Meeting of the Windemere Township Board - January 10, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM by Chairman, Pete Steen. Others present were Supervisors, John Wesely & Dale Kirkeby, Treasurer, Ron Mossberg, and Clerk, Scott Danelski.

CLERK’S REPORT :

The November 2018 Clerk’s report was read. Motion made by Wesely, second by Kirkeby to approve Clerk’s November 2018 report. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

The December 2018 Special Meeting Clerk’s report was read. Motion made by Wesely, second by Kirkeby to approve Clerk’s December 2018 Special Meeting report. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

TREAURER’S REPORT :

Treasurer’s report was read. Motion by Kirkeby, seconded by Wesely to approve the Treasurer’s report. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

PUBLIC INPUT :

Dennis Genereau was present and stated that MN Tax Courts are working on finalizing the last three utility company court cases regarding their assessed levies. He stated that the Board may want to look into the cases to see if the settlements could impact the township financially.

OLD BUSINESS :

ROAD MAINTENANCE POLICY :

No update to give at this time.

WARBER LANE :

An update was given on the Warbler Lane ponding issues. Chairman Steen and Clerk Danelski met with Doc’s owner Jim Kroon and he stated he conducted a survey of the property including shooting the elevation to determine which direction the water flows off of the Doc’s Sports Bar’s property. Jim Kroon stated he would provide the survey to the township. Kroon also stated that he spoke to his neighbor and a consensus was reached that the ponding issue is largely due to the high-water tables from last summer’s rains. At the April 2018 monthly board meeting a motion was made to install an 18” culvert and raise the road bed on Warbler Lane and the project will begin once the weather allows.

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PALON ROAD :

An update was given on the Palon Road Improvement Project (TP 17-01). Construction on Palon Road has been suspended for the winter season due to ground being frozen. Palon Road has reopened for the remainder of the winter season, but will again be closed to all traffic prior to the frost coming out of the ground until the completion of the Palon Road Improvement Project. A posting of the Palon Road closure will be published in both the Star Gazette and Evergreen papers. Erickson Engineering and vendor, Casper Construction, will be attending the February 14th, 2018 monthly board meeting to give a presentation on the Palon Road Improvement Project (TP 17-01).

BALSAM ROAD CULVERTS :

An update was given on Balsam Road culverts. The Road Maintenance Workers pumped approximately 2 million gallons of water and were able to lower one culvert on Balsam Road at the end of November 2018. Due to weather constraints only one culvert was able to be lowered. Ben Anderson from Straight-Line Surveying was present and stated he shot the lowered culvert on Balsam Road and stated that the elevation of the newly lowered culvert is now lower than the existing culverts on Birchview Road. The lowering of the one culvert should help alleviate the flooding problems that have been occurring on Birchview Road until all of the culverts on Balsam Road can be replaced with a box culvert (State Aid Project # 058-599-044).

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP) :

An update was given on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Chairman Steen confirmed that Windemere Township is in a flood zone and requested an application from (NFIP). The township has not received the application at this time.

SPEED LIMITS :

An update was given on the speed limits of township roads. Chairman Steen stated he has contacted the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), but has yet to get a response. Dennis Gerereau was present and stated that the township might rather take their request to Pine County instead of waiting for MNDOT to respond. Phil White was present and stated that he found some information from a 2017 MATS short course regarding township road speed limits. Phil to provide the information from 2017 MATs short course to the Board of Supervisors to review.

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ISLAND LAKE OUTLET CULVERTS :

An update was given on the Island Lake outlet culverts. A public meeting was held on Tuesday December 18th, 2018 to discuss a new option/plan that was more feasible and economical than previous plans regarding the Island Lake outlet culverts. Funding cannot be found to replace the existing culverts with a box culvert so the Pine County Soil & Water Conservation District (PCSWCD) in conjunction with the Minnesota DNR proposed a plan to remove the existing culverts and create a channel 10 feet wide with sloped-back banks. The new outlet for Island Lake would be the box culvert under Pine County Road 51 / East Frontage Road. Permits would be needed from Windemere Township for the shoreland excavation and from the DNR for the water. PCSWCD will work to draft an agreement with the Webbs to create an outlet channel on their property. Also needed would be an agreement by all the stakeholders for PCSWCS to be the fiscal host as well as an agreement with the stakeholder to maintain the channel. There is an exemption for temporary bridges in state law. A bridge will be built across the channel so that the Webbs can access their property on the other side of the channel. No government entity will pay for the cost of the bridge, it will need to come from private sources. The Lakes Association stated that they would monitor the channel. Motion by Steen, seconded by Wesely for Windemere Township to make up to $30,000.00 in contributions or in-kind assets towards the removal of the existing Island Lake outlet culverts to be completed in the 2019 calendar year. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

