

# GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 13, 2023 6:30 PM

Chair Bassing calls meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

This meeting is being recorded for transcription and archival purposes.

ROLL CALL: Chair Bassing, Vice Chair Drobac, Supervisor Lofquist, Supervisor Skubic, Supervisor Stoehr, Treasurer Maus, Clerk JoAnn Bassing

Any changes to the agenda? None

MOTION: Stoehr/Skubic- to approve the agenda. No dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS

MOTION: Skubic/Stoehr- to approve minutes of Board meeting June 13,2023 no dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS.

TREASURER'S REPORT: General Fund 86,976.84, Community Enhancement Fund 97,152.93, Building Fund 101,913.71, Capital Equipment Fund 20,492.43, Trail Fund 18,492.41, CD 252,000.00 total 577,028.32 MOTION: Lofquist/Stoehr- to approve Treasurer's report no dis VOTE 5/0 PASS

CLAIMS: MOTION: Drobac/Lofquist- to approve claims no dis VOTE 5/0 PASS

PAYROLL: MOTION: Drobac/Lofquist- to approve payroll no dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS

PUBLIC COMMENT: Lee Peterson-In the early 1980's Isle of Pines residents created an association, incorporated and decided to build a new bridge. They applied for Fed. Grant of 300,000.00. The association was responsible for demolition of old bridge and engineering new bridge. The Association could not handle the money so Greenwood Township was chosen as fiduciary. NO Greenwood Township Funds were use to demolish, engineer or build the bridge. Nancy Eicholz-Reads letter from Lee Anderson which is included as an addendum to these minutes. Nancy continues to say she contacted SLC Commissioner McDonald and received no reply. She asks board to refer to road as GWT Rd. 4136. According to the Mn MAT manual it is the responsibility of the township to plow.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Lawn Service Bids-Clerk states one came today from A-Z Property Management for 250/cut. MOTION: Bassing/Lofquist- to hire A-Z pending confirmation of insurance for one time after which A-Z will review and bid. No dis VOTE 5/0 PASS.
2. Furnace Installation-Bassing asks cost of install. Stoehr-1,200. Total 1,700 for furnace and install.
3. Fire Boat GPS units-Chief Maus states both units are installed and ready to use.
4. Lawn Tractor-Bassing thanks Supervisor Stoehr for tractor setup and cutting grass. Stoehr says he spent 20 hrs to cut. Bassing- I put together a resolution together to allow Supervisor Stoehr payment for his effort which were outside the normal duties of supervisor. He will get paid \$25/hr according to resolution 2-2023. MOTION: Lofquist/Drobac- to pass resolution 2-2023 no dis VOTE 4/0 PASS Stoehr abstains unanimous. Bassing. Drobac, Lofquist, Skubic YES.
5. TAAS, TAC AD HOC-Bassing- I sent a letter informing them we would not be joining a JPB or Ad Hoc Committee. Vermilion Lake Township has also voted against joining a JPB. Tower City Council has voted to charge for calls outside city limits.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Broadband-A synopsis was presented of a May 12 meeting at Greenwood Township with Bois Forte, CTC, SLC, RAMS, IRRRB and three Greenwood representatives. Greenwood identified 5 areas of the township that were outside the Bois Forte project boundaries that it wanted included. Isle of Pines, Dells, Thirty Six Island, Hinsdale Area, and Stoney Ridge Area. CTC and Bois Forte will come with cost estimates to bring fiber to those areas individually. This synopsis will be added as addendum also.
2. Birch Point Extension: Bassing- When discussion of improvement of this road occurs as it is now, I have a conflict of interest. I own property along the road, any improvement to the road improves my property and gives me an advantage over other township citizens. Secondly, it would create a sense of impropriety that would be damaging to both myself and the town board. For these reasons I am disqualifying myself on this matter. I will not engage in discussion, make motion or vote on this matter and will relinquish the chair during it's discussion as advised by counsel. Supervisor Lofquist concurs that she will as well. Gavel is passed to Vice Chair Drobac and she reads a brief history of the road. Drobac states our options are to repair the potholes then plow the road ourselves or to survey the road, bring it up to county specs and get them to plow it. Funding options would be to use monies from the general fund, pay for it privately as was done before, or have a special assessment. Nancy Eicholz- The Mn MAT manual states most townships maintain roads. Skubic-I think Nancy is right it is a township rd. and is our responsibility. Stoehr-what can we do to make the county happy and continue plowing? Lee Peterson- it started innocently with a township supervisor asking it be plowed so the school bus could pick up kids on the road. Drobac-MOTION: to table until next meeting to get more information on returning it to gravel. Drobac withdraws motion. Drobac-MOTION- to fix potholes on 4136. Skubic- will check his contacts for asphalt to do repairs. Lee Peterson- there is nothing in the Levy for this so we should use the assessment mechanism. Drobac-Withdraws Motion. MOTION: Drobac/Stoehr -to table this issue until next meeting no dis. VOTE 3/0 PASS Bassing, Lofquist Abstain due to conflict.
3. Lake Vermilion Trail: Lee Peterson-It is dead in the water. Skubic-The price per mile is amazing, it will never happen. Lee Peterson- Shorter trails are more popular and gives a history of the trail dating back to 2011. They only have \$3,000 now but planned on raising \$150,000/yr for 2021-2023. He suggests withdrawal from JPB. Bassing asks the Board for 3 more meetings as he just got on the Board and wants to get more info. No action taken.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORTS:

Drobac-none

Lofquist-Invasive species truck was vandalized in our down lot and suggests cameras surveil area.

