

Canosia Township

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Town Board: Chair Kurt Brooks, Supervisor Scott Campbell, Supervisor Kevin Comnick
Clerk Susan Krasaway, Treasurer Angela Christianson

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES **May 6, 2015**

ATTENDING: Chair Kurt Brooks, Supervisor Scott Campbell, Supervisor Kevin Comnick, Clerk Susan Krasaway, Treasurer Angela Christianson, Road Foreman Gary Oswell, Fire Chief Gene Stevens, Asst. Chief Clyde Mortinsen, Rec Director Mike Ellingson, P&Z Director Tim Walburg and nine residents.

Chair Brooks called the meeting to order at 7 p.m., and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES AND TREASURER'S REPORT

- A. AGENDA: Motion by Brooks, seconded by Comnick, to move the "Group Home Issue" to public input. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried unanimously, 3-0.
- B. MINUTES: Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to approve the minutes from the Reorganization Meeting (4/1/15), Regular Meeting (4/1/15), Board of Appeal & Equalization (4/9/15), Road Inspection Tour (4/25/15) and P&Z Secretary Interviews (4/25/15) with the following changes suggested by Brooks: In the Regular Meeting Minutes, on page 3, add "Rocci will be giving copies of her previous AIS project records in e-files to Susan." On Page 9, add more detail to the ACTS motion and the ARHWC motion (See April minutes for approved details). In the P&Z Secretary Interview minutes, add after Discussion "Christi Capra was selected as the candidate that best matched the skills and characteristics desired for the Planning & Zoning Secretary position. Also..." Brooks explained that motions should include enough discussion detail to show why decisions were made. Motion to approve amended minutes carried unanimously, 3 – 0.
- C. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Christianson explained the various reports included in the board's folders. Chair Brooks said he would also like the current month's disbursement register and receipts register included in his packet of information at the meeting. He would like any voided check listed and numbered on the Treasurer's Report as well. The treasurer agreed to do this in the future. She will also be completing the budget for next month's meeting.

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to approve treasurer's report (1/1/2015 – 4/31/2015). Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

The chair also asked about the clerk's financial records. Krasaway said she and the treasurer reconcile monthly and the current year's records are kept in a binder above her desk.

PUBLIC INPUT

Group Home Issue: Chair Brooks explained that the township had received five letters from residents on Wilderness Trail expressing their concerns about two Stepping Stones group homes in their area. Their complaints included disturbances/screaming by group home clients, people sitting in the roadway, individuals being restrained in the ditches, garbage strewn about, and speeding by the staff members. Brooks also explained that it was not the residents' intent to get the group homes taken out of the area; they are only looking for better procedures/staff training/work practices put in place to make the group homes into better neighbors.

The residents in attendance also said they have been unable to get an adequate response from the staff at the home, the Stepping Stones company, or from the sheriff's office when they call to report incidents.

P&Z Director Tim Walburg said our zoning ordinance states that group homes are supposed to get a conditional use permit to operate within the township. However, it was not known whether the homes are in fact exempt from this type of township regulation. Supervisor Campbell cited a statute (MN256I.04) regarding group home licensing/regulation rules. Although the township's governance is limited in this situation, the board members agreed it is still their responsibility to act since there are safety issues at play.

Motion by Cornick, seconded by Brooks, to send a formal letter to Stepping Stones outlining the situation and asking for a response. Discussion: Supervisor Campbell provided the name of the contact person (Kathy Esson) from St. Louis County Health & Human Services who is in charge of licensing/monitoring group homes; she will be copied on the letter as well. He also suggested the letter be framed as a request to initiate conversation. The residents were also encouraged to call the undersheriff or sheriff directly if they felt the department's emergency response was inadequate. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. PIKE LAKE LANDING

1. DNR Improvements Schedule

Supervisor Campbell has set up a meeting with the DNR and Hawkinson Construction, (the company the county selected to re-do Martin Road this summer) to see if it makes sense for that company to also perform the asphalt work at the landing. Chair Brooks asked if the township or the DNR would end up with the contract for the work. Campbell said it would be a DNR contract since it is technically their project, design and expense; he will confirm this with Joe Russell. No schedule has been set yet for the landing work.