STURGEON ISLAND BRIDGE :

An update was given on the Sturgeon Island Bridge. On December 18th, 2018, Windemere Township approved a cooperative agreement with Pine County for State Aid Project # 058-599-045 to replace the Sturgeon Island Bridge # R0726. Chairman Steen contacted the Pine County Engineer to discuss funding for the project and also inquired as to which entity gets to determine what type of structure will be used to replace the existing Sturgeon Island Bridge. Pine County stated that Windemere Township will determine the type of structure that replaces the existing bridge, but depending on what type of structure is chosen, the MNDOT Town Bridge Fund may not cover all of the replacement costs. Any additional funding needed, not covered under the MNDOT Town Bridge Fund, would be Windemere Township’s responsibility over-and-above the estimated $20,000.00 listed in the cooperative agreement. A special public hearing meeting will be held and a presentation will be given by Erickson Engineering on different replacement bridge options, and also to get public input regarding the bridge replacement. Postings of the public hearing meeting will be published in the Star Gazette and Evergreen papers and placed onto the township website.

BUDGET :

An update was given on the 2019 Windemere Township budget. The Treasurer gave a presentation going through the approximate 1.2-million-dollar line-item budget approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 18th, 2018.

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ZONING DEPARTMENT :

An update was given on the Windemere Township Zoning Department. Supervisor Wesely contacted the MATs attorney inquiring as to whether the township had the ability to switch the positions/roles of the two current Zoning Department employees. It was determined that the township can switch the employee’s positions at the Board of Supervisors discretion. Motion by Wesely, seconded by Steen for Phil White to assume the position of Zoning Administrator, and Ryan Clark to assume the role as Assistant Zoning Administrator. Corresponding roles, compensation, and duties will be switched and Phil White must resign his current position as a member on the Windemere Township Planning Commission. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay. Supervisor Wesely thanked the Zoning Department for their ingenuity and cooperation in keeping the Zoning Department staff intact.

POLICIES :

An update was given on the writing of township policies as recommended by the external auditor. The Clerk contacted the MATs attorney regarding the adopted Purchasing Policy – Dated 12/18/2018, and the attorney stated that the policy needed to be revised regarding the pre-approval of utility claims. Electronic claims may not be pre-approved unless the claim amounts remain constant and do not change each month. Motion by Steen, seconded by Wesely to approve Windemere Township Purchasing Policy – Dated 1-10-2019, removing the portion pertaining to pre-approval of utility claims from the Purchasing Policy that was approved on 12-18-2018. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

NEW BUSINESS :

PLATTED ROADS :

Ben Anderson from Straight-Line Surveying gave a presentation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the benefits of platting and recording township roads. At the 2018 MATs spring short courses, the MATs attorney stated that it would be beneficial if all township roads were platted. Platted roads show the location and boundaries of individual parcels to the road. Platted roads are owned by the public. Ben explained that the platting of roads can be done at any time, but the best time to complete the platting of roads is when there is a road project about to occur on the road, as it helps to keep costs down. The Township Clerk will contact the Windemere Township Attorney for information regarding how the Board should proceed to move forward with the platting of Windemere Township’s roads.

ELECTION JUDGES :

Windemere Township Election Judges were discussed. Motion by Steen, seconded by Wesely to approve Scott Danelski, Rhonda Young, Terry Schumann, Debbie White, Susan Quest, Gayle Moonen, Mary Wiegand, Donna Burns, Linda Eckert, Marie Danelski, Doreen Mossberg, Dee Koivisto, Clarissa Ellis-Prudhomme, & Kelly Goeb as Windemere Township Election Judges for the 2019 calendar year. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

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ABSENTEE BALLOT (AB) BOARD :

The Windemere Township Absentee Ballot (AB) Board was discussed. Motion by Steen, seconded by Wesely to approve Scott Danelski, Rhonda Young, Terry Schumann, & Gayle Moonen to the Windemere Township Absentee Ballot (AB) Board for the 2019 calendar year. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP ELECTION :

