

Tofte Town Board Meeting Minutes April 13, 2017

Present: Supervisors Sarah Somnis, Craig Horak and Sam Crowley, Treasurer Nancy Iverson, Clerk Barb Gervais, Rescue Captains Kim Jahnke and Phil Bonin, County Commissioner Ginny Storlie, Carroll Peterson, Dan Shirley, Rowan Watkins, and Sheriff Pat Eliassen.

Vice Chair Sarah Somnis called the board meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Unless otherwise stated, all actions have been approved by unanimous yeas vote.

Clerk Barb Gervais presented the Supervisors with a tentative agenda for tonight's meeting. Supervisor Craig Horak approved the agenda with the lawn mowing be moved up to B on the Old/New Business at the request of Joseph James. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Clerk's report: Clerk Barb Gervais had sent the Supervisors the minutes for the March 9 monthly meeting and the March 14 Board of Canvass meeting prior to tonight's meeting for their review. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to approve the March 9 as well as the March 14 minutes as presented. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Clerk Barb Gervais gave a report on the MAT spring course she attended. She said she always learns something new each time she attends the MAT spring courses, gave a report on the bills in the legislature which would have some impact on Tofte Township including the HF 1689/SF1274 (Ecklund/Bakk) adds local or town historical societies to the list of authorized recipients for township fund and HF 1247/ SF1382 (Lueck/Eichron) which modify PILT for DNR administrated and County administered payments from \$1.50 to \$2.00 acres. Clerk Barb Gervais reminded those in attendance of the upcoming meetings, Tofte LBAE on April 20, 2017, at 6 p.m. and the ALCCTO semi-annual meeting on May 3, 2017, hosted by Crystal Bay Township being held at the Claire Nelson Center in Finland, MN.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Nancy Iverson gave the attached report. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Claims, Payroll, and Transfers: Clerk Barb Gervais presented the board with claims totaling \$23,755.37 for approval for payment. Supervisor Sarah Somnis asked to review the claim forms and invoices from Holiday and LTTA. She reviewed the two claim forms and invoices. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to approve payment of claims as presented by the Clerk. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Clerk Barb Gervais presented the board with payroll this evening totaling \$2150.00. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to approve payment of the payroll as presented. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

The Clerk suggested the following transfers of funds to transact tonight's business: 1. Transfer \$13,380.59 from the lodging tax account to general checking, 2. Transfer \$557.52 from the lodging tax account to savings account #2, 3. Transfer \$1500.00 from the community center lease account to general checking. With no questions, Supervisor Craig Horak motions to approve the transfers as recommended by the Clerk. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconds.

Fire Department report: Chief Rich Nelson was not able to attend this meeting. Phil Bonin reported no calls last month and a couple of false alarms. FF 1 & 2 training being held at the Tofte Fire /Town Hall is almost done. The lake pump is working well. May Day training is next month. Darren Peck found a company that will bring a burn trailer.

Rescue Squad report: Rescue Captain Kim Jahnke reported the Rescue Squad had one (1) call in March. She said the Emergency Services Conference will be held in Grand Marais at the end of April. Kim drove the Excursion in the St. Urho's parade.

County Commissioner Report: County Commissioner Ginny Storlie she was going to give this spot in the agenda to Sheriff Pat Eliassen and Rowan Watkins.

Sheriff Pat Eliassen Request: Sheriff Pat Eliassen sent information out to the Clerk who is turn forwarded it to the supervisors. Cost of the survey is \$5400 which the County doesn't have in the budget. Sheriff Pat Eliassen turned over to Rowan Watkins who explained that the cost of a bi-directional amplifier would a lot less than building a tower. There is a balance between cost and effective service that the County is trying to maintain. The County may partner with Minnesota Highway Patrol and MN DOT. They did their presentation at Lutsen and Schroeder on Tuesday also will be presenting to Colvill. Town of Schroeder pledged to donate 10% (\$540); Lutsen is also looking at 10% which will be voted on the next week at the monthly meeting. Supervisor Craig Horak motions that Town of Tofte donate \$540 towards the survey matching Schroeder's donation. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Clerk asked to have an approval to add the donation of \$540 to tonight's claims. Supervisor Craig Horak approves \$24,295.37 claims total this includes the addition of the \$540 made payable to Cook County Auditor. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Citizen's comments: None

Old/New Business

Sawbill Canoe Outfitters liquor license: Dan and Clare Shirley asked the Town Board for support to renew their 3.2 liquor license. Supervisor Craig Horak motions to support the renewal of Sawbill Canoe Outfitters liquor license. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Clerk Barb Gervais will send a letter to the Cook County Auditor confirming the town board unanimously voted to support the renewal of the Sawbill Canoe Outfitters liquor license.

