Regular Town Board Meeting Town of Gnesen

August 14, 2023

The bi-monthly meeting of the Town of Gnesen was held on Monday, August 14, 2023. The following officers were present:

Jon Nelson Chair

Gary Juten Supervisor

Nancy Poppenberg Supervisor

Sarah Blix Clerk

Hannah Jurek Deputy Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Nelson. Board Members and residents stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. A motion to approve the agenda with the addition of the GCC garage floor drain and DAT meeting update was moved by Chair Nelson, second by Supervisor Juten. All voted in favor.

Minutes of the July 24, 2023 Town Board Meeting were unanimously approved with a motion by Chair Nelson, second by Supervisor Poppenberg.

Treasurer’s report:

Balance for June 2023 $315,932.82

Receipts for July 2023 +$211,210.51

$527,143.33

Disbursements for July 2023 -$58,495.88

Balance for July 2023 $468,647.45

There were two outstanding checks for the month totaling $2,546.33. Motion by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg to accept the Treasurer’s report. All vote in favor.

**DISCUSSION**:

**OLD BUSINESS**:

STR Septic Compliance Requirement – David and Marcella Stewart, residents who were wanting to apply for a STR, were present at tonight’s meeting. Per the ordinance, septic systems need to be inspected and have a current certificate of compliance. The Stewart’s septic was found to be non-conforming by St. Louis County but compliant per the state of MN. Chair Nelson stated that Gnesen has to follow the county’s rules so therefore they have to go by the non-conforming certificate. David Stewart was questioning why he has to show a compliant certificate when his is still considered passing. Chair Nelson stated that a septic system can be deemed non-conforming for several reasons. The Gnesen ordinance states that 2 people per bedroom plus 2 are allowed for STR which maximizes water usage and the township does not want to start policing non-conforming septics. Both P&Z and the Town Board agreed to go with compliant systems only as a baseline to know the septic would be ok for the extra usage. Chair Nelson explained to the Stewart’s that in order for them to operate a STR, the septic would need to be brought into compliance per the ordinance. Chair Nelson suggested to the Stewart’s to talk with a septic inspector to see if there are changes they can make to their current septic to bring it into compliance.

Normanna Road Building Violation Update – Supervisor Juten asked for this to be tabled until the August 28, 2023 town board meeting as Sheriff Gordan Ramsay will be attending that meeting to discuss methods on how the township can deal with this specific situation. Sarah will inform neighbors of the meeting so they can attend.

P&Z Identification Gear – Sarah researched pricing for custom safety vests that the P&Z could wear when doing site visits. She can get vests for $18.99/vest. Supervisor Juten made a motion to approve purchasing 11 of the safety vests, second by Supervisor Poppenberg. All vote in favor.

Update on Old Fire Hall Violation – Carter stated he had contacted the owner and was informed that he is not interested in having a meeting with anyone from the township and feels he is not in violation. The owner also stated he has no intentions of changing how he is using the property but if he feels he may change the usage into a commercial usage then he would consider discussing the issue with township personnel.

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STR on Boulder Dam Road – Sarah spoke with the owner of the parcel in question and she informed Sarah that she only rents out one of the cabins as a STR but utilizes the other as overflow sleeping space if needed. Sarah said she also asked the owner for a map of the property per the request of the supervisors to which she has not received. Chair Nelson stated per the ordinance the owner would only be able to utilize one of the cabins as a STR due to the distance rule that is stated in the ordinance.

Resolution #23-12 Amending Tracey Road Order – Supervisor Juten made a motion to approve resolution #23-12 amending the Tracey Road Order to clearly define the width of the road as 66ft, second by Supervisor Poppenberg. All vote in favor.

Island Lake Falls Road Complaint – Carol said she had researched anonymous complaints and read that although people can make an anonymous complaint, there still needs to be a signed one turned into the clerk who would be required to keep the name confidential.

