

Special Meeting of the Windemere Township Board - November 13, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman, John Wesely. Others present were Supervisors, Pete Steen & Heidi Kroening, Clerk, Scott Danelski, Zoning Administrator, Phill White, Assistant Zoning Administrator, Ryan Clark, Pine County Zoning, Caleb Anderson. Absent Treasurer, Ron Mossberg

WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP & PINE COUNTY ZONING COOPERATIVE :

Caleb Anderson of Pine County Zoning Department was present to discuss with the Windemere Board the future of the Windemere Township Zoning Department and the possibility of Pine County assuming all or some of the township's zoning responsibilities. Of the 33 townships in Pine County, Windemere and Pokegama Townships are the only two townships in Pine County that conduct shoreland zoning. Shoreland zoning is any area within 1000' of a lake, 300' of a river, or any area within the 100-year flood plain.

In April 2019, Pine County released the first complete draft of a Pine County-Wide Zoning Ordinance and then gave townships located in Pine County the option to opt-in to the county-wide zoning ordinance. By choosing to opt-in, all township zoning responsibilities would then be handled through the county. Benefits of opting-in to a county-wide zoning ordinance are that the county has additional resources and expertise in zoning, there is no longer a need for a Planning Board, or a need for a Board of Adjustments. The Pine County-Wide Zoning Ordinance is virtually the same as the Windemere Township's Zoning Ordinance due to all zoning regulations being defined in MN State Statute Chapter 6120. Opting-In to county-wide zoning is cost-free to the township as almost all funding for county zoning comes through the State of Minnesota and grants. Also, when the Pine County Zoning Board holds a variance hearing, the township will always be notified of the hearing. There will also be a vacant seat on the Pine County Zoning Board in Windemere's district and the county would like to fill the vacancy from Windemere township.

Approximately 90% of all current Windemere zoning permits fall inside the shoreland zoning area and it is getting increasingly more difficult for the township's zoning department to enforce ordinances due to lack of resources. Windemere township is considered a non-participant in the FEMA flood insurance program and if the township decides to opt-in, the township would then be able to fall under the Pine County's enrollment in FEMA.

The Board discussed what the next steps would be if they were to opt-in to county-wide zoning and the time-frame to do so. No action taken by the Board. Supervisors and the Windemere Zoning Department to have further discussions regarding township zoning and the possibility of opting-in to county-wide zoning.

Motion made by Wesely, seconded by Steen to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED :

APPROVED :

Clerk, Scott Danelski

Chairman, John Wesely