Regular Town Board Meeting Town of Gnesen

October 23, 2023

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

Jon Nelson Chair

Nancy Poppenberg Supervisor

Gary Juten 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 Poppenberg. All voted in favor.

Minutes of the October 9, 2023, Town Board Meeting were unanimously approved with a motion by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg.

**DISCUSSION**:

**OLD BUSINESS**:

Zoning Officer Training – It was decided to schedule this training for November 30, 2023 in the evening. Sarah will reach out to the City of Rice Lake and let them know as they were also interested in the meeting.

Locust Road Anonymous Complaint – Rick stated he has met with the landowner several times. The landowner informed him that she is attempting to clean up her property. Regarding her holding tank, the resident has a pumping contract with Steve’s Septic. Rick stated he will send a letter to the landowner and let her know that any further buildings that are constructed on the property will require a building permit.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

MIG – P&Z recommended issuing a notice to the MIG group that they need to stop all dirt work until further notice. Rick and Mike had met with the group on Friday and noted that between their parking lot and W. Van Road the ground has been leveled off to create future parking spaces. Mike said the permit for them to do work has expired even though an extension had been approved for them to continue working through August 31, 2023. Neighbors have stated concerns with a cliff that is being created on the property, erosion/run-off, and wetlands that are located on the property. After much discussion it was decided to ask the property owners to stop work until they could address some permit issues including erosion, the size of the project, exceeding the time allowed by the permit, and how they plan to stabilize the cliffs that have been created. Mike will set up a meeting with the MIG group to discuss these issues.

Normanna Road Issue – Supervisor Juten spoke with Sheriff Ramsay and was told that the Biskey’s had never followed through with reaching out to him to get assistance filling out eviction paperwork. Sheriff Ramsay said evicting through the probation officer is not the correct process. P&Z has recommended to wait until October 31, 2023, which is the day the probation officer had stated the squatters needed to be off the property by, but if there is no action then the Township should continue with issuing fines through the Nuisance Ordinance. The Supervisors agreed that since the next Town Board meeting is not until November 13, 2023 a letter should be issued ASAP letting the landowner know that if the squatters are not out by the 31st then they will be fined.

Fees Regarding Johnson Variance Redo – Carol explained that the Johnsons had applied and been granted a variance recently but have since changed their floor plans. One P&Z member thought the fees should be waived but as Carol stated they must go through the whole variance process all over again so the workload will be the same as their first variance. Sarah mentioned that Rick found in the ordinance that the previously approved variance must be terminated before the Johnson’s can apply for a new one. The Johnson’s need to provide a letter of termination to the Township, then a zoning official must write a letter to St. Louis County requesting the variance be terminated and that then must be recorded. The Supervisors agreed that the Johnson’s should have to pay the variance fees including the additional fees.

Voter Allocation Funds – Supervisor Juten made a motion to allow St. Louis County to retain Gnesen’s portion of the voter allocation funds, which is $101.51, and they will put it towards continuing to do absentee voting for all elections other than the Township elections, second by Supervisor Poppenberg. All vote in favor.

FEMA Appeal Letter – FEMA is in the process of remapping wetlands and is trying to inform people in case they have questions or believe things have been classified incorrectly. Chair Nelson suggested putting an article in the next newsletter and a link on the website so that residents can appeal if they would like.

GCC Toilet Repair – The middle toilet in the women’s restroom is still not working correctly. Sarah explained that Beau has investigated the issue but cannot figure it out and would like permission for a plumber to look at it. All three supervisors agreed that a plumber should be hired to resolve the issue. Sarah will reach out to R.J Mehrman & Sons and see if they can fix the broken toilet.

Plastic for Skating Rink – Sarah stated that the resident who floods the rink has mentioned that plastic might help with the longevity of the rink. Sarah priced out plastic and a 60ft x 120ft piece would cost $691.20. Supervisor Poppenberg made a motion to approve the expenditure plus shipping, second by Supervisor Juten. All vote in favor.

Appeal of Short-Term Rental Permit Denial – An appeal of a short-term rental permit denial has been turned into the office. After reviewing the appeal, the Supervisors stated that although the short-term rental is in Gnesen Township, the owner resides in Fredenberg, and the ordinance states that the owners of short-term rentals in Gnesen must be homestead residents of Gnesen. Chair Nelson made a motion to deny appeal based off the fact that the owner is not a homestead Gnesen landowner, second by Supervisor Juten. All vote in favor.

**ZONING OFFICERS REPORT:** There was nothing to report other than both zoning officials are continuing to move through second site visits.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

No further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:02pm 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, Carol Jacobson, Al Werner, Luke Miner, Theresa Lorentz

Employees present: Darrin Franckowiak, Bruce Smith, Mike Polzin, Rick Hogenson

Employees absent: None

**Upcoming Meetings:**

Town Board Meeting – November 13, 2023 – 7:00pm

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

Town Board Meeting – November 27, 2023 - 7:00pm

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

Sarah Blix, Clerk Jon Nelson, Chair

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