DNR Grant – Sarah mentioned that although the contract signing doesn’t happen until Oct-Nov 2023 the township should start contacting contractors who book up fast so that we can get in their books. Sarah will contact the contractors for the parking lot and the swing set as that needs to be ordered 6 months in advance. Sarah also mentioned that Dave Opack suggested when the parking lot is getting redone that would be the time to trench an electrical line to the flagpole so that there can be proper lighting installed.

MIG Building Violation – Sarah mentioned the former zoning officer had an email in his computer from St. Louis County stating that Rice Lake Road is indeed classified as an arterial road requiring a 110ft setback from centerline. Since both the front entry and the deck were permitted at 85ft, St. Louis County said a variance would be required to make the situation right. Supervisor Juten suggested if a variance is required the township should not require MIG to pay a fee since the township signed off on the permits. This topic will be sent to the Planning Commission to be discussed at their August 16, 2023 meeting.

GCC Garage Floor Drains – Supervisor Juten said he has investigated the garage floor drains. Water is going somewhere but it is moving very slowly, and they can’t see where it is coming out. Supervisor Juten said he would like to bring in an excavator and dig some behind the building to see if he can locate where the water is draining. Sarah will try to find some schematics of the garage and provide to Supervisor Juten.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Road Report – Darin reported the roads are in good condition. Needle Lane and Tracey Roads need grading. Calcium Chloride was completed and is helping to maintain the conditions of the roads. Boulder Lake tree was removed by Rick’s Tree Service. Mowing has been completed. Bruce stated that he would like to revisit some areas this fall and do some brush cutting. The deck of the mower is damaged so Supervisor Juten informed Bruce to bring the mower to Northern Welding in the fall to get a quote to fix it. Bergstrom Road is getting some new power lines run and it was noted that three transformers were going to be installed in the drainage ditch. Supervisor Juten did speak with MN Power and they are going to move the transformers back to the power poles.

Gnesen Community Center Report – Sarah gave a budget update from National Night Out. The cost for food and kid activities was $967.46 minus donations of $587.00 meaning the total spent for National Night Out was $380.46.

Como Employee Pricing – Sarah questioned if this applies for P&Z members as well and was informed P&Z members should be included.

Zoning Officer Job Opening – Two individuals have applied for the position. Sarah said she believes both would be great assets to the community and suggested hiring both. There was discussion on how to divide the workload to make it fair for both. Sarah will contact both applicants and set up a time for her and Supervisor Poppenberg to meet with them.

Building Permits for 2021 & 2022 – Sarah informed the Supervisors that none of the building permits from 2021 or 2022 have had a second site visit. It was determined that although it is too late now to do a proper second site visit, it is still necessary to perform these visits so that the building records are accurate.

Sarah – Renew MN Notary – Chair Nelson made a motion to approve the expenditure for Sarah to renew her notary, second by Supervisor Juten. All vote in favor.

M100 Voting Machine – This was brought to St. Louis County to be recycled.

DAT Meeting Update – Chair Nelson stated there are grants available for police and first responder funding. Chair Nelson said he will look into this and share with the new fire chief for the Gnesen Fire Department. In

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January 2024 the statewide emergency sick and safe time begins. Chair Nelson asked Sarah to watch for trainings so that the township can learn how this will affect townships.

**ZONING OFFICERS REPORT**:

**CORRESPONDENCE**: None

Disbursement #15909 through #15943 and 3 EFTs were read, approved, and signed for payment for a total of $22,615.02 with a motion by Chair Nelson, second by Supervisor Juten all in favor to pay the disbursements.

No further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m. with a motion by Chair Nelson, second by Supervisor Juten. No objections, meeting adjourned. (This meeting is taped for transcribing purposes only.)

Visitors attending the meeting: Jay and Marcia Haller, David and Marcella Stewart, Carol Jacobson, Dave Stewart

Employees present: Mary Bjorklund, Bruce Smith, Beau Halverson, Darin Franckowiak, Carter Williams

Employees absent: none

**Upcoming meetings:**

P&Z Meeting – August 16, 2023 - 7:30pm

Town Board Meeting – August 28, 2023 - 7:00pm

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

Sarah Blix, Clerk Mary Bjorklund, Treasurer

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Jon Nelson, Chair