

Empire Township Meeting Minutes September 22, 2020

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

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

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 September 8th, 2020; the Park & Rec. Meeting of September 14th, and the Planning Commission Meeting of September 15th, 2020. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Treasurer Report: The treasurer's report showed a General Fund Account balance of \$25,815.22 plus investments and an Escrow Account balance of \$2,559.65 plus investments. A transfer in the amount of \$25,000 from savings to checking was made on 9/22/2020.

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

Visitors: Zachary Geragi presented information about a CNC machine that he operates in the garage at his home in the MXR District. He is seeking a letter from the Township indicating that his operation is in compliance with the Township's zoning ordinance. Jane Kansier reported that after review by the Planning Commission, the operation meets the definition of a home occupation. Mr. Geragi indicated that he will be able to provide the Township with a copy of his ATF license to have on file. Ed Gerten made a motion to provide Zachary Geragi with a letter indicating that his home occupation is in compliance with Empire Township's zoning ordinance. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Bills to be Paid: Ed Gerten made a motion to approve the attached list of bills in the amount of \$73,539.94. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Committee Reports

Maintenance / Sewer and Water / Road and Bridges

Jeff Hince reported that maintenance staff has repaired the washed-out area of the walking bridge along Highway 3. Work on replacing the Sachs Park playground equipment will begin later this week. This week, crews will begin restoring parts of Biscayne Ave. that were packed down during the Highway 3 project.

Park & Rec

Denise Williamson reported that the Park and Rec. Committee will be hosting the Holiday Party this year as a drive-up party where residents will drive up and receive a bag of treats. Denise is ordering items for 100 bags.

Engineering

The Town Board reviewed two change order requests for the Highway 3 project. One request was for the removal of the weight station parking lot near the 170th Street Roundabout. The Town Board will wait to review the request until the next Town Board Meeting when Brian Hilgardner is present.

Planning

Jane Kansier reported that the Planning Commission has reviewed a request from George Maverick of Glenhaven Events to look into the feasibility of placing a wedding chapel on the property. The Planning Commission has concerns about doing this and if the project would be permissible under the zoning ordinance. Jane Kansier indicated that the project would be permissible under the zoning ordinance through the process of amending the CUP for Glenhaven Events. Some concerns that the Town Board had were the site meeting zoning requirements from an impervious surface standpoint, compliance with all building and fire codes, the implications of adding additional buildings to the existing parcel, and well and septic service capacity on the property. The Town Board would like to know if the house on the property could be removed as a condition in an amended CUP. No additional parking should be permitted. The property owner will need to address these concerns as well as other concerns that come up. For staff to review compliance with these concerns, the owner will need to submit an application for CUP amendment.

It was recommended that the zoning ordinance violation at 2951 Vermillion River Trail should be sent to the Township attorney.

It was reported that there were some issues with a proposed drainage structure at the intersection of Chesterfield and Highway 3. MnDOT has indicated that there is not enough room to install the structure, so the proposed plan would involve the removal and replacement of some of the existing sidewalk. It was the consensus of the Town Board to proceed with the installation of the drainage structure as planned and incurring the cost of the sidewalk removal and replacement.

Jane Kansier reported that permission for the storage of outdoor containers at a new rural residential property at 20655 Clayton Ave. was granted by the Planning Commission at their last meeting. After discussion, the Town Board recommended that the placement of the containers be granted for a period of one year, beginning October 1, 2020. If construction of the proposed home on the property has not commenced at that time, the structures will need to be removed.

Jane Kansier reported that the UMore property was discussed at the Vermillion Highlands meeting. UMore is selling property to a developer in Rosemount. Ames Construction is also purchasing part of the UMore property for their construction site expansion. New cabins at Whitetail Woods will be going in on November 21st.

COVID-19:

The Town Board reviewed the list of COVID related expenditures to date. After discussion, it was recommended that the Public Works facility be closed to private events for the remainder of

the year. Rentals for public meetings such as the Township Officers and Dakota County 4H will be permitted.

Old Business:

The Town Board reviewed the draft Data Practices Act Policy. Ed Gerten made a motion to adopt the Empire Data Practices Act Policy. Jamie Elvestad seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Town Board discussed the presentation of the Dakota County Land Conservation Plan at the DCTOA Meeting on September 17th. The Town Board would like for the Township Planner to send a letter to Commissioner, Mike Slavik; Dakota County Land Conservation Manager, Al Singer; and County Planning Commission, voicing Empire Township's strong opposition to the plan.

New Business:

The Town Board reviewed the health insurance renewal options for employee health insurance. The Township would like to stay with the current plan provided by BCBS of Minnesota. Jamie Elvestad made a motion to renew the Township's health insurance plan with BCBS of Minnesota. Ed Gerten seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

It was reported that Chris Williamson is resigning from the Planning Commission as of the end of October. The Town Board set a November 1st deadline for applications.

FYI:

The Town Board reviewed information from Dakota County on the upcoming County Road 46 Project introduction study and a report from the MN Dept. of Health regarding the Township's Lead/Copper Tap Monitoring report.

The Town Board Meeting recessed at 9:30 P.M. until the joint Planning Commission/Town Board Meeting to be held on October 6th at 8:00 P.M.

Terry Holmes Chairman, Town Board

Charles Seipel, Clerk – Treasurer