town is not required to open or build a road there. Its possible that the town may be expected to contribute to the cost as an owner within the plat, though. That question should be referred to the township attorney for review.

Supervisor Sheila Gruba will advise Clerk Cheri DeBeltz when she gets email confirmation from Madeline Cash at MATS regarding the difference in opinions on opening a platted road and then we will address property owners concerns as this also affects the Mike Sarazine parcel 28-6382-38160 previously mentioned in meeting.

Another thing that was discussed was the Potential of Dave Johnson selling us his parcel. After discussions with Mr. Dave Jonson in the past he has advised that some of Ernie’s road is currently on his property. Supervisor Eric Hart will talk to Dave Johnson about the possibility of purchasing his land.

Supervisor Eric Hart feels it would be beneficial to the township to purchase the Warren Johnson Parcels just as a potential place for septic drain field should ours ever fail or even build a new well. Supervisor Craig Seliskar also feels it is in the best interest of the township to purchase the Warren Johnson parcel even if Dave Johnson does not want to sell us his property.

Supervisor Sheila Gruba pointed out that recently looking at property on she has figured out that the parking lot here at the town hall is NOT owned by the township. This property ID 28-6382-30040 is currently listed as STATE OF MN IN TRST FOR TAXING DIST. Supervisor Sheila Gruba made a motion to write a letter to Lake County to purchase this property from them for the price of \$1.00. Supervisor Eric Hart 2nd and Supervisor Craig Seliskar supported.

Recreation Fund Distribution - A discussion was had, and Supervisor Sheila Gruba advised that she was told at the MATS short Course, we are only to spend \$10,000.00 a year on Recreation, including the Recreation Funds received from Lake County.

We received a letter from Ely Junior Class asking for donation to help with funding for the prom and junior/senior banquet. Supervisor Eric Hart motioned to table Junior class requests until further clarification could be made on funding. Supervisor Craig Seliskar 2nd and Supervisor Sheila Gruba supported.

Supervisor Sheila Gruba also pointed out that we cannot give money to a "booster club". The funds must be given to a school instead. She found this out at the new supervisor training.

Supervisor Hart made a motion to delay any further recreation fund requests until this can be figured out. Supervisor Craig Seliskar 2nd the motion.

Supervisors Comments:

Supervisor Sheila Gruba – She learned at the new officer training that the Township is at the same level as the Judicial Branch in the State of MN. The City of the county cannot tell us what to do. All Legislative powers come from statutes. We are required to point to a MN statute for every decision.

She attended the RAMS meeting; she states that 2 legislators spoke, and stated EMS is the priority for this session. The next meeting for RAMS is 5/23 is an offsite meeting at Nashwauk city hall at 3:30, they will tour Mesabi Metallics and then a diner at Muco Si. Sheila is unable to attend Craig will check his schedule to see if he can attend. The next meeting is on 6/27 at their normal location.

Wildfire protection Strategic Planning she attended the 1st session. The 2nd meeting will be held at Fall Lake township on 5/20 5-7pm. Break down actions and what our biggest concerns if there is a wildfire will be discussed at this next meeting. The goal is to develop a mitigation action plan for Morse & Fall Lake. Work on funding for fuel reduction.

Supervisor Eric Hart made a motion to as a board to attend the 5/20 meeting and get paid. Supervisor Craig Seliskar 2nd and Supervisor Sheila Gruba supported.

Supervisor Eric Hart – had nothing to report at this time.

Supervisor Craig Seliskar – Exploring the opportunity of getting engineering firm hired by township that could possibly to look at our roads and get our roads to a better end goal and to get our roads up to par. Supervisor Craig Seliskar made a motion reach out Braun InterTech to get pricing and see if they can look at township roads give us an analysis for our roads. 2nd Supervisor Eric Hart and Support Supervisor Sheila Gruba.

He also made a motion to contract USDA aprox. \$2000.00 for beaver control for areas of concern would be Sunset, Shady Lane, Cloquet Line. 2nd Supervisor Sheila Gruba Support Eric Hart.

He advised that Scott Vogel cannot fix the doors. Supervisor Eric Hart will investigate someone to fix the doors.

Clyde Peterson was supposed to get pricing mowing township roads. Nothing has been received as of this time. Supervisor Craig Seliskar will reach back out to him and get his pricing to us. He is looking at doing around 7/3/24.

Roads Report - Road inspection was completed on Monday April 30, 2024 by Supervisor Eric Hart and Supervisor Craig Seliskar. Clerk Cheri DeBeltz went along on that road inspection. Supervisor Sheila Gruba completed the Road Inspection separately on Tuesday May 7, 2024, she was not able to attend on the April 30, 2024, due to the Wildfire Workshop being held at the same time. Supervisor Eric Hart read the road reports and Supervisor Sheila Gruba added anything additional she found along her road inspection.

