

BEMIDJI TOWNSHIP TOWN BOARD
REGULAR BOARD MEETING (Second Meeting of the Month)
Tuesday, May 22, 2012
MINUTES

PRESENT: Jan Heuer, Pete Fredrickson, John Rowles, Lowell Vagle, Brian Merschman and Michelle Anderson

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Bemidji Township Town Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Jan Heuer and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

MINUTES: Pete Fredrickson made a motion, seconded by John Rowles, to approve the minutes of May 8, 2012, (regular meeting) as printed. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Roads:

Beltrami County Road/Township Road "Swap" Status Report: No update on this issue at this time. The item will be placed on the June 12, 2012 agenda.

Stripping Town Hall Parking Lot Update: No update on this issue at this time. The item will be placed on the June 12, 2012 agenda.

Calcium Chloride Update – Fox Dr NW: Road Supervisor, John Rowles stated JD Hansen is preparing the road. EnviroTech is in the area and the County will advise them to spray the road. EnviroTech will bill the County, the County will give the bill to JD Hansen and JD Hansen will pass the bill on to Bemidji Township. A Board member reminded the Board that class 5 needed to be applied two weeks before spraying. The road has been graded and the cul-de-sacs will not be sprayed.

Little Norway Ave SE: Road Supervisor, John Rowles gave an update on the work done on Little Norway Ave SE. The project was \$5000 over budget but the road will not need maintenance for a long time.

Fire:

Rural Fire Association District (Did Bemidji Township "sign off" on agreement?): Discussion among Board members ensued regarding if the township had signed off on any agreements for a Fire District. A Board member felt the parties verbally agreed to a Fire District but had not officially signed anything. At the Bemidji City Council meeting on May 21, 2012, the consent agenda included a Resolution of Support for the Concept of Establishing a Joint Powers Entity for Shared Fire and Rescue Services for the Bemidji Area. The wording of this resolution is of concern to the Board members. The Board is in favor of a Fire District but not another joint powers agreement.

CONSTITUENTS (see attached attendance sheet): A constituent asked if there were any updates regarding annexation and a Board member said there weren't any at this time except the Township Attorney is working on the complaint to file in District Court. The process could take a while once it has been filed, but sometimes this gets the parties involved to discuss issues. A constituent asked if there are any statutes stating

the city has to provide services to residents and a Board member replied the statutes are mostly in favor of cities. The constituent was informed to search the Minnesota Statute website for more information. Detachment options and the possibility of filing for an open seat on the council and/or mayor position were discussed.

JPB/JPC REPRESENTATIVES

May 24, 2012 Planning Case Reports:

Thompson – Variance (JPB Special Meeting on May 25, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.): JPC Representative, Monte Eidem stated the variance is for less restricting setbacks and he would recommend the JPB Representatives deny the request. He said there is no uniqueness in the situation and if this is approved, other variances should be reviewed again in order to provide consistency. However, there is considerable support for this variance. A Board member stated a few positives listed in the variance were the impervious surface and the removing of two entrances and only having one. Another Board member mentioned the traffic in the area. Mr. Eidem noted there is a traffic signal at the intersection by the property, so traffic should not be backed up. A Board member asked if there will be a public hearing and that will be at the May 25, 2012 meeting. Another Board member brought up consistency, safety and other possible obstructions as potential concerns. Mr. Eidem will be asking about safety concerns at the JPC meeting.

JPB REPORT

Planning Cases Heard in April:

DeMarchi – Variance: JPB Representative, Pete Fredrickson stated the variance was passed however the JPB added to the variance an easement from the neighboring property owner must be recorded. No timeline for this to be completed was set.

North Homes – IUP: The IUP was passed.

Willstar Riding Academy – IUP: Mr. Fredrickson said there was a lot of discussion at the JPB meeting regarding this request for IUP. Willstar is not using any portion of sensitive areas on the property; they must come up with a sewage plan before starting the business; and the plan will be checked during the first year and then on a five year basis – or anytime in between as needed. JPB Representative, Jan Heuer noted the property had previously been zoned an environmentally sensitive area and all variance issues must be met.

