

Tofte Town Board Meeting Minutes September 8, 2016

Present: Supervisors Paul James, Jeanne Larson and Sarah Somnis, Treasurer Nancy Iverson, Clerk Barb Gervais, Fire Chief Rich Nelson, Rescue squad co-captain Phil Bonin, County Commissioner Ginny Storlie, Jerry Gervais, Gary Hansen, and Brian Larsen from the Cook County News Herald.

Chair Paul James called the board meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

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

Clerk Barb Gervais presented the Supervisors with a tentative agenda for tonight's meeting. Supervisor Jeanne Larson asked to change the "no special session" under Housing to "there maybe a special session" with this change motions to approve agenda. Supervisor Sarah Somnis seconded.

Clerk's report: Clerk Barb Gervais had sent the Supervisors the minutes for the August 11 monthly meeting and August 22 special meeting prior to tonight's meeting for their review. Supervisor Jeanne Larson said she thought at the August 22 special meeting Coralyn Koschinka mentioned that Stan Tull would be going off the Foundation Board in January as well as her and Don Fehr with this change, Jeanne motioned to approve the meeting minutes of August 11 and August 22. The clerk will confirm with Coralyn and then amended the minutes. Supervisor Sarah Somnis seconded. Clerk Barb Gervais will certify the Town of Tofte 2017 Levy at \$236,497 to the Cook County Auditor by the September 15 deadline. Barb reminded those on the board of the ALCCTO meeting on Wednesday, October 5, 2016, to be held in Beaver Bay, MN. Clerk Barb Gervais reminded those in attendance of the upcoming special meeting to continue the discussion with WE CONNECT on Tuesday, September 20, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. at the Tofte Town Hall.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Nancy Iverson gave the attached report. With no questions, Supervisor Jeanne Larson motioned to approve the report. Supervisor Sarah Somnis seconded.

Claims, Payroll, and Transfers: Clerk Barb Gervais presented the board with claims totaling \$13,527.74 for approval for payment. The lodging tax revenue check has not been received from the County as yet; expected to arrive next week. Clerk added to the claims list a written entry to pay out 96% of the check amount when received to the LTTA. MATIT sent information on the Township's renewal of the consolidated liability coverage (CLC) which includes general liability, errors and omissions, property, auto insurance, commercial crime, inland marine, optional firefighters (Fire Department owned by the town) and workers compensation coverage. There was a notation that the insurance bond covering the Clerk/Treasurer has more than one level now. The \$100,000 bonding level is included in the commercial insurance package at no cost. There are new levels of \$200,000 to \$500,000. The board discussed the bonding for the clerk and treasurer and consensus was to leave at the \$100,000 level. Chair Paul James asked to

review the claim forms and invoices for the payment for True North Broadband and Alert-All. He reviewed the two claim forms and invoices. After reading all of the proposed payments, Supervisor Sarah Somnis motioned to approve payment of claims as presented by the Clerk. Supervisor Jeanne Larson seconded. Clerk Barb Gervais presented the board with payroll this evening totaling \$2200.00. After review of the payroll, Supervisor Jeanne Larson motioned to approve payment of the payroll as presented. Supervisor Sarah Somnis seconded.

The Clerk suggested the following transfers of funds to transact tonight's business: 1. Transfer 96% of the lodging tax revenue when received from the County next week from the lodging tax account to general checking, 2. Transfer 4% of the lodging tax revenue when received from the County next week from the lodging tax account to savings account #2, 3. Clerk suggested a transfer of the second half of taconite production tax in the amount of \$7376.00 from the general checking to savings account #2. 4. Transfer \$9100.00 from the community center lease account to general checking. With no questions, Supervisor Sarah Somnis motions to approve the transfers as recommended by the Clerk. Supervisor Jeanne Larson seconds.