Housing: No update.

Lawn Mowing: Joseph James send a letter to the Tofte Town Board asking if they would hire him again as a temporary employee for lawn mowing the community center, park and cemetery. He also he was interested in doing work in the park, i.e. painting the fence and picnic tables. Supervisor Sam Crowley motioned to hire Joseph James as a temporary employee for the summer/fall of 2017 to mow the lawns at the community center, park and cemetery at a rate of \$20/hr with reimbursement of \$15/hr for using his own equipment. Supervisor Craig Horak seconded. The town board will look at the park budget to see if there are funds available to do the work in the park.

Birch Grove Community Center: Supervisor Sarah Somnis presented the final agreement which was prepared by the Birch Grove Task Force Conciliation Committee. Supervisor Sarah Somnis said they are presenting to the Tofte, Lutsen and Schroeder Town Boards as well as the BGCS board and the WECONNECT board as they have to accept the agreement; the task force doesn't have a vote. The voting is on the entire agreement; not picking out sections. Supervisor Craig Horak asked if the town board accepted the agreement who would be the building manager. Supervisor Sarah Somnis said the Birch Grove Community Education will act as the building manager; WECONNECT will take a major role in programming and grant writing. Clerk Barb Gervais asked Supervisor Sarah Somnis if she checked with the township attorneys to see if the agreement was legal. Sarah said she sent an email to the MAT attorneys but they haven't gotten back to her yet. She went to the MAT attorneys because the use of them is included in the MAT annual fee; she said she would only go the town attorney at Fryberger which would include a cost if the MAT attorney recommends it. WE CONNECT will again be holding pizza night using the outdoor pizza oven on Wednesday evenings through this summer like last year.

Commissioner Ginny Storlie: Talked about what a great job Bill Hansen did as the facilitator of the Birch Grove Task Force meetings. Commissioner Storlie said Rowan Watkins and Rena Rodgers, will give the commissioners a quarterly update going forward. The meeting on where your property taxes go was attended by about 50 people. Three commissioners and the county administrator went to Nisswa for a county meeting. Poplar River watershed committee meets every other month.

TSSSD: TSSSD sent a Resolution to Tofte Town Board to vote on the election of officers Bruce Martinson, Charlie Muggley, Dave Rude, Jerry Gervais, and Jim King (see attached). Supervisor Craig Horak motions to adopt Resolution #1-2017 Resolution Electing Member(s) to the Board of Managers of the Tofte-Schroeder Sanitary Sewer District pursuant to Minnesota Statute 442A.14, Subdivision 7. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Supervisor Craig Horak motions to accept the funding from the TSSSD to build the sewer for the Tofte Fire and Town Hall in the amount \$22,730.00 with a provision for 10% over run as quoted by Scott Robinson. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to hire Scott Robinson, Terra Firma, as the contractor for the construction of the sewer. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. The Tofte Schroeder Sanitary Sewer District Board asked Tofte Town Board to vote on Town of Schroeder's detachment from the organization. Supervisor Craig Horak doesn't support letting Schroeder detached; they should dissolved the entire organization. Tofte Town Board tabled the vote until more information is known. The Clerk was asked to put on the May agenda.

Support letter for Tofte General Store for a USDA grant: Supervisor Sarah Somnis asked the board to consider writing a letter of support for the Tofte General Store which is applying for a grant to replace the coolers. This will make fresh food at a grocery store in town for the residents. Dan Shirley suggested the tax assessment energy efficiency loan. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned for the Clerk to write a letter of support stating the Tofte Town Board is supporting the Tofte General Store in the USDA grant application process. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Propane Bids The current propane contract with Superior Fuel ends on 4/30/17. Clerk Barb Gervais brought three (3) bids to present the Town Board; one for Superior Fuel, Como Oil and North Shore Oil & Propane. The bids were as follows: Superior Fuel for two years 5/1/17-4/30/19 quoted per gallon \$1.319 up to 6500 gallons of propane, North Shore Oil & Propane and Como Oil were both quoted: Year One - 5/1/17-4/30/18 at \$1.399 per gallon; Year 2 – 5/1/18-4/30/19 at \$1.499 per gallon. Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to accept the Superior Fuel quote for two (2) years from 5/1/17 – 4/30/19 @ \$1.319 per gallon. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

SBA proposal: Tabled this discussion until the May meeting.