2. Toilet Rentals: Prices in folders

Motion by Brooks, seconded by Comnick, to have Brent's Septic provide the ADA accessible portable toilet at the landing this summer. Discussion: Brent's Septic was \$10 cheaper per month (\$100 vs. \$110) than Brent's Biffies, the company which provided the unit last year. Brent's Biffies was willing to do \$100/month if they could also provide the toilet at the rec area. However the rec area unit is arranged through the little league, not the township; we only pay a portion of the total bill at the end of the summer. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. The unit will be delivered as soon as possible.

B. PIKE LAKE INSPECTIONS

1. Employee Update

Supervisor Campbell said there will be six inspectors working the landing this summer; all have been trained/certified by the DNR. The landing manager will be Jake Carlson; two of the others are UMD students majoring in environmental-related topics.

2. Grant Contract: Approve and Sign

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to approve the DNR grant contract. Discussion: Brooks asked about the "publicity clause" on page 5, which states that the township must get written approval from the DNR before publicizing this agreement. The board members agreed this was in regards to the specifics of the grant, not the specifics of the inspection program. Motion carried unanimously, 3- 0.

3. County Money Update?

The clerk asked whether there would be money available from the state (filtered down to the county) for which we could apply. Supervisor Campbell said the county money would not be affiliated with AIS inspections.

C. FIRE DEPARTMENT:

APRIL FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSES		
TYPE OF CALL	#	NOTES
EMS	9	
Medical MUA	0	
Township Fire	1	Grass fire on Hwy. 53
MUA Fire	6	Rice Lake, Hermantown, Grand Lake
Service	1	
TOTAL	17	
TOTAL FOR 2015		63

Training: The department cleaned and inspected all gear hoses and equipment on all trucks. They were also trained on the portable radios and were measured for Class B uniforms.

Motion by Campbell, seconded by Brooks, to approve the purchase of Class B uniforms for the fire department members. Discussion: Asst. Chief Clyde Mortinsen said the price came in under \$6,000. The board members asked that the entire department pose for a roster pic after the uniforms arrive. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

1. Fire Hall Security

Asst. Chief Mortinsen said ESC Systems was in earlier this week to get measurements, etc. for a quote to upgrade to a key-card lock system at the fire hall. Supervisor Comnick said they should also contact Minnesota Locksmith in order to get more than one estimate.

Comnick also asked about the type of security problems at the fire hall that would merit the installation of a key-card system. He pointed out he wanted to increase the security at the rec area, but was told there were not enough problems to warrant doing so. Mortinsen said the current locks do not work during extreme cold; plus, the system could be used to track the call responses of the various department members. Mortinsen said he will contact MN Locksmith and return with two quotes next month.

2. Draft Truck Purchase Schedule

Chair Brooks had put together a draft version of a truck purchasing schedule; he explained the purpose is for everyone to understand as a group what steps will need to be taken to get from start to finish. The first step will be board approval to begin the purchasing process.

The Assistant Chief provided the board with a draft copy of the bid specs for the mini-pumper along with a sheet explaining why they need this new vehicle/why they need to replace the old one. Brooks called this a great starting point. Each of the supervisors will review these documents and the draft schedule and talk about their questions/suggestions next month. Campbell will also review the draft purchase schedule with the chief.

3. Vehicle Inventory List

Supervisor Comnick asked that the department provide an inventory list of their vehicles and the purpose of each one. The chief recently put together a total inventory list for the insurance policy; the clerk will turn this information into a spreadsheet for the board to review.

4. Fire Relief Meeting Schedule

Comnick also asked about the Fire Relief Association's meeting schedule (they're supposed to meet four times per year) and said he would like the meetings to be posted on our website since he has had some interest from residents. Campbell will follow up with Fire Relief Treasurer Scott Mercier.

D. FUEL POLICY

The clerk provided the board members and assistant fire chief with copies of a draft fuel policy that was first discussed last month. Mortinsen explained that each truck has a Holiday credit card which can be used by whichever firefighter is using the vehicle. The receipts are then initialed, kept in the fire hall and then given to the treasurer each month.