Fire Department report: Chief Rich Nelson said the Tofte Fire Relief Association meeting will not be held on Monday, September 12, as MPL has invited the area fire departments to a meeting that evening to go over what the plan is for shutting down the plant. The Fire Relief Association Meeting will be held on Monday, September 26, 2016, at 7 p.m. Rich said the lake pump was pulled and sent to Duluth for repair. It was packed with rocks, etc. It is going to rebuilt by a company in Duluth; approximate cost will be about \$1000. False fire alarms are still a problem at Bluefin properties; talked to Dennis Rysdahl several times. Dennis is trying to figure it out. Rich said Dennis has been very good to Fire Department so they aren't considering charging for the false alarms.

Rescue Squad report: Co-captain Phil Bonin reports rescue had three calls last month. A couple of rescue members attended training on administering NARCAN which is used for heroin overdoses. Lutsen is still waiting for their new rescue vehicle. Grand Marais is still interested in the current Tofte rescue vehicle. Tofte Rescue Squad received a \$200 donation from Jim & Carol Tveekrem. The clerk will prepare a resolution to accept this donation for the October meeting. Chair Paul James suggested the rescue squad spend the money on something other than general operating supplies.

County Commissioner Report: County Commissioner Ginny Storlie reported Cook County has hired a PHHS director. She said there are a lot of personnel changes at the County level. The assessor position has been closed; Ginny is assuming the County has hired a person for that position. Dave Demmer has resigned from Planning & Zoning and Jim Wiianen is going to retire this fall. As far as Ginny knows there is a woman from Thunder Bay being reviewed for the Jim's position. Planning and Zoning changed its name to Land Services. Tim Nelson's title changed from Planning & Zoning Director to Land Services Director. They are also hiring a land commissioner which is a new position. A big part of the County board's time has been working on the levy. Gary

Gamble and Jan Sivertson are the two commissioners working on the budget; bringing their recommendations to the County Board. As far as the ½% transportation sales tax, basically the people who attended the meeting were for it. County has been notified by MNDOT they have to remove their salt/sand pile from MNDOT property. The County Board has to decide by the end of September on the 2017 levy. Rich Nelson said if the ½ % transportation sales tax goes through, he heard that would make Cook County that highest taxed County in Minnesota. Ginny said she heard that; but said the transportation sales tax would not have to be forever. Rich Nelson is concerned as a Cook County citizen about higher taxes. There was a discussion on not being able to get your driver's license renewed in Cook County now that Radio Shack has shut down.

Citizen Comments: None

Old/New Business:

Housing: Announced on the news this afternoon; there maybe a special session of the Minnesota Legislature yet this year. Rich Nelson asked what the plan was if Tofte didn't get housing authority. Supervisor Jeanne Larson is working with the EDA; not certain it will work. Cook County EDA is hosting a housing seminar on September 19. Supervisors Sarah Somnis and Jeanne Larson will attend this meeting.

District 10 Meeting Report: Supervisor Sarah Somnis attended this meeting representing Tofte. Tina McKeever, Schroeder chair, Rae Piepho, Lutsen Supervisor, and Sarah attended. Sarah said the discussion included free money for local fire departments; details on the MBFTE.org website. Fire Chief Rich Nelson said the Tofte Fire Department is already using the funding from this organization. Representative Mary Murphy was a speaker and said that the legislature got nothing done this year; she thinks the people would be better serve if they comprised. A resolution was unanimously passed at the meeting for Townships to be able to fund charter schools further than 25 miles from another school. Tina McKeever will attend the State L & R meeting to bring up the resolution there. Commissioner Ginny Storlie said as soon as she gets the signed Resolution she will have a meeting with Representative Rob Ecklund. Sarah said township employees are eligible for student loan forgiveness. They were reminded at the meeting that a historical society has to be registered with State Historical Society in order to for Townships to donate.

Birch Grove Community Center:

Billboard lease –Clerk Barb Gervais reported several inquiries but no commitments yet. Maintenance report: Barb said Steve Michaud is doing an outstanding job; got a lot accomplished in just two weeks. The maintenance list is mostly taken care of now. Barb is going to meet with Johnson Controls tomorrow at the community center. Carlson Refrigeration is coming to look at the walk in cooler and Barb is in contact with Horizon Equipment for repairing/cleaning the Vulcan oven. Barb will inquire what there basic service call cost is before having them come from the Twin Cities.

