

## **Empire Township Meeting Minutes March 24, 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, and Charles Seipel.

**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 March 10, 2020. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

**Treasurer Report:** The treasurer's report showed a General Fund Account balance of \$21,864.85 plus investments and an Escrow Account balance of \$19,809.65 plus investments. The cash balance report was presented. A transfer of \$10,000 from General Savings to General Checking was made on 3/24/2020.

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

**Visitors:** None.

**Bills to be Paid:** Ed Gerten made a motion to approve the attached list of bills in the amount of \$56,938.86. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Maintenance / Sewer and Water / Road and Bridges**

The Town Board reviewed information about MnWarn, a program operated through the Minnesota Rural Water Association. The program allows cities and townships to enroll in a mutual aid agreement that permits equipment and staff to be allocated to municipalities in need during an emergency or crisis. Enrolling would allow Empire to have access to mutual aid as well. The Town Board recommended that the Township check with its insurance carrier to determine if equipment will still be covered if loaned out to other municipalities in an emergency.

#### **Park & Rec**

Discussion was held on the future of summer programs for 2020. It was decided that because of the Covid-19 pandemic and the planning needed to host events, all events through the month of June should be cancelled.

Additionally, due to public safety and the safety of township employees, all playground equipment and public restrooms, including portable restrooms should be closed until further notice. This follows new County guidelines. After discussion, it was determined that the best route to close playground equipment would be to post metal signs at the site of the playground. Portable restrooms should be moved off site if possible, otherwise they should be locked.

Park and Rec. meetings will not be held until further notice.

**Engineering**

No report.

**Planning**

No report.

Planning Commission Meetings will not be held until further notice.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

The Town Board reviewed information from the Minnesota Association of Townships and the League of Minnesota Cities regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. The information discussed items such as hosting open meetings by teleconference if needed, the closure of public facilities, employee compensation and new FMLA regulations, and contingencies for making decisions in the case that the Town Board is not able to meet.

Jamie Elvestad made a motion to adopt Resolution 2020-3A; “Resolution Establishing The Ability To Conduct Open Meetings By Telephone”. Ed Gerten seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Jamie Elvestad made a motion to close Township facilities to the public until it is determined that closure is no longer necessary. Ed Gerten seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Discussion was held on when new water invoices will be due and how the handling of building permits will take place. Ed Gerten made a motion to remove the charge of penalties on the first quarter water invoices. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

It was recommended that all building permits be picked up and paid for at Inspectron’s office in Rosemount as long as public facilities are closed to the public.

It was recommended that the Township maintenance supervisor and clerk-treasurer have the ability to consult with a member of the Town Board to make decisions if needed in the event that the Town Board is not able to meet.

It was recommended that the Public Works facility be closed to the public for the month of April, with the exception of the American Red Cross blood drive. The Township should notify parties scheduled to rent the Public Works Building in May that the building may still be closed at that time and they may need to look for other facilities. No new rentals should be scheduled for any time until further notice.

The Town Board reviewed the 2019 Audit Report, provided by Lewis, Kisch & Associates Ltd. Ed Gerten made a motion to approve the 2019 Annual Audit Report. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Town Board reviewed the invoice for 2019 fire services from the City of Farmington as well as the 2019 Annual Report of the Farmington Fire Department. It was noted that the percentage of fire calls in Empire Township did not increase; however, the capital expense portion of the fire department's budget saw a large increase.

**Meetings:**

**FYI:**

The Town Board reviewed a chart showing the 2019 gravel permit fees for aggregate removal; the City of Farmington's request for a regional trial grant letter of support; a request from Flint Hills Resources for Community Advisory Council Members; and the Minnesota Association of Townships regarding a conference call for information on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Town Board Meeting adjourned at 9:50 P.M.

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Terry Holmes Chairman, Town Board

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Charles Seipel, Clerk – Treasurer