

Empire Township Meeting Minutes January 28, 2020

The Town Board meeting was called to order by Chairman Terry Holmes at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Terry Holmes, Jamie Elvestad, Ed Gerten, Charles Seipel, Jeff Hince, Jane Kansier and Brian Hillgardner.

Agenda: Jamie Elvestad made a motion to approve the agenda. Ed Gerten seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting Minutes: Ed Gerten made a motion to approve the minutes of the Town Board Meeting of January 14, 2020, and the Planning Commission Meeting of January 21, 2020. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Treasurer Report: The treasurer's report showed a General Fund Account balance of \$54,856.59 plus investments and an Escrow Account balance of \$13,059.65 plus investments. The report noted the receipt of the January tax settlement on 1/27/2020 in the amount of \$49,912.40.

Jamie Elvestad made a motion to approve the financial report. Ed Gerten seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Visitors:

No visitors to be heard.

Bills to be Paid: Terry Holmes made a motion to approve the attached list of bills in the amount of \$80,146.57. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Committee Reports

Maintenance / Sewer and Water / Road and Bridges

Jeff Hince reported that things have been calm. Staff is doing certification training.

Park & Rec

The Town Board reviewed an application for the Park and Rec. Committee from Nicole Bower. It was recommended that a deadline for Park and Rec. Committee applications be set for February 11th.

Engineering:

Brian Hilgardner reported that everything is ready to proceed with the 170th Street Roundabout this summer.

The Town Board reviewed a letter that will be mailed out to all Empire Township residents, regarding the Highway 3 detour this summer. The letter contains information about the 170th

Street Roundabout, turning lanes to be constructed south of 197th Street and mentions the future proposed roundabout at Highway 66, with the anticipated installation in 2024. Brian will check into pricing to pave the Chippendale frontage road. This would need to be an add on to the existing turn lane project.

Brian reported on the discussion that took place at the EFPAC meeting regarding the joint water study for the proposed City of Farmington water tower. It is anticipated that based on the results of the study, Farmington may be looking at beginning construction on the water tower this fall, with completion in the spring of 2021. Potential financial participation in the project from Empire Township will need to be discussed. Farmington Council Member Terry Donnelly was present to discuss some financing possibilities.

Planning:

Jane Kansier presented a memo regarding a request to rezone 95 acres of property near the McNamara mine from AG (Agricultural Production) to ME (Mineral Extraction) as well as proposed Ordinance No. 400-G, an Ordinance Amending Section 5.02 of the Empire Township Zoning Ordinance Related to the Official Zoning Map for Empire Township. The request is being made to accommodate plans for future expansion of the McNamara mine. It was the recommendation of the planning commission to approve the rezoning request. Ed Gerten made a motion to approve the zoning request and adoption of Ordinance No. 400-G to rezone 95 acres of property owned by McNamara Contracting from AG (Agricultural Production) to ME (Mineral Extraction). Jamie Elvestad Seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Jane Kansier presented a memo regarding an IUP request from McNamara Contracting to continue and expand their mining operations. The application proposes that mineral extraction activities will take place on the remaining area of McNamara's property in six phases over the next 30-40 years. The request also includes allowing hours of operation from 4AM-10PM, Monday through Friday and 6AM-9PM Saturday; thirty days per year of 24-hour operation with no advanced notice prior to 24-hour operation.

It was reported that the Planning Commission has recommended that hours of operation be set at 6AM-9PM and a 24-hour notice be provided to the Town Board and Planning Commission prior to a 24-hour day. Mike McNamara noted that during the beginning and end of the requested times, their operation is capable of doing activities that don't produce much noise. The company's trucks have white noise back up sensors and they are willing to work with the Township to address any noise concerns. After some discussion, it was recommended that hours of operation be permitted between 5AM -9PM with staging operations allowed to take place one hour prior and one hour after this time. Notice of a 24-hour operation should be provided to the Town Board prior to said operation. Jamie Elvestad made a motion to approve the Mineral Extraction Interim Use Permit Renewal for McNamara Contracting, Inc., 2014 Empire Site – Sections 5 & 6, as discussed. Ed Gerten seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Old Business:

The Town Board reviewed the revised language in the Personnel Policy regarding overtime compensation and recommended that it be incorporated into the policy with some slight revisions.

New Business:

It was reported that Pheasants Forever is looking for space south of Southern Hills Golf Course to implement a project that would transform the area with native grasses and wildflowers. The Town Board was concerned that future development of 190th Street may not make that area feasible for this type of project.

It was reported that contractors obtaining ROW Permits are not notifying abutting property owners prior to the start of projects as required per Ordinance No. 375. It was recommended that this requirement be noted on the ROW Permit application form.

The Town Board reviewed a draft data practices policy for Empire Township. It was recommended that the Township attorney review the draft policy.

Meetings: The annual spring meeting of the Dakota County Township Officers Association will take place on Saturday, March 21st at the Farmington Extension Office.

FYI:

Charlie will be out of the office during the first week of February.

The Town Board Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Terry Holmes Chairman, Town Board

Charles Seipel, Clerk – Treasurer