Chief Maus concurs because of storage building. MOTION: Lofback/Stoehr- to activate cameras by FD and parking lot. VOTE 2/3 FAILS Bassing, Drobac, Skubic vote NO.

Skubic-Questions if Drobac can be Deputy Clerk. He refers to Mn Insider article. Clerk Bassing states MAT had told her she could. Drobac-states MAT has given conflicting answers in the past. Clerk Bassing states she will just use Drobac as an assistant not Deputy.

Stoehr-Suggests the benches in the rec area be on concrete pads to eliminate trimming. MOTION: Stoehr/Lofquist- to move Porta John to the blacktop area. No dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS.

Bassing-none

CORRESPONDENCE:

Thank you from Tower 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee with request for this year. MOTION:  
Drobac/Bassing-to donate \$100.00 no dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS.

CLERK'S REPORT:


Liquor license request for Tavern on the Bay MOTION: Bassing/Skubic- to approve. No dis  
VOTE 5/0 PASS.

FIRE DEPT REPORT:

7 EMS, 6 Fire, 7 Training. Both boats are in the water. Boat 1 now goes 37 MPH vs 9 MPH  
replaced all fuel lines. More repairs are yet needed on boat 1 and additions to boat 3 are needed.  
FD went to "BIG TRUCK NIGHT" at Bois Forte for the kids. Did a combined training with Tower  
FD. We had a joint meeting with Bois Forte, DNR, and the County regarding response to large  
propane tank bleve. Replaced pads on AED units in the Townhall. Cistern is leaking more so we  
will look into repair or replace. The Board requested the cost of maintenance so far to bring fire  
apparatus into shape, \$18,100.00. Boat 1 manufacturer could come out and do an inspection for  
1500/2000. We need group fire signs in certain areas to help location by emergency service.  
MOTION: Skubic/Lofquist-to appropriate \$1,000.00 to start sign project. No dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS.  
Chief Maus will put ad in newspaper requesting residents to clear around their fire signs.

MOTION: Drobac/Skubic- to adjourn no dis. VOTE 5/0 PASS

8:18 PM

  
CHAIR JOHN BASSING

  
CLERK JOANN BASSING

Those present- Whitney Ridlon (IRRRB), Randy Long (Bois Forte), Brad Gustafson (SLC), Joe Buttweiler (CTC), Steve Giorgi (RAMS), Sue Drobac (Sup. Greenwood), JoAnn Bassing (Clerk Greenwood), John Bassing (Sup. Greenwood).

Bassing-I would like to know where we are at with this project. Long-We are writing up environmental review before we can get started, hoping to get it complete 3-4 weeks ago but haven't heard any reply from the NTIA. Then Buttweiler and his team at CTC can get a contract out for bids. Buttweiler-The environmental review is sitting with the NTIA right now and needs approval. Then it goes from us to an engineering firm that Bois Forte has for detail design. That design is used for the contract bid. Bassing-Are you (Long) going to use NESG above ground fiber? Buttweiler-No, those are with Frontier. We will be installing brand new fiber going everywhere. Long-The Nett Lake area will be lit up in 6-8 weeks on a Border to Border Grant the Vermilion sector hopeful by end of summer. Drobac-When they finish a sector will it be useable immediately? Long-Depends what Buttweiler and his team want. They can open the sector or, what I prefer, is to wait until it is all done. Drobac-How will testing be done at completion? Long- Bois Forte will handle it's sector. We have gotten considerable calls call on the NTIA project and it looks like businesses will be covered in Tower but not homes due to the state speed test maps. Bassing-Presents map of project, we laid out 5 different areas on the map that are not included in the NTIA project map. We don't know how to reach some of these areas WIFI or underwater cable. Buttweiler-Cable is the best solution but it is also the hardest from a permitting perspective. We could go through the permitting process before funding is in place. Ridlon-Is it just these 5 areas that are left to be served in the township? Bassing-No. #1 ON THE MAP IS Isle of Pines, there are about 50 units there. Gustafson-These areas weren't in the original discussion before NTIA? Bassing-Isle of Pines was in it, because we were talking all roaded areas, I have the original map. Giorgi-How would the permitting concerns work, do we start with an estimate? Buttweiler-Yes, we would start with the construction easements and permitting costs (ARMY CORPS and DNR). Bassing-Do you have any interest in WIFI. Long-No all fiber Buttweiler-If we would do WIFI CTC would need a boat for service and CTC is not going to agree to that. Maybe there is an opportunity for a company like Treehouse to feed off fiber. Ridlon-Are these areas islands? How do you get to the Vermilion Dam area? Bassing-It is a roaded area. Ridlon- But you have to go all the way around. Gustafson-Do you know what the total population is for the 5 areas? Bassing-Not sure. Ridlon- So these are the areas outside the NTIA grant area? Buttweiler-These might be classified as high cost areas for BEAD funding, but the definition of high cost has not yet been determined. Buttweiler- What is #1, Isle of Pine,. It has a narrow road with large pines next to the road that will get their roots severed by trenching and people will get mad. Long-That leaves one option, to go directly beneath the road. Buttweiler-High costs. Bassing- It all depends how profitable it needs to be for you. Buttweiler-Can it be profitable? Can you make money on 50 homes in 50 years, how many are year round? Bassing-15-20. Giorgi-Cost is about \$70,000.00/mile average in U.S. Buttweiler-Contractor prices are going up 20%/year. Long- The NTIA map is no guarantee we will scale back if contractor bid comes in high. Buttweiler-Contractors have lots of work right know and are having a hard time getting equipment so the sooner the environmental review gets done the better. We will be happy to put together an estimate for these areas cost and Randy and I can look at the permitting that would need to be done. We will look into when high cost funding becomes available. Ridlon- Do you think BEAD funding will come in at 75% or beyond? Buttweiler-I think it will be at 75% . Giorgi- You don't need only cash as a match. The Office of Broadband doesn't have a clue what goes on in rural MN. Bassing- Joe, when you go over these 5 areas could you break them down individually for estimates.? Buttweiler-Yes Ridlon- We

