

**BEMIDJI TOWNSHIP TOWN BOARD
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, July 23rd, 2013
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Jan Heuer, Pete Fredrickson, John Rowles, Brian Merschman, Lowell Vagle, and Erin Stieg, Clerk

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.

AGENDA: After review and discussion, Jan Heuer suggested that a few items be removed from tonight's agenda and added to the meeting agenda for August 13, 2013. The items "Roads", "Letter from Natural Resource Management", and "Letter from Beltrami County Re: Payable 2013 annexations-Mobile Homes" were moved to the 8/13/13 agenda. Under "Legal Issues", the item "Email regarding septic and roofing records" was removed completely because the question had already been answered before the meeting. Lowell Vagle made a motion, seconded by Pete Fredrickson to approve the agenda as modified. Motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES: The meeting minutes for July 9th, 2013 were reviewed and John Rowles motioned to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Brian Merschman and carried unanimously.

CONSTITUENTS (see attached attendance sheet): Rick and Annette Schulke were present to discuss building a road on their property by Pete's Place South. The Schulke's were wondering if they could build their own road to their property. Township officials said they may do so, but it is important to follow guidelines set out by the county. Bemidji Township will not adopt the road for maintenance, however, since it is located on an easement granted by a public utility company.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Roads: Item "JD Hansen & Sons vs. Someone else for road contract" was moved to 8/13/13 agenda.

Signs: No Report

Fire: Email/Handouts from Donna Anderson: Just the 'Governance' portion of this item was discussed at tonight's meeting. After review and discussion of the Governance agreement outlined in Anderson's handout, Town Board officials stated that Bemidji Township is in opposition to the proposal as it is currently written. Brian Merschman explained the purpose of the Fire District and taxing authority over non-profit organizations, primarily benefiting the City of Bemidji rather than the multiple townships represented. Pete Fredrickson added that if the committee would change the ratio to 1 representative per 1 local government unit instead of 1 representative for every 3000 people in each unit, the township would be more will willing to accept the agreement. Lowell Vagle motioned that Bemidji Township not accept the presented governance agreement from Donna Anderson of the Fire District Research Committee. Brian Merschman seconded that motion and it passed unanimously.

BATO/ BRACO: No Report. Lowell will leave early for the BATO meeting this evening.

Weeds: Lowell has toured the Bemidji Township area with Lenny Bergstrom to observe weed problem areas. They noticed a couple of problem areas on Diane Mason's property and Bob Ewart's property. Mason's did a nice job of eradicating the weeds on their property in a timely fashion. However the Canadian thistle on the South of Ewart's property has not been taken care of yet. There were a number of weeds in the County ditches by Roosevelt Rd and Tyler Ave and Chuck Buus' property has shown significant improvement. Other than those areas, weed problems have remained under control in Bemidji Township. The clerk will write thank-you letters to Mr. Buus and the Mason's for their cooperation with this project.

Legal Issues: JPB notice of violation- 1019 Augusta Dr. NE- No Action Taken
Check received from City for Annexations: This check was handed over to the Township Lawyer for further review before being cashed.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Ottertail vs. Charles Worms et al – Order has been completed and filed. Matter is resolved.

Attorney John Steffenhagen: At 6:38 p.m., the meeting was turned over to Mr. Steffenhagen to explain the legal progress Bemidji Township has made and where we go from here.

Steffenhagen explained that Northern Township was not a part of the lawsuit between Bemidji Township and the City of Bemidji, nor were they a party to the mediated agreement that was signed by the two entities on May 31, 2013. It was agreed that the City of Bemidji should present the agreement to Northern Township for their approval. Since the original meeting on July 10th was cancelled the day before amongst disagreements about whether quorums from each of the LGU's should be present or not, Bemidji Township offered three alternative dates on which a quorum would be available. Northern Township did not accept any of the alternative dates and pushed forward with a meeting on July 17th, 2013. Steffenhagen was present at the meeting, along with Vice Chair Pete Fredrickson and Supervisor Brian Merschman. There was a feeling among them that they were not welcome at the meeting. Bemidji Township representatives stressed the need for consistency among all the LGU's when it came to approving the mediated agreement, however, approval was denied by Northern Township. Steffenhagen explained that the agreement is going forward regardless of Northern Township's decision, although it would have been nice to have their cooperation.

At 6:50 p.m. Lowell Vagle was excused from the Board meeting to attend the BATO meeting.

Steffenhagen went on to say that Phase 1 annexation parcels that were eligible would be able to return to the jurisdiction of Bemidji Township and Phase 2 & 3 parcels will be taken off the table for number of years.

It was stressed that this process is far from complete and Bemidji Township will be using information received from the City to determine which parcels are eligible and which ones aren't. Residents will need to respond rather quickly after being notified so that the Township can move forward with the detachment process.

ADJOURN:

Pete Fredrickson made a motion, seconded by Brian Merschman, to adjourn. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Prepared by Erin Stieg, Bemidji Township Clerk



Erin Stieg, Bemidji Township Clerk

Approved 8/13/13_____



Jan Heuer, Chairperson