Meeting of the Windemere Township Board - November 8, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM by Chairman, Pete Steen. Others present were Supervisors, John Wesely & Dale Kirkeby, Treasurer, Ron Mossberg, and Clerk, Scott Danelski.

CLERK’S REPORT :

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

TREAURER’S REPORT :

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

PUBLIC INPUT :

Phil White was present to discuss the 2018 Windemere Christmas party. Phil requested that the date of the party be changed to Saturday December 15th, 2018 from (2 – 4pm). The board agreed to the changed date and an advertisement will be place in both the Star Gazette and Evergreen papers.

Debbie White was present and requested the board hire an exterminator to do something about the fly and insect problem in the town hall and wanted to know if something can be done prior to the 2018 Christmas party. The clerk will purchase some bug bombs and fumigate the town hall prior to the Christmas party.

Larry Martin was present to discuss Sturgeon Island Road and the approaches to the covered bridge on Sturgeon Island Road. He requested that patches to all of the pot holes be completed to Sturgeon Island Road and the approaches be repaired before the end of the construction season. The board stated the patches on Sturgeon Island Road will be completed. The board stated that Sturgeon Island bridge approaches were discuss at the special meeting to discuss the upcoming budget and the project was placed onto the Windemere Township Roads & Bridges budget for 2019.

Michelle Anderson was present to discuss Sturgeon Island Road. She also stated that she would like the pot holes addressed before the end of the construction season.

Bridie Wickstrom was present to discuss the intersection of South Military Road and Rush Blvd. She stated that the intersection is a public safety hazard because the stop sign on Rush Blvd is covered by branches and there is a need for a double-arrow sign facing Rush Blvd to alert on-coming traffic that there is a “T” intersection ahead. Bridie also commented that the 2nd stop sign on the intersection of Dobosenski Road and Dago Lake Road has not been placed yet.

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Vern Anderson was present to discuss the dry fire hydrant located on Johnson Lake. He stated that the dry hydrant is located on private property owned by Spencer Anderson and he did not want Mike Buetow to do the brush clearing around the hydrant. The Moose Lake Fire District has requested Windemere Township complete the brush clearing around the dry hydrant so that they can conduct routine maintenance.

William Sauka was present to discuss Windemere township’s variance application fee. William had a variance approved by the Board of Adjustments on October 25th, 2018 to place a handicap ramp onto his dwelling located at 37449 Spruce Drive Sturgeon Lake, MN. He was inquiring as to if the variance application fee could be waived as the variance was for a handicap ramp needed due to medical conditions. The board stated that the variance application fee is used to cover administration costs such as the Board of Adjustments meeting, the posting notice of the public hearing into the papers, the recording costs at Pine County, and staff wages.

Corey Prachar was present to discuss Sturgeon Island Road and the covered bridge on Sturgeon Island Road. He made comments about the pot holes on the roads and the lip on the bridge approach.

OLD BUSINESS :

WARBER Lane :

No update to give at this time.

ROAD MAINTENANCE POLICY :

No update to give at this time.

BALSAM ROAD CULVERTS :

The culverts on Balsam Road were discussed. At a special meeting held on October 25th, 2018 a motion was made to lower the existing culverts on Balsam Road by approximately 9” to the engineered specification from the Fall 2017 Balsam Road culvert lowering project. By lowering the culverts to the designed specifications, the board hopes to alleviate the flooding problem on Birchview Road until Pine County can complete the bidding and awarding process to replace the existing Balsam Road culverts with a box culvert. Windemere Township qualifies for funding from Pine County’s Road & Bridges fund to place a box culvert on Balsam Road.

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PALON ROAD :

The Palon Road Improvement Project (TP 17-01) was discussed. Construction on the Palon Road is proceeding slowly as work continues to be delayed due to inclement weather. The contractor is now working on installing the geotextile fabric and covering it with 9” of compacted class-5 gravel. When the weather has cooperated, the contractor has been averaging approximately 1000’ per day of the laying of the fabric and covering it with class-5.