****Please see the attached finalized road report ****

Citizens: nothing currently

Future Meetings:

Morse Fall Lake Fire Meeting – Wednesday May 15th, 6 pm

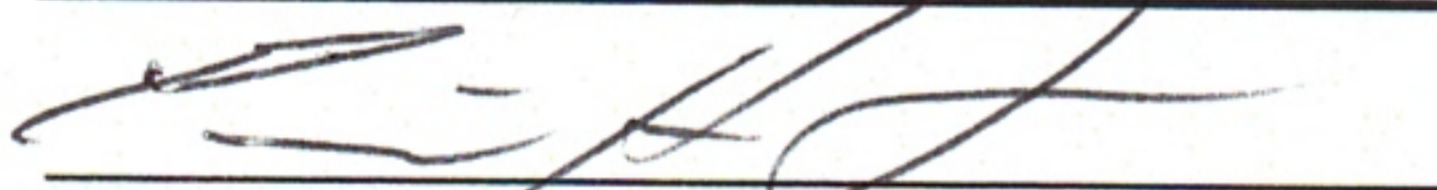
Next Regular Township Meeting – Wednesday June 5th, 6 pm

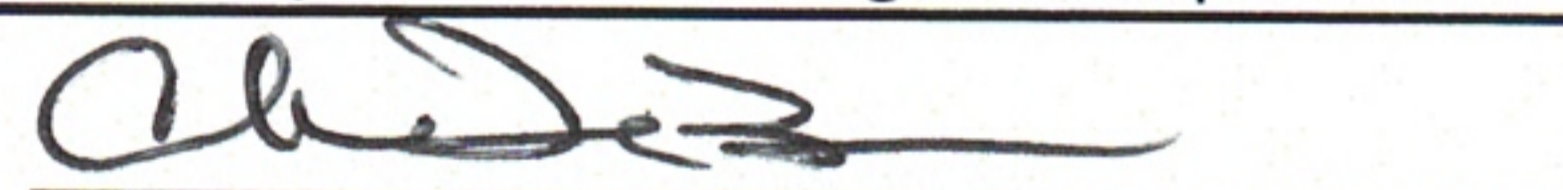
Wildfire Strategic Planning Meeting – Monday May 20th, 5- 7 pm

Lake County Board of Commissioners meet as a Whole – Tuesday June 18 – 6pm @ Fall Lake Township

Motion to pay the bills by Eric Hart, 2nd by Craig Seliskar & support from Sheila Gruba.

Motion by Hart, second by Seliskar, support by Gruba to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 pm.


Chairman Eric Hart


Clerk Cheri DeBeltz

2024 Road Report		
Road Name	Milage	Work Needed
Pine Road	1.2	Clean up sod on edge of road & remnants of plowing on the end of Pine rd, by curve stop ahead sign needs fixing, brushing, stop ahead sign needs fixing.
White Iron Beach	0.35	Culvert needing to be reset, grading, sod removal, sod removal
Chest Nut	0.1	Fill hole by sign, cut back sod
Sellwood	0.1	Good Shape
Aurora Drive	0.1	Clean up gravel from plowing, sod, brushing
Borealis Lane	0.1	Sod, brushing turnaround
Snowbank Rd.	3.54	Timber is coming through the road; trees need to be cleaned up
Villa Rd.	0.6	Clean out by fire number 13426 side of road, trees over rd homeowners' responsibility, log in ditch 13380, fill holes
Maple St.	0.1	Culvert is pinched need to be replaced, road could be fixed up
Ironwood Rd.	0.5	Patch pothole at intersection of Ironwood and Villas Rd, cut sod road edge
Ernies Rd.	0.9	End of Ernies Rd soft spot, water isn't running off, clean ditch out or at least needs attention
Sunset Rd	3	Culvert maybe needs by fire number 389 Hwy side, sod work needs in low spots, by fire number 260 clean up windrow or ditch
Voyageur Rd.	0.75	Soft spots at Wigdahls across from mailboxes, owners should put a culvert (possible powerlin and phone buried) cut sod remnants on road need to be graded off
Kelly's Lots	0.2	Sod built up alongside of road
Garden Lake Rd	2.4	Grading, sod build up, culvert past paradise need to be reset or fill, Wetzels Fire # 529 both properties need culverts on end of both driveways, reset culvert past #321
Point Drive	0.35	Pothoes, needs grading and cut back sod
North Pine Rd	0.3	Seal and Sweeping
Cloquet Line	2.2	Fix, cut trees, first portion, ditch, brush whole thing, ask for a bid, Fire # 1428 Railroad tie sticking out
Shady LN	0.6	Grading, Beaver Dam USDA again?

Winton Point Rd	0.3	Needs grading, sod needs to be cut back, brushing
Birch Lane	0.15	Needs to be fixed, additional dirt, sod cut back, brushing
Circle Drive	1.25	Needs grading, sod, #665 new house entrance might be in right of way
Power Dam Rd.	0.4	Replace culvert near end of road, fill, brush for visibility, something sticking up. Maybe have contractors do an assessment on road.
Hickory Rd.	0.3	Need to have some TLC by Lozars, clean up, skid steer road material may be needed, sod on top
Transfer Site	0.2	Clean up gravel from snow plowing
Total Milage	19.9	