Treasurer Christianson explained that the bills are all itemized by truck number (so it is possible to calculate how much is used per vehicle, per month); she reconciles the receipt dates/amounts against the Holiday bill each month. She said there are occasional purchases other than fuel (oil, steering fluid, etc) and those are always noted on the receipt by the purchaser.

Mortinsen said it would not be useful to note the odometer readings since the vehicles are often left idling on calls or as they pump water. The clerk was asked to update the draft policy with the information from Mortinsen. The board did not discuss the purchase policy for those doing the lawnmowing. The discussion will continue next month.

E. ERRORS & OMISSIONS INSURANCE FOLLOW-UP

Chair Brooks said he contacted MAT and confirmed all our township entities are adequately covered. He asked that it be properly coded when the bill is paid next time and in future budgets.

F. TOWN HALL FLOORS

Supervisor Comnick said T&C Hardwoods will be working on the floors on Friday, May 15, and no one will be allowed in the meeting room until the following Monday.

G. REC AREA

1. Rec Director Report

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, approving the purchase of six yards of ag-lime for the back ball field as recommended by Rec Director Ellingson. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

Ellingson said the concession stand door does not close. Chair Brooks's theory is that the slab is uneven due to frost and the two separate compartments of the structure (concession stand and dugout). They do not believe repair is possible. The discussion for future plans is ongoing.

Ellingson introduced Scott Nelson, a resident who is involved in youth soccer and little league. Nelson said there has been some confusion this year about the scheduling for baseball at our fields. After some discussion, the board decided it was Ellingson's responsibility to make sure the township is informed of the scheduling and that we retain control of it (instead of an outside source) since it is the our facility. Ellingson and Comnick will work together on this.

2. Playground Equipment Repair

Supervisor Comnick distributed a report regarding the rec area (attached to official minutes): he, Ellingson, and Gary Oswell recommend dismantling the portion of the playground that is now slanted (due to frost) and reset it with new footings. He stated it's the township's lawful obligation to make sure it is safe. The board members were in agreement that repairs must be done. Comnick will begin researching contractors who do this type of work and ask for prices.

Comnick's report also stated he met with Gary Frye of Asphalt of Duluth regarding the tennis and basketball courts: Frye does not believe the large, heaving cracks are repairable. Comnick will begin researching prices for replacing the courts. He will then approach the school district again about sharing costs. Brooks wondered if the township should apply for grant money, depending on the timeline of the project. Campbell said he would also ask Hawkinson Construction about possible cost-saving options while they work on Martin Rd.

Resident Dan Jezierski asked whether the school district would become a part owner of the rec area if they helped cover the costs. The board members all agreed the township would retain sole ownership. Comnick said they would also continue the discussion about charging user fees to the leagues using the fields/courts.

3. Tennis Lesson Request

The township has received a request from Jessica Rich who would like to teach private tennis lessons this summer at the rec area. Supervisor Campbell said he was concerned about liability issues and about a for-profit business operating on township property. Comnick pointed out that the soccer and baseball associations are for-profit as well. There was also some discussion about having participants sign Hold Harmless agreements. The supervisors will ask about this at the next DAT meeting; the clerk will contact MAT.

4. Seasonal Lawn Care

Supervisor Campbell gave the clerk MAT Document E4000 about hiring seasonal employees. MAT recommends establishing a firm start/end date and advertising all seasonal positions. This is done to prevent discriminating against any who wanted to apply, even if the township ends up hiring the same employees each year.

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Brooks, to re-hire Laird Erikson as the main lawn-cutting employee and Rick Carlson as his back-up for this season; next year the board will post openings for all seasonal employees and begin this discussion two months earlier.

Discussion: Campbell recommended formally posting the job, however several others pointed out that the grass needs to be cut soon and it cannot wait one month. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

H. ROADS

1. Road Tour Recap: Reports from Comnick and Oswell

(roads contd).