Thorson - Variance: Mr. Fredrickson said there is a turning area by the garage which addresses the prior concerns about safety and the front setback and that is consistent with other properties in the area. Ms. Heuer noted the erosion control must be in place but is not concerned as Mr. Thorson has previously followed through on another variance he received. A Board member asked if the owner is including another adjacent lot and he is, which satisfies the impervious surface requirements. Residents in the neighborhood are very pleased with what Mr. Thorson has proposed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Township Website: TJ Design Studio is currently doing updates to the website. If there are any changes that need to be made to the website, please give them to Jan Heuer. Ms. Heuer stated the domain was renewed for three years.

Clerk Position: Jan Heuer said Lanette Anderson from Frohn Township would help as a clerk on a very temporary basis until a clerk has been hired. With elections coming up, a clerk needs to be hired soon so they are able to attend the short courses for elections held in June. The job opening was posted on the Minnesota Works website as of early May and has been viewed 284 times with six responses. Ms. Heuer suggested a few Board members be on a committee to go through the applications and make recommendations to the Board. A Board member wanted to make sure prior applications from a previous posting were also taken into consideration. Pete Fredrickson and Brian Merschman volunteered to review the applications and present the final selection to the Board at the regular meeting on June 12, 2012.

A constituent asked about the job posting and she was encouraged to submit her resume.

The Board discussed the need to talk about wages and duties for the position and concluded this will be done in a closed meeting possibly on June 14, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. Proper notice will be submitted once a finalized date has been set.

Rental Ordinance Enforcement: Another complaint was received regarding the same rental property in Bemidji Township that had a complaint in April. The complaint this time came from Bill Patnaude, Beltrami County Director of Environmental Services, in regards to potential hazardous conditions on the property. He asked for any information regarding the property from township files and he will take action on the situation on behalf of the county under their rental ordinance. As long as there are health and/or safety issues involved, Mr. Patnaude will handle these types of complaints. There will be no cost to the township. Mr. Patnaude has been invited to the regular meeting on June 12, 2012.

2012 Newsletter: No update on this issue at this time. The item will be placed on the June 12, 2012 agenda.

Meeting Time Change to 7:00 p.m. – Constituent Inquiry: A Board member stated the meeting time was set at the reorganization meeting in March after the elections were held. Board members discussed there could possibly be very late meetings if the time were changed and there is no real pressure to change the time at this moment. In prior years, meetings were at 6:30 but 6:00 has been working out. Lowell Vagle made a motion, seconded by Brian Merschman, to leave the regular Board meeting starting time at 6:00 p.m. Discussion followed where Mr. Vagle amended his motion to include any time changes of regular meetings will be done at the reorganization meeting after the elections are held. Motion carried unanimously.

Township Gopher Bounty – Constituent Inquiry: Discussion regarding the amount paid per gopher from surrounding areas took place. A Board member said the statute regarding this issue must be followed and a constituent noted the Minnesota Association of Townships has information regarding gopher bounties. Brian Merschman made a motion, seconded by Lowell Vagle, to table the gopher bounty issue until more information is gathered regarding how to proceed and Lowell Vagle will follow up on the

issue and present information to the Board at the regular meeting on June 26, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

Other: A Board member wanted to know since Phase 1 of the Orderly Annexation Agreement has taken place, how was the formula for the township portion of the cost of the Joint Planning Office determined. Since the township has now lost acreage and residents, the concern was if the city should be picking up more of the cost. A constituent stated the township is still receiving tax money from those properties for the next four years and Mayana Rice, Joint Planning Office Administrator, may be able to answer those concerns. The item will be placed on the June 12, 2012 agenda for further discussion.

JPC Representative, Monte Eidem asked the Board if the JPC Representatives should attend township meetings. The Board agreed it would be helpful for them to do so if there are cases coming up.

ADJOURN: Lowell Vagle made a motion, seconded by Brian Merschman, to adjourn. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Prepared by Michelle Anderson, Temporary Clerk

_____ Approved _____
Michelle Anderson, Temporary Clerk

Jan Heuer, Chairperson