ROAD MAINTENANCE POSITION :

The hiring of the new Road Maintenance Worker was discussed. Kole Milczark was hired as the new Windemere Township Road Maintenance Worker with a start date of November 1st, 2018.

2018 WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP CHRISTMAS PARTY :

The Christmas party was discussed earlier in the monthly meeting and the date of the party was changed from Saturday December 8th, 2018 to Saturday December 15th, 2018 (2 – 4 p.m.)

SPEED LIMITS :

The speed limits on township roads was discussed. At the September 13th, 2018 monthly board meeting a township resident inquired as to whether the speed limit of Sturgeon Island Road could be reduced. The township does not have the authority to reduce speed limits as they are set by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). The township’s only course of action is to contact the DPS and request they conduct a speed limit study on the township road. Once the speed limit study is completed, the Department of Public Safety has the option of leaving the speed limit the same, or they may decide to reduce or increase the speed limit on the road. Amended motion by Steen, seconded by Wesely for Chairman Steen to contact the DPS and other agencies to gather information regarding the reduction of the speed limit on Sturgeon Island Road. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

2019 WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP BUDGET :

The 2019 Windemere township budget was discussed. At a special meeting held on Monday October 22nd, 2018 the first draft of the township budget was made by each department and the board of supervisors. The township board will review the proposed budget and approve prior to the annual town meeting held in March of 2019.

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NEW BUSINESS :

MOOSE LAKE – WINDEMERE SANITARTY SEWER DISTRICT (MLWSSD) :

An appointment of a member to the Moose Lake – Windemere Sanitary Sewer District was discussed. Moose Lake resident, Byron Kuster, expressed interest in the term for the MLWSSD. Motion by Wesely, seconded by Kirkeby to approve Byron Kuster as a member to the Moose Lake – Windemere Sanitary Sewer District Board for a term expiring in January 2023. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay. A joint resolution with the city of Moose Lake was signed and returned to MLWSSD.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM (NFIP) :

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) was discussed. The town board received a letter from FEMA informing them that the Windemere Township is a non-participating community within the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The benefits for joining the NFIP include: the ability to purchase flood insurance, eligibility for disaster assistance, and the ability to build back fast after a flood. Chairman Steen to gather more information regarding cost and coverage to join NFIP.

BOARD OF APPEALS & EQUALIZATION :

Training for Windemere board supervisors was discussed. Any township that holds their own Local Board of Appeals & Equalization hearing must have at least one trained board member present at their Local Board meeting held in April. Supervisor, John Wesely, volunteered to take the on-line training course for the Board of Appeals & Equalization.

ENVIRONMENT & FIRE FUND ACCOUNTS :

Windemere township’s Environment and Fire Fund accounts were discussed. The treasurer stated that one of the recommendations of the external audit firm was to zero down the balances of some of our fund accounts. The Treasurer requests the board to zero down the balances of the Environment and Fire Fund accounts. Motion by Wesely, seconded by Kirkeby to zero the balances of approximately $36,000.00 in the Environment Fund account and approximately $216,000.00 in the Fire Fund account and transfer those balances into the Revenue Fund account. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP INVESTMENTS :

Windemere township’s investment strategy was discussed. The Treasurer made a recommendation to the board to transfer some funds from the Windemere township checking account to a 30-day investment vehicle. Motion by Steen, seconded by Kirkeby to transfer $400,000.00 from the Windemere township checking account to the township’s investment account. Motion passed, 2 Aye – 0 Nay with Supervisor Wesely abstaining.

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WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE :

The formation of an advisory committee to the Windemere Township Board of Supervisors was discussed. The intent of the advisory committee is to look at how the township currently conducts daily business (policies, procedures, & ordinances) and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors as to where there are improvements that can be made. The advisory committee would consist of a group of Windemere township residents that would be appointed by the board. Tabled until a later monthly township meeting.