The board members all had copies of the road report from Supervisor Comnick and Road Foreman Gary Oswell. (Report attached to official minutes). The report includes:

- Quote for the road repairs at five PLAWCS connection areas (Asphalt of Duluth: \$2,450)
- A preliminary estimate for the blacktopping of Nelsondale and Lorendale Roads (Asphalt of Duluth: \$58,322.40)
- A preliminary estimate for the blacktopping of the town hall parking lot (Asphalt of Duluth: \$26,311.00)

Motion by Brooks, seconded by Comnick, to send out RFP's for the gravel work recommended for Alder and Townline Roads. Discussion: The RFP's will be sent out to only those companies on our contractor list who have submitted both their insurance paperwork and signed hold harmless agreements. Comnick will prepare the RFP and the clerk will send out on Monday, May 11. The board will pick a contractor at the next meeting. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

The county will be using Fahrner's for crack-sealing this year. Comnick will contact them regarding prices and then re-assess to see if any township roads need filling this year. He will report back in June. He will also ask Gary Frye about whether engineering or surveying would be needed for the blacktopping of Nelsondale and Lorendale.

2. Mowing Plans: Hear from Jake's Mowing

Jake Demerge of Jake's Mowing said he is renting a mower this year and would charge \$110/hour to mow our right-of-ways. He will discuss the township's needs with Gary Oswell and get a more specific quote for the board next month. His grading price is \$85/hour this year; Calcium chloride is \$1/gallon.

3. Utility Permit Question

A company called MP NexLevel, LLC. has contacted the township asking whether they will need a permit to for a utility installation this summer on Dubla Dr. The clerk will contact the company to ask for a sketch and more information.

The township recently passed a policy stating that a \$250 fee is needed for utility installation, but there was much discussion about how and when to actually utilize this. Oswell asked that the clerk act as the starting point and request all information regarding a potential project; then she would pass that information along to Oswell who would decide if a permit is warranted. The clerk would then deal with the company and collect the money and paperwork.

Chair Brooks asked whether the bigger companies contact us for every installation (no, they do not), and whether it was fair to only charge this smaller company who had actually reached out to us. The board all agreed more discussion is needed about the need for this policy and how to use it fairly.

I. POSTING SIGN REPAIR

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to accept the quotes from SignDecisions, LLC for replacing the cabinets/signs at the township's official posting spots:

- Aluminum wall cabinet at town hall: \$1,950
- Aluminum cabinet at posting site at Lavaque & Martin: \$1,230
- Extension brackets for posting site at Lavaque & Martin: \$560
- Aluminum sign (meeting schedules) at Lavaque & Martin: \$190

Discussion: The board members agreed they would like to spend the money to get this done right with quality materials that will last. They decided they did not need another quote before proceeding. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

J. PLANNING & ZONING

P&Z Director Tim Walburg has issued five permits this year (one in March, four in April). He is expecting one variance request shortly. He also checked on an addition on Tomak Rd. that did not have a permit; the homeowner will be charged double for the late permit.

The county is scheduled to approve their new zoning ordinance shortly, at which point the township commission can move forward with ours.

The board reported they have hired Christi Capra as the new P&Z secretary.

K. AIRPORT ZONING

Supervisor Comnick said there has been a major change for the Joint Airport Zoning Board: they have tabled all work on the zoning ordinance because the 148th Fighter Wing has been activated for 2016. The 1988 ordinance will remain in place for the time being.

L. HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Nothing to report

M. TECH COMMITTEE

1. Review Draft of Spring Newsletter

Supervisor Comnick said he would not be in support of the article submitted by the fire chief (the article questioned why two supervisors were reportedly “against” the purchase of a new fire vehicle and asked why the supervisors only said this after the chief had left the meeting last month). Chair Brooks explained that the discussion Chief Stevens was referring to took place during a broader conversation about the township's “goals and priorities”: They never said they were against the purchase; they only decided they needed more information about why it was needed and how to proceed so everyone was on the same page. Brooks said that if problems arise in the future, the chief should call him directly so they could talk and work as a team. The clerk will re-work the chief's article and send it to him for approval.

The clerk asked whether the board wanted to keep the article about hiring someone to work the concession stand this summer. There were several unanswered questions about the condition of the stand, the hiring process, inventory for concessions, etc. but they decided to leave the article in to see if anyone is interested in doing it. The clerk will email the final draft newsletter to Chair Brooks to proofread before sending it out.

N. CEMETERY

1. Burial Process Recommendation

The board members all had copies of Chair Brooks' recommendations for the cemetery operation and burial process (report attached to official minutes).

