Regular Town Board Meeting Town of Gnesen

January 23, 2023

The bi-monthly meeting of the Town of Gnesen was held on Monday, January 23, 2023. The following officers were present:

Jon Nelson Chair

Ed Franckowiak Supervisor

Sarah Blix Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Nelson. Motion to approve the agenda was moved by Chair Nelson, second by Supervisor Franckowiak. All voted in favor.

Minutes of the January 9, 2023, Town Board Meeting was unanimously approved with a motion by Supervisor Franckowiak, second by Chair Nelson. All vote in favor.

**DISCUSSION**: Supervisor Franckowiak stated that he received a call from a resident on Park Drive complaining about the high snowbanks and narrow roadways. Jody agreed that the banks are high and that a skidsteer is needed to push them back. Supervisor Franckowiak suggested contacting Cedar Drive Excavating to see if they could help. Supervisor Franckowiak asked if Sarah could send the Supervisors an update via email once we hear back from Cedar Drive Excavating and then move forward with getting the job done.

**OLD BUSINESS**:

Broadband – Dan Cummings and Ed Roberts, representatives from Cooperative Network Services (CNS) attended tonight’s meeting to share information about the broadband project that will be starting in Gnesen spring of 2023. Ed explained that CTC had applied for the grant that Gnesen was awarded. CNS is the engineer company that will perform all the design work. A separate contractor, which has not been determined yet, will oversee the installation. Ed stated that this project is a two-year project with installation beginning in 2023. The entire project will encompass a 6-mile x 12-mile section of Gnesen – it will go to the NE side of Island Lake (but not NW of Rice Lake Road) and most everything else south of Island Lake. Ed had the following questions: Where Gnesen would like them to run the cable along Township Roads? Both Chair Nelson and Supervisor Franckowiak agreed that as close to the backslope of the right-a-way as possible. Regarding township roads and minimum maintenance roads can they plow across and restore or would Gnesen require them to bore under? Chair Nelson stated he does not want the roads plowed across other than minimum maintenance roads. Chair Nelson questioned what they do for private driveways and private roads. Ed stated that for private roads they must identify them and get private easements to plow across them. As for private driveways, Ed said they are not required to get landowner permission if it is gravel. They will plow across the driveways and immediately cover it up. If the driveway is blacktop, then they must bore under it. Regarding permits – Ed questioned if any permits will be required from Gnesen. Nathan stated that Gnesen does not require any permits for utilities unless it is within the shoreland impact zone. Nathan asked Ed what they are required to do when crossing the Lester River. Ed replied that they are required to get DNR crossing permits. Nathan asked about how deep the cable will be buried and if it will be direct buried or in HDPE pipe. Ed said the minimum allowed is 36 inches, but most will be buried at 40 – 48 inches and they will be using both direct buried and HDPE buried. Ed also commented that they are not able to plow across one resident’s lot to get to another lot unless they get permission first. Sarah asked if Gnesen could get a electronic copy of their map so that it can be added to our website for residents to see. Ed said he would provide that, and that CTC should be sending out a flyer soon informing residents about the project and allowing them to sign up if they would like.

Linda Lenard – Linda Lenard, who would like to rent the old town hall facility to run a gymnastics class, was in attendance at tonight's meeting. Linda said that she has done some market research and has gotten a lot of positive feedback from people who are interested in joining her classes. Chair Nelson said that there have been some concerns mentioned about traffic and the fact that the Township uses that site for their maintenance shed as well so at times there is large equipment on site and also the fueling tank that is situated within close proximity to the building. Chair Nelson said there is concern with small children and large equipment sharing the same space. Chair Nelson asked Linda if all activities would be indoors to which Linda said yes. Supervisor Franckowiak agreed that traffic would be a concern as well as the fact that the building is not a commercial building. Supervisor Franckowiak questioned if a study has even been done to see what the township wants the building used for. After some more discussion about what would be a fair rent and an appropriate lease term length, as both supervisors did not want to see a long-term lease, it was decided to hold off making a decision until the February 13, 2023, meeting since Supervisor Juten was absent from tonight’s meeting.

STR Ordinance – Sarah had made the four changes that were suggested by Mike Couri which included adding a definition for the term CAP, under section B8 adding, “*shoreland and non-shoreland*,” under B10 eliminating the sentence that reads, “*The Town Board shall vote on whether to increase the number of permits based on feedback from the public hearing.”* Also changing the misprinted date under Section C from June 5, 2024, to June 5, 2023. Chair Nelson made a motion to approve as presented at tonight’s meeting with the changes that were suggested by Mike Couri, second by Supervisor Franckowiak. All vote in favor.

Administrative Fine Ordinance from P&Z – Chair Nelson made a motion to advance both Nuisance Ordinance Version 1 and the Administrative Enforcement Version 1 to a public hearing on February 27, 2023 at 6:00 pm, second by Supervisor Franckowiak. All vote in favor.

New Waterlines at the GCC – The waterlines are currently being installed at the GCC.

Deputy Zoning Officer Job Opening – Sarah said that so far there has been one application turned in but another interested resident was going to stop by the office on Wednesday and pick up an application. Sarah questioned how long we were going to continue accepting applications. Chair Nelson suggested until February 28, 2023. Chair Nelson then told Nathan that he would be in charge of interviewing the applicants and making a recommendation.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Quote from MAVO and ACCT for asbestos abatement of GCC gym – Mavo Systems provided a quote for $10,830.00 to abate the GCC gym floor tile, ACCT Incorporated provided a quote of $22,900.00. Supervisor Franckowiak made a motion to accept the Mavo Systems quote, second by Chair Nelson. All vote in favor.

Pay/compensation for P&Z Commission & why do we have a 9-member commission – Sarah stated that it has been increasingly hard to keep the Planning Commission motivated and since they are volunteers it is hard to set expectations. Sarah said some other townships, such as Duluth Township, offer their zoning board compensation and although it is minimum (Duluth Township pays their members $38.50/month) it still allows for some expectations to be set such reading packet information prior to the meeting. There was also discussion about lowering the number of members on the board. Marcia Haller stated that a five-member board would be too small and not diverse enough, Chair Nelson agreed and said the most efficient boards he has worked with have all been seven member. Chair Nelson asked Sarah to reach out to MAT and see if we wanted to move forward with setting some sort of compensation would that be done at the Town Board level or would that need to be done at the Annual Meeting.

2023 Membership letter – Both Chair Nelson and Supervisor Franckowiak gave their permission for Sarah to send out the prepared Membership Letter.

2023 Board of Appeals Meeting – St. Louis County scheduled this for Tuesday, April 18, 2023, from 10am – 11am.

STR Application – Nathan said he has not had a chance to do this yet but will have it prepared for the February 13, 2023, Town Board Meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

No further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30pm with a motion by Chair Nelson, second by Supervisor Franckowiak. No objections, meeting adjourned. (This meeting is taped for transcribing purposes only.)

Visitors attending the meeting: Jay and Marcia Haller, Dennis Campbell, Dan Cummings, Ed Roberts, Linda & Joe Lenard, Mary Bjorklund

Employees present: Nathan Horyza, Jody Cooke Employees absent: Gary Juten

**Upcoming Meetings:**

Board of Audit - February 13, 2023 - 6:00pm

Town Board Meeting - February 13, 2023-7:00pm

P&Z Meeting - February 15, 2023-7:30pm

Public Hearing for Administrative Enforcement/Nuisance Ordinance - February 27, 2022-6:00pm

Town Board Meeting - February 27, 2023 - 7:00pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sarah Blix, Clerk Jon Nelson, Chair

Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_