are moving incrementally forward and could get WIFI off fiber provider but won't get state grant money.

Long-Looking at the significant infrastructure needed to cover all the areas for so few people it might be better for those people to look at Starlink. Giorgi- You have to purchase the equipment and sign a 2 year plan. Bassing-I talked with Bree Maki (Office of Broadband) specifically about Isle of Pines because the NTIA project is not in yet. She said to get those people to get their names in as a cluster for the line extension program because they like clusters. Ridlon- How does Line Extension work? Giorgi-They have had 2000 applications in the first group and they will send those locations to all ISPs in Mn. and wait for providers to respond. The limit is \$25,000.00/ household. Buttweiler- When the NTIA project is complete all 50 households on Isle of Pines to sign up and then they would bid it out. Bassing-Bree Maki, of the Mn Office of Broadband, said they weigh clusters or groups of applicants more heavily. Ridlon-You guys, Buttweiler and Long, will look at the cost estimates so the township has a number, then the township could choose how do we make up the funding using the various funding sources as well as it's own. Bassing- Does SLC have funding? Gustafson-Yes. Ridlon-IRRRB will fund pockets and has done so such as Ash Lake and are open to looking at incremental fixes. Long-Project will cover 430 residents total in Nett Lake and Vermilion and about 2500 surrounding the reservation in the NTIA. Bassing-Television and telephone also? Buttweiler-Not traditional TV but streaming service, cost for internet \$65.00/250Mbps/month. Drobac-Is blasting rock possible? Long-We would like to avoid it as much as possible. Bassing-Do you ever use concrete overlay? Long- Yes. Drobac-How deep do you normally bury? Buttweiler 2'. 1ft under driveway. Gustafson-Does CTC have experience underwater? Buttweiler-Yes, we have some from the Cook Co. Project. We lay the cable with anchors on the bottom. The cost for water crossing permit is \$2,000.00/ crossing. Ridlon-The challenges are real. From the township's perspective there is a need to have some serious conversations with the residents outside the project. Are they willing to contribute, is the township willing to contribute. The agency would like to see the local township contribute as much as possible especially when you have a tax base such as Greenwood Township. Let's just be real here. Giorgi-Ballpark completion 2026? Long-Probably. Buttweiler-2026 is reasonable but so is 2025. Giorgi-It is unfortunate to wait for the NTIA. Meeting over.10:14.

Letter from Lee Anderson as read by Nancy Eicholz during the June 13,2023 Board Meeting.

Good evening to the Board and it's members. While there has been a lot of talk over the past several years over the need to build and resurface GWT Rd 4136, commonly known as the Birch Point Extension Road. The immediate and pressing need is to have the potholes repaired in certain areas. The potholes have developed in areas which require evasive maneuvers from vehicles which can and do result in unsafe traffic and pedestrian conditions. The residents along 4136 would like the Board to approve two actions tonight. 1.) Repair the existing potholes that have developed over the past year or two. There should be an ongoing annual Springtime maintenance event for the road. Ideally, we would encourage the Township to get these potholes repaired each year before the Fourth of July weekend. 2.) Set up a committee of Township officials and possibly residents of the road to explore and develop a plan to rebuild, repair, resurface Township Rd 4136. This committee should also identify different funding sources and develop a funding formula which would allow for the payment of an agreed upon resurfacing plan. We believe all parties need to recognize that this process could take several years to put everything together before any major work could begin.