CITY OF NORTHERN, MINNESOTA

Minutes, Town Board, November 27, 2023 (PDF)

Location: Northern Town Hall, 445 Town Hall Rd NW, Bemidji, MN. These minutes were copied from the archived Northern Township website and formatted as a PDF for the city meetings archive.

NORTHERN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS – Monday, November 27, 2023, 6:00 PM. Northern Town Hall, 445 Town Hall Road NW, Bemidji, MN.

PUBLIC HEARING – FIRST READING OF THE PROPOSED NORTHERN TOWNSHIP ZONING & SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE.

Chairman Frenzel called the hearing to order, and asked if anyone wished for the entire proposed ordinance to be read, and it was agreed that the reading would be dispensed.

It was explained that this ordinance is, for the most part, the same as the existing ordinance being administered by the joint planning office. Items that do not pertain to, or affect our township, were taken out and there were a few adjustments made. The intent will be for the new planning commission to review it over the next year, and recommend areas that require amending in order to better fit the needs of Northern Township.

Borseth noted that he talked with Attorney Kubousheck about a few items that he questioned. One of them is the permitting of short term rentals, suggesting that they be pulled out of the ordinance and dealt with via a license. It was agreed that this will be looked at through the review process in the coming year. Also, Borseth talked with the County's Environmental Services Director regarding the definitions for the classification of 'sensitive lakes', and it was agreed that the topic in the proposed ordinance will be left as it is for now.

FIRST READING OF THE PROPOSED NORTHERN TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

Chairman Frenzel asked if anyone wished for the proposed comprehensive plan to be read, and it was agreed that the reading would be dispensed.

Attorney Kubousheck recommended that the new Northern Township Planning Commission be part of the process of reviewing the comprehensive plan, and then recommend its acceptance to the township board. It was then agreed that the new Planning Commission will meet prior to the 2nd reading on Monday, December 18, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. They will be asked to make a recommendation to the township board, for acceptance of the Northern Township Comprehensive Plan, and acceptance of the Northern Township Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance. The Northern Township Board will meet at 6:00 p.m. that same evening for the Public Hearing for the 2nd Reading of the Comprehensive Plan and the proposed Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

It was also agreed that Northern Township Board of Supervisors will sit as the Board of Appeals, to hear Variances and appeals of administrative decisions.

With no further comment forthcoming, the public hearing was closed at 6:40 p.m., and the regular Northern Township Board of Supervisor Meeting followed;

PRESENT: Supervisors: Jess Frenzel, Chris Lahn, Gary Barnard, Mike Kelly and Curt Blumhagen. Administrator Mark Borseth, Road Supervisor Tim Vigen, and Clerk Mary Israelson. See sign in sheet for guests.

MINUTES: A motion was offered by Blumhagen, seconded by Lahn, and carried, to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023 meeting as presented.

VISITORS:

TOWNSHIP UTILITIES:

Frenzel reported that he had a conversation with the DNR Area Supervisor regarding a meeting she attended discussing the Section 36 School Trust Land proposal by Northern Township. He was informed that we should be receiving a letter at some point, with some direction. It was felt that a discussion should be held with reps from Beltrami County, to determine if there might be some interest in some sort of land swap in order to help make the plan work. It was agreed that a meeting with the County's Land Management Supervisor be held, and that it is important to keep the discussion going regarding some sort of proposal.

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION REPORT:

Borseth reported that he has been working on the process for the land use permitting that will begin the first of the year. The permit applications are ready. He has talked with the township's attorney, and also the Beltrami County Environmental Services Director, who indicated that their office could help with the shoreland permitting and septic inspections. He also talked with Tim Terrill, the Mississippi Headwaters Administrator. Town Hall office hours are being proposed to be Monday – Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to noon, with Deputy Clerk Dianne Dockendorf filling in where she can. The LRIP application is nearing completion for Fairgrounds Road, and he will follow up with Mark Fuller and a couple land owners for support letters.

ROAD REPORT:

Grading – With the lack of snow, the gravel roads have all been graded.

Lofgren Tree Service – They will be contacted to get a year end invoice for us.

Tavistock/S. Movil – There are some items being wrapped up on the re-construction project.

JOINT PLANNING BOARD (JPB) REPORT:

The JPB will vote to approve the Dissolution Agreement between Christmas and New Years, and there will be a final meeting in February. The JPC meets this week with 3-4 cases, and December will be the final meeting for them (provided there are cases).

RURAL FIRE ASSOCIATION (RFA) REPORT:

Blumhagen reported that there was a letter sent to everyone from the Fire Chief, regarding a recent fire and how a shortage of staff affected it. The Long-Range Planning Committee will meet Thursday, with Kelly reporting that he is still working on the financial reporting and they might be in better shape than anticipated.

RESOLUTION #2023-1121: CERTIFICATION OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE WAVILLE WASTEWATER TREATMENT DISTRICT: A motion was offered by Lahn, and seconded by Barnard, to approve the special assessment roll for operation and maintenance fees for the coming year at $85.00/mo,for an annual total of $1,020.00 for the 19 users. The motion carried unanimously. The list will be certified to the County Auditor/Treasurer for collection in 2024.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1)Outgoing Planning Commission member Al Steffen and Michael Granlund were called by the Chair and thanked for their service, 2) notes from Attorney Kuboushek regarding his review of the land use planning process and ordinances, 3) copy of letter sent to DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen regarding a plan for Section 36 School Trust Lands, 4) Beltrami County Board's approved Resolution for support of the LRIP application for Fairgrounds Road, 5) notice of the MAT Annual Meeting with pre-registration ending November 27th.

OTHER:

MAT – Kelly reported that he has heard that MAT is proposing an increase in 2024 for dues even though they have a 2.5 year surplus in reserves.

First National Bank – A motion was offered by Blumhagen, and seconded by Lahn, to approve the authorization to update the signers on the C.D. accounts, to include Treasurer Peterson and Clerk Israelson. The motion carried unanimously.

With no further business forthcoming, the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.