

**BEMIDJI TOWNSHIP TOWN BOARD
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, August 27th, 2013
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Jan Heuer, Pete Fredrickson, Brian Merschman, and Erin Stieg- Clerk
ABSENT: John Rowles, Lowell Vagle (MAT District Meeting)

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Bemidji Township Town Board was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chairperson Jan Heuer and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

AGENDA: After review and discussion, the item "Planning and Zoning" was removed because William Patnaude was not able to attend the meeting. The other planning issues that were to be discussed have been tabled until further notice. The official donation given to the Beltrami County Sheriff's department was moved up to be the very first thing on the agenda, and "Ottertail Power Company/ Permitting Issues" was moved up right after the approval of last meeting's minutes. Pete Fredrickson made a motion, seconded by Brian Merschman to approve the agenda with the amendment. Motion carried unanimously.

Official Donation to Beltrami County Sheriff's K-9 Unit: Last April, Ernie Beitel and Jason Riggs of the Beltrami County Sheriff's department came in to speak about their need for a new dog to help find drugs and apprehend criminals. Bemidji Township approved a \$5000.00 donation request, but because of scheduling conflicts, the Sheriff's Dept. was not able to receive the donation until tonight. Prior to the meeting, Bemidji Township had a photo op with the new dog "Jessie" and Sierrarose Sypult, a young lady who volunteered earlier in the year to conduct a fund-raising campaign to purchase body armor for the K9's. At this time, Jan Heuer officially gave the check to Ernie Beitel.

MINUTES: The meeting minutes for August 13th, 2013 were reviewed and a change was made under the item "Fire". The spreadsheet that Brian had handed out was to be used in the Rural Fire Contributions as well as the new Fire District, if there becomes one. Pete Fredrickson motioned to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Brian Merschman and carried unanimously.

CONSTITUENTS (see attached attendance sheet): Carmen Huber came to give an update on her progress with re-paving the parking lot at Pete's Place South. She spoke with the DNR and they had no issues as long as any run-off went in the opposite direction of the DNR land. She was reassured that Bemidji Township would stand by her and she would not face repercussions from the Joint Planning Board for repaving the parking lot. Walter Remmick was present to show pictures of a washed out trench on Augusta Drive, where he resides. The township board agreed that it needed to be taken care of. Pete Fredrickson will speak to J.D. Hansen & Sons about getting it fixed before winter.

Ottertail Power Company/Permitting Issues: Darren Matetich, Operations Manager from Ottertail Power Company was at the meeting to present a proposed line upgrade in the Bemidji Area. He said that after a review of the City's current system, it is becoming outdated and will not meet the power demands of upcoming generations. Their solution to this is to get rid of the 69kv system that is in place currently and replace it with a 115kv system with three substations surrounding Bemidji. The Board is concerned about private land that Ottertail will try to acquire for private easements and wants to make sure that everything remains fair for the constituents of Bemidji Township. Right now Ottertail is looking into the best possible configuration for the

new system and they are trying to stay within the confines of the existing grid, however some changes may be necessary to avoid cutting through private property. Bemidji Township is supportive of the system upgrade as long as residents are fully informed of what is happening and are in support of it. Jan suggested that Ottertail have a meeting with Bemidji Township residents at the town hall to discuss the upgrade and the changes that are being proposed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Weeds: No Report

Roads: A resident had called in a complaint of wash boarding on Madison Ave SE. Pete said he would drive by and look at it. There was another question about setback distances, it was explained that Bemidji Township's setback from the right-of-way is 50 feet and the side lot distance is 15 feet. Pete Fredrickson spoke with J.D. Hansen, who promised to give a price quote to Bemidji Township so that a contract can be written for 2013-2015. He did warn that prices would be going up substantially. Pete also mentioned that he would call Bruce Hasbargen at Beltrami County and ask about mowing one more time before winter.

Signs: No Report

Fire:

- Nat. Resource Mgt: The clerk invited Fire Chief Dave Hoefler to the meeting to discuss the tax- forfeited parcels for future Fire Station locations. Mr. Hoefler stated he would like to drive by each of the locations and do assessments to see if any of them would be feasible locations for a Fire Station.

Brian Merschman gave a report of the latest Fire Committee meeting held on August 15th, 2013. He stated that even though he felt he had made progress at the first meeting, Mel Millender had suggested that the new fire district should have an administrator. Bemidji Township is not in favor of an administrator position because that is the Fire Chief's position and the Fire district doesn't need another employee to handle the same things as the Chief. The board suggested that instead of a 5-member board, the new fire district could have 5 committees to take care of things like Personnel and Equipment purchasing and other business operations. There is another meeting on August 29th and Brian will bring those suggestions to the table.

BATO/ BRACO: No Report.

Legal Issues: The clerk gave an update on the people who have responded to the letters regarding annexation. So far about 95% on the responses have been in favor of returning to Bemidji Township jurisdiction. The people who have already hooked up to City sewer and water services have said that they felt "forced into doing so" by City officials threatening them. The clerk was asked to contact these people and see if she could get documentation of copies of the letters or other correspondence these individuals received from the City.

OTHER BUSINESS:

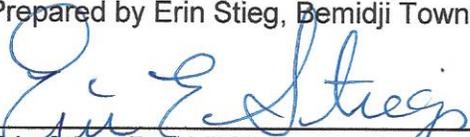
- Christiansen Lot Division: Mike Christiansen was present and the Board reviewed his application for selling a portion of his property to a neighboring landowner. After some discussion regarding that portion becoming part of the existing parcel, Pete Fredrickson made a motion to approve the lot division. Brian Merschman seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- Clerk hours: Pete Fredrickson motioned for Bemidji Township to employ the clerk full time for another three months, to be reevaluated at the 1st meeting in January, 2014. Brian Merschman seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- Constituent Shawn Larson inquired about getting an animal permit to have horses on his land. After further discussion it was determined that Mr. Larson's land was too small to have horses and he will have to figure something else out for housing them.

ADJOURN:

Peter Fredrickson made a motion, seconded by Brian Merschman, to adjourn. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Prepared by Erin Stieg, Bemidji Township Clerk


Erin Stieg, Bemidji Township Clerk

Approved 9/10/13


Jan Heuer, Chairperson