Donations and Appropriations: Supervisor Jeanne Larson is working with the attorney at MAT to define senior center, youth center, and artistic organization. Fryberger attorney Chris Virta asked Jeanne if the Town has heard from the State Auditor's office on the town's reply regarding past donations. The town has not.

IRRRB Grant Software Training – IRRRB may be offering training on their new grant software in Cook County, MN. Clerk Barb Gervais is in contact with Chris Ismil and Jeri Venne from the IRRRB regarding setting up the training in Cook County.

Stripping and Waxing the floors – This item was tabled at the August meeting and Clerk was asked put it on the September agenda. Steve Duclos from Lutsen Land and Cabin sent the Town a quote of \$1500 for stripping and waxing the town hall floor. The consensus of the Town Board Supervisors was to wait for this project until this winter. At that time, we will post once again for quotes. Clerk Barb Gervais will contact Steve Duclos letting him know that the project has been put off until winter and then the township will once again request quotes for the work.

Separate emails for each board member: Supervisor Sarah Somnis suggested this be removed from the agenda. Other board members agreed.

Fire/Town Hall Septic System: Tofte Schroeder Sanitary Sewer District (TSSSD) board member Jerry Gervais was in attendance at this meeting. Scott Robinson submitted a quote on the cost of installing the Fire/Town Hall septic system which was \$17,730 without the wall options. The TSSSD funded the design of the fire/town hall septic system. Jerry thinks that the TSSSD can fund the actual project. The TSSSD board has to check to see if they can fund it and then vote on it. Their next meeting is Tuesday, September 27.

Request to Designate 9/21 as International Peace Day: The Township received a letter from Kathy Sullivan requesting the board officially support by declaring Wednesday, September 21, 2016, as A Day of Peace to begin in a small way to heighten awareness of people where we live to call for peace. Supervisor Jeanne Larson made a motion to declare Wednesday, September 21, 2016, as A Day of Peace. Supervisor Sarah Somnis seconded.

Park – Chair Paul James said the picnic tables, pavilion and fence in the park needs painting. Paul asked his son Joe if he would be interested in doing the work. Rich Nelson suggested waiting until next spring. It was agreed that the rock work in the park needs to be done. Paul suggested the clerk contact Jim King regarding the loans from the Coastal Council. Chair Paul James will check for quotes on the rock work.

Cemetery: Park/cemetery committee member Barb Gervais said the committee is scheduled to meet in October.

2016-2017 Winter Season Snow Removal Quotes: Clerk Barb Gervais will post/publish the snow removal quotes for the Fire/Town/Park/Cemetery, Birch Grove Community Center, and the Gitchi Gami bike trail the requirements same as last year. Barb will contact the DNR to see if we need do anything before posting/publishing request for quotes for snow removal on the bike trail. The board asked the clerk to post a notice as well for snow removal on the sidewalks and the ice rink at the Birch Grove Community Center asking for an hourly rate and needing to be monitored daily. In discussing the snow removal on the ice rink, it was suggested painting a white circle in the middle of the rink to slow the melting from sun rays on the dark cement. The board asked the clerk to contact to Steve Michaud to see if he would do that before he goes to Florida. Rich Nelson volunteered to set the ice rink lights timing this season. Clerk Barb Gervais will get Rich a key to the storage part of the warming house.

Mail received: The Town received a letter from the Sugarbush Trail Association thanking for the donation from the Town of \$1500 to help with maintaining their trails.

Any other business: Jerry Gervais asked about radar speed signs. Chair Paul James said Jeremy Ridelbauer has ordered new batteries for both of the signs.

With no other business, Supervisor Sarah Somnis motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m. Supervisor Jeanne Larson seconded.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Gervais, Tofte Town Clerk