

Town of Tofte 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2017

UNAPPROVED UNTIL THE MARCH 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

Clerk Barbara Gervais called the 2017 annual meeting for the Town of Tofte to order at 8:04 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, at the Birch Grove Community Center. All attendees were asked to sign in.

Clerk Gervais called for nominations for meeting moderator. Jeanne Larson nominated Paul James. Clerk called for any other nominations. Without any response, the Clerk called for a vote for appoint Paul James as meeting moderator. All votes were aye, Paul voted nay even though he accepted the nomination.

Moderator Paul James asked those in attendance to stand and say the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

2016 Annual Meeting minutes: Each person in attendance received a copy of the March 2016 annual meeting minutes and the minutes for the August 2016 continuation meeting. Moderator Paul James called for a motion to approve the 2016 annual meeting minutes and asked if those in attendance would like the minutes read aloud. Jim King motioned to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approved as written. Rich Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

Financial Report/Board of Audit Report: Clerk Barbara Gervais made a copy of the board of audit report available to each of the attendees. The approved board of audit report for 2016 financials for the Town of Tofte showed the following balances on 12/31/2016: Town checking account \$102,444.49, Savings #1 \$30,020.86, Savings #2 \$47,111.14, Lodging Tax Revenue Account \$0, Town Road Allocation account \$7,236.72, Community Center Lease Funds account \$10,071.75, Abatement funds account \$0, IRRRB grant funds account \$46,711.97, Cemetery CD \$16,358.65, Land use plan CD \$1,039.77, Connect water/sewer CD \$26,568.20, Park Fund CD \$26,359.28, Fire Truck CD \$80,471.57, Rescue Truck CD \$14,426.71, and Community Center Building CD \$12,063.19. The total of all funds on 12/31/16 is \$420,884.30. Outstanding debt on 12/31/16 is Grand Marais State Bank-GO Bond for 29 acres \$64,397.04, 0% promissory note to Cook County for the pellet boiler \$5225, and Grand Marais State Bank-Temporary Abatement bond for \$60,000. Town of Tofte total outstanding debt on 12/31/16 is \$129,622.04. With no questions for the Clerk, Jim King motioned to dispense with the clerk reading the report. Augie Schauland seconded. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

Birch Grove Community Center Report: Supervisor Sarah Somnis gave this report as she is the liaison to Birch Grove Community School, WE CONNECT/Birch Grove Foundation and the Birch Grove Community Center building. She reported the Town Board suggested extra funds in the community center budget for the building because it needs a new roof. Joel Bonin is the part-time maintenance person currently. Sarah also reported on the Task Force whose goal is to set up an appropriations model to fund the non-profits in Tofte. She said last Monday meeting was positive and they are making progress.

Housing Project: Supervisor Craig Horak gave an update on the housing project in Tofte. Craig said he met with One Roof Housing who said the engineering of the project has to be redone. Paul James said that was because the original engineering plan was for senior housing. One Roof Housing told Craig Horak that would have an answer for the Town by June 1, 2017, if not sooner. Craig Horak explained the County would issue the abatement bond because it could get a lower interest rate; One Roof Housing and Tofte Township would be co-signers on the bond. Paul James asked Craig if One Roof Housing took the project would they start building this year or next. Craig Horak said he was not certain but thinks One Roof Housing would start building as soon as possible.

Fire Department Report: Fire Chief Rich Nelson reported 2016 was a quiet year. The Fire Department had 19 calls and 6 mutual aid calls. Rich has been working with Dennis Rysdahl on the false alarms at Bluefin. Rich Nelson said the MN State Fire Marshall gave them to approval to extend the response time from 45 seconds to 2 minutes for fire calls from Bluefin. Rich reported they will be holding their annual May Day training exercise in sometime in May 2017. The Fire Department is building an office in the fire hall for their records. Sam Crowley is doing the work.

Rescue Squad Report: Rescue captain Kim Jahnke reported the rescue squad responded to 42 calls; most of them medical. The Rescue Squad purchase a newer Ford Excursion rescue truck from Lutsen for \$20,000. The Rescue Squad received a grant of \$7500 from the North Shore Health Care Foundation for the updated rescue truck. Tofte sold their old rescue truck to the City of Grand Marais for \$2500. The Rescue Squad purchased a snow ambulance for \$6100. This was funded by AgStar Grant of \$3000, Lutsen Township donation of \$1000 and Schroeder Township donation of \$1000. It belongs to Tofte however it will be used by Search and Rescue and if needed by the other west end Townships. Kim Jahnke said they are looking at purchasing wheels to replace the skis so it can be used year-round. Kim Jahnke said the rescue squad members have been training with Dr. Stover. They now carry and can administer nitro, NARCAN and epi vials (instead of pens which hold only one dose, the vials hold more than one dose.) Kim Jahnke thanked the members of her squad and said she actively recruiting members; currently the rescue squad has nine (9) members.