Windemere Township Annual Election was discussed. The Clerk requested the Board to consider approving the use of the automated M100 Ballot Machine going forward for all of our annual township elections. The clerk inquired with Pine County as to what the additional cost would be to the township should the M100 Ballot Machine be used, but the Pine County Auditor did not know what the additional costs would be at this time. Motion by Steen, seconded by Kirkeby to use the M100 Ballot Machine for all Windemere Township Annual Elections going forward. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

BOARD OF AUDIT :

The Windemere Township Board of Audit was discussed. The Board of Audit meeting will be held on Thursday February 21st, 2019 at 5:30 PM located at the Windemere Town Hall. Time and location to be published in the Star Gazette and Evergreen papers and placed on the township website.

REPORT OF OUTSTANDING INDEBTEDNESS :

Windemere Township’s Report of Outstanding Indebtedness was discussed. The Clerk and Treasurer to complete the report and return to Pine County Auditor prior to the January 31st, 2019 deadline.

TOWN HALL CLEANING :

The cleaning of the Windemere town hall was discussed. DHS (Moose Tracks) located in Moose Lake, MN will be closing in May of 2019 and relocating to another site in Cloquet, MN. Due to the relocation, Moose Tracks will no longer be able to provide cleaning services at the Windemere town hall after they move. Tabled for discussion until a later meeting.

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WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP ROAD R.O.W. BRUSH & TREE CLEARING :

The annual clearing of brush and trees along Windemere Township Road R.O.W.s was discussed. Motion by Steen, seconded by Wesely to authorize Road Maintenance Supervisor, Mike Buetow, to get quotes for the one-week rental of a Boom Brush Mower to be used to complete the annual clearing of brush and trees along Windemere township roads. If the project is projected to extend past the one-week rental, an additional approval from Windemere Road Supervisor, Pete Steen, is required to extend the rental contract. Motion passed, 2 Aye – 1 Nay (Kirkeby).

PUBLIC INPUT :

Public input at township meetings was discussed. In an effort to help shorten the length of the monthly township meetings, the public input portion of the meetings will be limited. Motion by Wesely, seconded by Kirkeby to remove the public input portion from the beginning of the monthly board meeting agenda and have only one public input time, which will be located at the end of each monthly board meeting. Speakers must register on the sign-up sheet located on the podium and will have a three-minute limit time to speak. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

LAUNCH DRIVE :

Doc’s Sports Bar is holding their annual fishing contest on Saturday January 12th, 2019 and requested the township salt and sand Launch Drive. Launch Drive is currently not a township road. No action taken.

ROAD UPDATE :

The monthly road update was covered earlier in the meeting.

ZONING UPDATE :

Zoning Administrator, Ryan Clark gave the monthly zoning update. There was only one permit application in November 2018 for a bunk house, and none for December 2018. The Zoning Department processed a total of 61 permits for the calendar year 2018. The Clerk and the Zoning Department are looking into options for blight enforcement through special assessment on property taxes. Calls and emails are beginning to pick up as there is ice-damage to the shoreline of Sturgeon Lake already. The Treasurer and Zoning Department have begun drafting a policy regarding verification of deposits made to the Zoning Department.

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PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE :

Claire Strandlie gave the Planning Commission update. The Planning Commission met Tuesday January 8th, 2019 and made one additional change to the Comprehensive Plan and then approved the plan to be presented the Board of Supervisors. The next planning commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday April 9th, 2019 at 6:30 PM to be held at the Windemere town Hall.

FIRE DISTRICT UPDATE :

No update for this month.

PUBLIC INPUT & RESPONSE TO MEETING GIVEN :

Scott Danelski was present and posed a question to Supervisor Kirkeby regarding his attendance at township meetings. Danelski asked Supervisor Kirkeby if he would be attending all future township meetings, or is it his intent is to maintain the pattern he has set, being absent for the majority of most township meetings. Kirkeby stated he would be present for the February and March meetings.

CLAIMS :

December 2018 claims were reviewed. Motion made by Steen, seconded Wesely to approve December 2018 Claims as submitted. EFTs - 1901 through 1903, Checks - 12146 through 12174 & Direct Deposits - 1128 through 1134 for a total of $106,639.80. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

Township mail opened and reviewed.

Motion made by Kirkeby, seconded by Wesely to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 PM. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED : APPROVED :

Scott Danelski, Clerk Pete Steen, Chairman

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