Annual Re-Organizational Meeting:

Appoint Fire Chief: Supervisor Craig Horak motion to appoint Rich Nelson as Fire Chief of the Tofte Fire Department. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Appoint Rescue Chief: Supervisor Craig Horak motion to appoint as Kim Jahnke and Phil Bonin as co-chiefs for the Tofte First Responders. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Designate Official Newspaper: Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to designate the Cook County News Herald as the official newspaper for Tofte Township. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Designate Official Bank Depositor: Supervisor Craig Horak motioned to designate Grand Marais State Bank for Tofte Township. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Clerk Barb Gervais mentioned that our deposits are over \$250,000 so next year the town should look at designating two banks.

Appoint Chair and Vice Chair: Supervisor Craig Horak motions Supervisor Sarah Somnis as the chairman of the board. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded. Supervisor Sarah Somnis abstained from the vote. Supervisor Sam Crowley motions Supervisor Craig Horak as the vice chair of the board. Supervisor Sarah Somnis seconded. Supervisor Craig Horak abstained from the vote.

Appoint board liaisons: There was a discussion on Supervisor Horak and Supervisor Sam Crowley being on the Fire Department and the Tofte Fire Relief Board and Sarena Nelson (Sam's fiancé) being on the Birch Grove Community School board. Supervisor Craig Horak motions to appoint Supervisor Sarah Somnis as the liaison to the Fire/Rescue Departments, Supervisor Sam Crowley as the liaison to the Park/Cemetery and himself Supervisor Craig Horak as the liaison to the Birch Grove Community School, WECONNECT and the Birch Grove Community Center building. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Resolution for policy compensation of officers: Supervisor Craig Horak motions to make no changes in the Resolution. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

July 4th celebration: Clerk Barb Gervais asked for permission to the sign the Cook County road closure permit for the July 4th. Supervisor Craig Horak motions to authorize Clerk Barb Gervais to sign the Cook County Road Closure Permit for July 4th parade and fireworks. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconds. Clerk Barb Gervais sent an email to Paul James asking him to reserve a cabin at Lamb's Resort for the fireworks crew as was done in the past few years. He offered two smaller cabins at a 25% discount for \$569. There was a discussion on the Clerk checking with Dennis Rysdahl to see if he could offer accommodations for the fireworks crew (4 adults). Supervisor Craig Horak gave Clerk Barb Gervais permission to book whatever is the cheapest. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Tofte Park: Clerk Barb Gervais was told the rock restoration project is not eligible for a STAR grant by Cynthia Poyhonen from the DNR. Cindy suggested the town work with Barb Caskey at ARDC. Barb Caskey suggested the IRRRB Culture & Tourism grants; she said if the IRRRB accepted the pre-application she would help the Clerk. Supervisor Craig Horak motion to authorize Clerk Barb Gervais to pre-apply for the IRRRB Culture & Tourism grant. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

Mail received: Thank you from Zoar Church for not charging for use of the community center for the fundraiser for Angie Cook, letter from North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum documenting their name has changed in efforts to enable the township to donate after the township was told by the MN OSA it doesn't have authorization to give the local historical society. Supervisor Craig Horak said he wanted to wait and see if the bill in the legislature passes adding the local or town historical societies to the list of authorized donations. Clerk Barb Gervais said she would complete the US Census surveys that the town has received.

Any other business: Clerk noted the board should declare a vacancy in the Town Treasurer and make a motion to appoint Nancy Iverson until the next election. Supervisor Craig Horak declared a vacancy in the Tofte Town Treasurer position and appoints Nancy Iverson until the March 2018 election. Supervisor Sam Crowley seconded.

With no other business, Supervisor Sarah Somnis motions to adjourn this meeting at 9:11 p.m. Supervisor Craig Horak seconded.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Gervais, Tofte Town Clerk