Paul James thanked Fire Chief Rich Nelson and Rescue Captain Kim Jahnke for their hours of service and dedication.

Tofte Town Board Report: Supervisor Jeanne Larson gave a report of what happened in 2016 in Tofte Township; including updating the comprehensive plan, updating the cemetery policy, discussion on writing a grant for restoration Tofte Park rock work, discussion on putting in a sewer for the Fire/Town Hall, securing another 3-year contract for July 4th fireworks from the same company, and an active community center. The Township received a letter from the Minnesota State Auditor's office saying the Township has no authority to give donations the Birch Grove Community School or the Tofte Historical Society. Jeanne reported that the town board has discussed working with each other abiding by Roberts rules. Jeanne Larson thanked everyone for attending.

County Commissioner Report: County Commissioner Ginny Storlie reported the County was working to create listening sessions about the County budget. Ginny reported a Communications Committee has been set up to address how the County Board communicates with the other board members, constituents and in an emergency. The committee will also address social media. She reported the County now has a logo -branding symbol which is blue and green. Ginny announced there will be logging at Britton Peak. The County met with the DNR out of Two Harbors, MN. Logging from the lakeside back to the Sawbill Trail. Bid will be let this summer; logging will happen late summer. Ginny reported on the Gitchi Gami Bike Trail; DNR approved the bike trail downtown Lutsen, work on the bike trail at Caribou Falls, and in Tofte from the Coho to the North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum. There will be a seminar on where your property taxes go on April 4, 2017, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Mary Somnis talked about the Lutsen housing project. When Mary was asked the question when will the Lutsen housing be available to rent; she said hopefully the tenants will be having Thanksgiving dinner in the units. The criteria for renters that they have to be employed in Cook County. The rental application isn't ready but they are taking names. Mary Somnis left some handouts with information on the Lutsen project.

Election Results: Election Judge Diane Norman brought the election results to Clerk Barb Gervais. Clerk Barb Gervais gave them to Paul to announce:

3-year term supervisor – Craig Horak 66 votes – Sam Crowley 3 votes

1 year remaining term supervisor – Jeanne Larson 13 votes – Sam Crowley 55 write in votes

2-year term as treasurer – write in votes Nancy Iverson – 5 votes, Sarena Nelson – 2 votes, Susan Meyer – 1 vote, Sam Crowley – 2 votes, and Eric Frost – 1 vote.

2018 Levy:

At a budget workshop held on 3/1/2017, the proposed totals for the 2018 levy were as follows:

General Administration: \$77,400– no questions and/or comments. Jim King motioned to approve; Craig Horak seconded.

Fire Department: \$32,000 –no questions and/or comments. Craig Horak motioned to approve; Sarah Somnis seconded.

Rescue Department: \$10,000 – no questions and/or comments. Jim King motioned to approve; Craig Horak seconded.

Cemetery/Park/Rec: \$11,000-no questions and/or comments. Craig Horak motioned to approve; Rich Nelson seconded.

Contract for Services/Donations: \$39,500 – no questions and/or comments, Jim King motioned to approve, Sarah Somnis seconded.

Road & Bridge - \$6,500 – no questions and/or comments -Craig Horak motioned to approve, Jim King seconded.

Birch Grove Community Center - \$80,000 –no questions and or comments – Jeanne Larson motioned to approve, Kim Jahnke seconded.

Capital Spending: \$41, 972 – no questions and/or comments, Jeanne Larson motioned to approve, Jim King seconded.

2018 Expenditures \$298,372 less revenue of \$85,500 totals a \$212,872.00 levy

There was a discussion on whether the Township should ask other organizations for funding to snow plow the Gitchi Gami bike trail. Discussion on plowing and use of the trail. Moderator Paul James said he does the snow removal on the trail. There was a discussion on whether the joint agreement with the DNR specified snow removal has to be done using a snow blower. Craig Horak said he looked over the DNR contract; does not specify what should be use to remove the snow; just the width of the snow removal. Paul James said asking other organizations for funding would be decided by the Town Board.

Any other business:

Jim King motioned to set the 2018 Tofte Annual Meeting on March 13, 2018, at 8:01 p.m. to be held at the Birch Grove Community Center. Kim Jahnke seconded the motion.

Diane Blanchette motioned to adjourn the 2017 Tofte Township Annual Meeting at 9:05 p.m. Rich Nelson seconded.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Gervais, Tofte Town Clerk