Motion by Cornick, seconded by Campbell, to follow Brooks' recommendation of retaining Gary Oswell as the Cemetery Administrator (Oswell can no longer perform the burials as he had done in the past). Discussion: The administrator's job duties would include representing the township when meeting with families, keeping accurate cemetery records, coordinating burials/grave digging, staking the cemetery each fall for winter burials, providing periodic inspections for vandalism and maintenance needs. These duties will be added on to his Road Foreman tasks and he will be compensated at the same hourly rate for both. Motion carried unanimously, 3- 0.

Brooks' also recommended putting together an official "Approved Burial Services List" of qualified grave diggers; funeral homes/families can choose which of these contractors they would like use or the cemetery administrator can choose for them. The grave diggers would be paid by the family, not the township. Only contractors on this list can dig at the cemetery.

Motion by Cornick, seconded by Brooks, to form an "Approved Burial Services List" comprised of the following four contractors: Larry Shelton, Jay Peterson, Dan Golen and Bob Rodda. Discussion: These contractors have varying levels of experience. There was some talk about the difference between being "technically capable" of grave digging versus the other qualifications needed (i.e. comforting to the family, tactfulness in a tough situation, etc). Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

2. Other

Brooks said he would like to work with Oswell to take the original, large cemetery plat map and create 8 ½ x 11 sheets to use. The other board members agreed to the idea.

O. RECYCLE SHED

Brooks said the WLSSD grant has been submitted. He said recycling at our shed went down 5% last year; others thought it may be due to more garbage companies collecting recycling along with the trash. The township is still waiting on details regarding the WLSSD meeting scheduled for May 19 (Time and place: TBD)

P. MPCA: MS4

The clerk confirmed the MPCA received our initial application and \$400 fee. The board discussed joining the Regional Stormwater Protection Team (RSPT) comprised of various city, county, environmental and township officials; annual membership is \$300, but we would have access to all their resources and expertise. Supervisor Campbell will discuss the membership enrollment details with Chris Kleist.

Q. ANIMAL CONTROL

Chair Brooks sent a letter informing a resident about the complaints about his dogs. The homeowner responded with a phone call and promised to secure their fencing and purchase bark collars. The clerk will follow up with Jeri Georges to see if she has noticed any improvements.

R. DEPUTY CLERK/DEPUTY TREASURER UPDATE

Chair Brooks reminded the clerk and treasurer about the importance of appointing a deputy. Treasurer Christianson asked about the potential conflict of having a family member serve in this role (no conflict of interest, but potential scheduling conflict with family emergencies). The clerk asked whether the deputy could help perform some of the clerical tasks during unusually busy periods; Chair Brooks said they could not.

S. PLAWCS

The biohazard update was not discussed, but will be left on the agenda.

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Brooks, to approve Resolution #2015-5: Authorizing PLAWCS to purchase six pumps for \$12,938.53. Discussion: as noted in the resolution, the Joint Powers Board needs approval from both the Grand Lake and Canosia town boards before making a purchase of over \$10,000. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. GOALS & PRIORITIES: Tabled due to the late hour

B. SUPERONE 3.2% MALT LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to approve Pike Lake SuperOne's 3.2% malt liquor license. Motion carried unanimously, 3 -0.

C. TOWN HALL USAGE POLICY: Tabled

SUPERVISOR COMMENTS

Supervisor Comnick reported that the office locks were changed and the keys issued. The treasurer also confirmed the township is receiving its quarterly cable franchise fee.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Newsletters from Duluth and Fredenberg Townships
- Newsletter from Proctor/Hermantown Community Education
- Notice from SLC: the final draft of the zoning ordinance is available online
- Letter from CenturyLink asking we notify them of any construction projects that could impact their lines.

MOTIONS TO PAY BILLS/ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to pay bills #18126 – 18161. Discussion: Chair Brooks asked to see some receipts that were not attached to the corresponding bills from the fire department. He also reminded the treasurer to allocate some of the Minnesota Power bill to the recycling shed so we can be reimbursed as part of the grant. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Campbell, to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Krasaway, Clerk
June 3, 2015

APPROVED:

(Kurt Brooks, Chair)

(Date)