

POKEGAMA TOWNSHIP
APPROVED REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 12TH, 2023

Co-Chairman Terry Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Supervisors who were present was Jason Zastera, Dean Swenson. Also, who were present was Treasurer Darla Hall, Zoning Administrator Gordy Johnson, and Administrative Clerk Christy Belsheim. Not present was Chairman Dave Deutschlander and Supervisor Wayne Whited.

AGENDA

Terry Peterson **motioned** and Jason Zastera seconded to approve the agenda with moving agenda request Tammy Carlson to after agenda is approved. All in favor motion carried.

AGENDA REQUEST

Tammy Carlson introduced herself as the clerk for Pine City Township and she is running for the MAT District 7 Director. She explained with the former director there has been a lot of changes going on in the MAT office and they have had a lot of turn around with employees. If she is elected, she will increase involvement in township government, particularly with the next generation of leaders and will always be transparent, ethical and a servant leader. The District 7 Special Election will be on January 31st, at the Corrina Townhall, 9801 Ireland Ave NW, Annandale.

APPROVE MINUTES

Jason Zastera **motioned** Terry Peterson seconded to approve the December 8th, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor motion carried.

PAYROLL

Jason Zastera **motioned** Dean Swenson seconded to approve payroll claims check# 13834 through check #13842 and check #13846 through check # 13859 and check # 13862 for a total of \$15,548.97. All in favor motion carried.

SEWER

Terry Peterson **motioned** Jason Zastera seconded to approve check # 3469 through check # 3471 and check # 3473 through check #3476 ECE EFT \$1,208.62 and ECE EFT \$1,329.41 for a total of \$12,840.10. All in favor motion carried. Dean Swenson **motioned** and Jason Zastera seconded to approve check # 3472 for \$9,218.70. Dean Swenson yes, Jason Zastera yes, Terry Peterson abstains due to conflict of interest. Motion carried

TOWNSHIP

Terry Peterson **motioned** Jason Zastera seconded to approve check # 13843 through check # 13845 and check # 13860 and check # 13863 through check #13878 and check # 13880 through #13886 and EFT \$175.74 and EFT \$14.95 void check #13861 for a total of \$35,550.06. All in favor motion carried. Jason Zastera **motioned** Dean Swenson seconded to approve Check # 13870 for \$1,067.60 Jason Zastera yes, Dean Swenson Yes, Terry Peterson abstains due to conflict of interest. Motion carried

TREASURER

Treasurer Darla Hall gave the treasurers report by reading the ending balance in each account. General fund \$71,890.51, Road & Bridge \$224,060.07, COVID \$141,181.05, Equipment \$36,924.95, Zoning \$35,063.56, Fire \$94,395.44, Shop \$49,288.03 with an ending balance of \$652,803.61. These balances includes the levy check that was received in December. Treasurer Hall explained that there is a sewer CD coming due on January 14th. She suggested to cash in the CD and reinvest with additional funds coming out of the money market savings account for a total amount of \$175,000. Terry Peterson **motioned** Dean Swenson seconded to cash in the CD coming due January 14, 2023 at Frandsen Bank and reinvest along with additional funds from the money market for a total amount of \$175,000. All in favor motion carried. Hall to look into rates to go with the best possible option. There was also a short discussion on looking into moving the money market savings account where we could get more interest.

Treasurer Hall mentioned 2019,2020 and 2021 audits are completed and they have us down to do the audit for 2022. She explained 2022 will go much faster than the previous years, because they have us written in their books this time. When all 4 years are completed, they will present them at one time. Jason Zastera **motioned** and Terry Peterson seconded to have Wipfli do our Audit for 2022. All in favor motion carried. Terry Peterson **motioned** and Dean Swenson seconded to accept the treasurer's report as given. All in favor motion carried.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT - None

CLERK

Administrative Clerk Christy Belsheim mentioned we need to set dates for the Board of Audit and the Reorganizational Meeting. Terry Peterson **motioned** and Jason Zastera seconded the date for the Board of Audit Meeting will be on February 9th, 2023 at 6:30 pm with the Regular Board Meeting will follow immediately. and the Reorganizational Meeting will be on April 13th at 6:30 with the Regular Board Meeting will follow immediately. All in favor motion carried.

Administrative Clerk Belsheim explained in the Town Hall Rental Policy and Rental Application states a key would be giving out when the damage deposit is paid, and we don't give the key out. Dean Swenson **motioned** and Terry Peterson seconded to change the wording in the Town Hall Rental Policy under section 4 to Rental Fee and Damage deposit: The following rental fee and damage deposit apply to the rental of the Hall and must be paid to the Town before the application is accepted. and section 4 b. Damage Deposit: The Town will require a Renter to submit a damage deposit to the Town when the application is submitted. and on the Rental Application under Rental Fee and Damage Deposit: The rental fee and damage deposit must be paid at the time of submitting the application, in order to reserve the date. All in favor motion carried.

ZONING DEPARTMENT

Zoning Administer explained the conditional use permit is for Grant Sommerhauser (H&G Auto Sales, LLC) is to allow for an auto sale, repair and maintenance business on property located at 21499 County Highway 61. Jason Zastera **motioned** and Terry Peterson seconded to approve the conditional use permit for Grant Sommerhauser (H&G Auto Sales, LLC) with the Planning Commissions all findings of facts and recommendations. All in favor motion carried.