EXTERNAL AUDIT :

The recommendations from the external audit were discussed. Recommendations from the external audit firm Ado, Eick & Meyers, LLP are as follows :

Disbursement Custody (Clerk now receives all correspondence)

Payroll Review (Quickbooks payroll report & review now included in claims processing)

Secure mailbox in place (Completed)

Adoptions of a Formal Budget (In Progress)

Township Funds (In Progress)

Receipt Verification

Segregation of Duties Policy / Internal Control Procedures

Preparation of Annual Financial Statements

Personnel Policy

Capital Assets Policy

Fund Balance Policy

Conflict of Interest Polity

Credit Card Support

Inventory Controls (Fuel & Gravel)

Monthly Financial Reporting (Add budget comparison & bank reconciliation)

A special meeting of the town board was set for Tuesday November 27th, 2018 to discuss the external audit recommendations.

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TOWN HALL WINDOW :

A damaged basement window at the Windemere town hall was discussed. During the removal of the chimney and old shingles from the town hall roof back in September, a basement window located in the NW corner of the town hall was broken during construction by the contractor Todd’s – Miller’s Roofing. The clerk will contact the contractor and request that they come back and make repairs to the window.

ROAD UPDATE :

The monthly road update was covered earlier in the meeting.

ZONING UPDATE :

Zoning Administrator, Ryan Clark gave the monthly zoning update. There were six permit applications in October 2018. Permits included two additions, a pole sheds, a dwelling, a shed, and a garage. On Wednesday October 24th, 2018 the Planning Commission met and was presented with the revised Comprehensive Plan. Three variances were approved by the Board of Adjustments on Thursday October 25th, 2018. There are still a few people working on construction and landscaping project.

PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE :

Claire Strandlie gave the Planning Commission update. On Wednesday October 24th, 2018 the Planning Commission met with the steering committee and they presented them with the revised Comprehensive Plan. The next planning commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 8th, 2019 at 6:30 PM to be held at the Windemere town Hall.

FIRE DISTRICT UPDATE :

There was no Fire District update this month as the meeting was moved to week following the township’s monthly board meeting due to the 2018 General Election.

PUBLIC INPUT & RESPONSE TO MEETING GIVEN :

Cindy Carlson was present and stated she had some questions regarding the formation of an advisory committee to the town board. She stated that she is please to see the town board move forward with positive changes, but believes the board would be abdicating their responsibilities to the advisory committee as to how they should conduct their business. If the board does decide to go forward with and advisory committee, she believes the board should do the appointing.

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John Menke was present and stated how good a job the election judges did at last Tuesday’s 2018 General Election. John also stated that to his knowledge when a public utility is located on private property, then it is the property owner’s responsibility to keep the area clear.

Corey Prachar was present and asked if anyone knew how many times the dry hydrant had been used in the last five years.

Vern Anderson was present and stated he would be more than happy to complete the clearing around the dry hydrant. Vern also asked the board about the rumors of the contractor working on Palon Road having to undo damage to the road.

Delores Gockowski was present and asked how did Dale Kirkeby loose his position as the Windemere Township Road Supervisor and Pete Steen be appointed to the position.

Jim Kroon was present and inquired as to why is Windemere township is only partnered with the Moose Lake Fire District. He asked if it was possible if the dispatchers could send out an all-call to Willow River, Sturgeon Lake, and Moose Lake Fire Departments at the same time. Jim also requested someone from the township to meet with him soon to discuss the Warbler Land water ponding issue.

CLAIMS :

October 2018 claims were reviewed. Motion made by Wesely, seconded Steen to approve October 2018 Claims. EFTs - 1826 and 1827, Checks - 12069 through 12099 & Direct Deposits - 1113 through 1120 for a total of $442,024.98. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

Township mail opened and reviewed.

Motion made by Wesely, seconded by Kirkeby to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Motion passed, 3 Aye – 0 Nay.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED : APPROVED :

Scott Danelski, Clerk Pete Steen, Chairman

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