ROADS

Riverview Road, vacate we have received a draft petition for Thomas Peine to vacate a portion of Riverview Road going over his property. It was then mentioned while we are doing his portion, we need to do the rest of the road that needs to be done. Right now, we are waiting for the signed petition.

Back up grader operator - Keith Rogne filled out an application for a backup, back up operator. Jason Zastera has talked with him on the phone before and a few of the board member had a chance just to meet him. Terry Peterson **motioned** Dean Swenson seconded to hire Keith Rogne as a backup, back up operator. All in favor motion carried.

The snow storm from December 13th-16th Governor Walz is declaring a disaster. If we have had more than \$3,800 in damages from that storm, we are able to receive 75% of our costs back. Right now, there is no way of knowing the damages from the storm due to all the snow in the ditches. In the spring after the cleanup is made, we submit all costs. Terry Peterson **motioned** Jason Zastera seconded to go ahead with the disaster relieve from the December 13th – 16th snow storm. All in favor motion carried.

Snow & Ice Removal Policy – There has been some concerns on vehicles parked along side road right- of- ways, and plowing across road ways after it snows. In our policy now it states Township residents are reminded to remove parked vehicles from Township roads and road right-of ways to prevent damage and interference with snow removal. There was a brief discussion on three different options for vehicles parked alongside the Township Roads when plowing. Terry Peterson **motioned** Jason Zastera seconded to replace Section B. under General Information in our Snow and Ice Removal Policy to state. Township residents are reminded that it is unlawful to plow snow from driveways onto or across public roads. Piles of snow left on or near the road can freeze into a solid mass creating a hazardous situation for both vehicles and snow plows. Accidents and damages caused by snow piles left in or on the side of the roadway may result in liability to the property owner. Snow piles left on the side of a roadway increase the chances of drifting snow onto the road. **Vehicles left or parked in the Township Road right-of ways will be towed at the owner's expense.** Residents are reminded to remove all obstructions from the Township Road right of ways that includes **boulders** and any **landscaping materials**. All in favor motion carried.

FIRE & ANNEXATION

Supervisor Jason Zastera explained that folks are not happy with how the fire district meetings have been run, and it is not right that there is no public comment at these meetings. He spoke up at one of the meetings that was held here and his comments were not in the minutes. He feels we need to listen to the people we represent, and that we now have the City's attention. We have around 10,000 people in our fire area which is equivalent to a suburban area. He went on to explain there is a lot of training of staff, equipment, and money to keep our fire department going. He feels right now Brook Park and Pine City Fire Departments have a great relationship on and off the fire scene and he hopes if Brook Park takes over the portion of Pokegama Township that it won't wreck that relationship. Zoning Administer stated that Pokegama Township should set up an informational meeting to discuss the concerns for Pokegama Township residents only.

SEWER

Supervisor Dean Swenson gave the general sewer report everything is going well.

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Jason Zastera explained it would be nice to be able to pay overtime for hours worked over 8 hours in certain circumstances. Treasurer Darla Hall stated that it was her idea and it would be for when someone who has to be here. Like when there is a snow storm and the operators are out for 12-13 hours a day for a few days and when the clerk is here for elections. Treasurer Darla Hall stated there needs to be a policy in place so it is not abused. There was an brief discussion if we can legally do that. The decision made was to check into if it possible to pay overtime after 8 hours in certain circumstances or if it has to be over 40 hours/week. It will be discussed again at the reorganizational meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

Aaron Quesenbury thanked supervisor Jason Zastera for speaking out and he agrees with him. His feelings about the fire district that it is time to put personal feelings and egos aside and look at the actual numbers. He feels that they have no clue on how a fire district is run. He stated that he just wanted to speak out and there are a lot of people upset over the fire district. A few of his main concerns are staffing and safety of the citizens.

Pete Leibel spoke and also thanked Supervisor Jason Zastera for speaking out and he agrees with him. One of his issues are how the fire district meetings are run with no public comment and people are not able to speak out on how they feel. He feels that the fire district is putting strain on people relationships and the fire district will fail. The citizens can vote down the levy at the annual meeting coming up in March. Supervisor Terry Peterson spoke stating that he feels like there something good that can come out of having a fire district. Right now, townships have no say on how the money is being spent. Supervisor Jason Zastera and Pete Leibel had to leave for a fire call.

CORRESPONDENCE - None


REMINDERS

- A. Next Regular Board Meeting February 9th, 2023 7:00 pm
- B. Planning Commission canceled January 16th (holiday)
- C. Fire District Meeting Chengwatna Town Hall, January 18th, 7:30 pm
- D. Board of Appeal and Equalization Tuesday, April 18th, 2023 9:00 am

ADJOURN

Terry Peterson **motioned** Dean Swenson seconded to adjourn the January 14th, 2023 Regular Board meeting. All in favor motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm


 Christy Belsheim
 Administrative Clerk


 Terry Peterson
 Co- Chairman