

Regular Town Board Meeting Town of Gnesen

November 12, 2024

The bi-monthly meeting of the Town of Gnesen was held on Tuesday, November 12, 2024. The following officers were present:

Jon Nelson	Chair
Gary Juten	Supervisor
Nancy Poppenberg	Supervisor
Sarah Blix	Clerk
Mary Bjorklund	Treasurer

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 additions of invasive aquatic species under Old Business and Ulland's Oscar Pit under Discussion was moved by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg. All vote in favor.

Minutes of the October 28, 2024 Town Board Meeting were unanimously approved with a motion by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg.

Treasurer's report:

Balance for September 2024	\$323,265.05
Receipts for October 2024	+\$3,456.02
	\$326,721.07
Disbursements for October 2024	<u>-\$101,811.92</u>
Balance for November 2024	\$224,909.15

There were six outstanding checks for the month. Motion by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg to accept the Treasurer's report. All vote in favor.

DISCUSSION: Nathan Horyza attended tonight's meeting to discuss his concerns about Ulland's Oscar Pit and the smell that comes from the asphalt plant. Nathan said the smells seem to be getting worse and believes that it is because the plant has expanded far beyond what was really intended. In the email Nathan sent all three Supervisors he identified several questions that he was wanting answers for. Chair Nelson said that those questions should start with the planning commission and invited Nathan to attend their next meeting. Chair Nelson said he will forward the email he received from Nathan to Sarah so she can share his questions with the planning commission prior to their meeting on November 20th. There was discussion about adjusting pay for Sarah while she picks up planning and zoning duties while Hannah is out on maternity leave. Chair Nelson and Sarah will work up a proposal and provide at the next meeting. Carter asked if there is an update regarding the proposed copper/nickel mining on the north side of Boulder Lake. Chair Nelson said he has not seen an update recently but will look into it and if he finds anything he will bring it back to share at the next town board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Aquatic Invasive Species – Clay Cich and Jeff Monsaas from Fredenberg attended tonight's meeting to discuss funding that is available through the DNR to fund purchasing and installing informational boards at public boat launches to increase public awareness regarding invasive species to help alleviate the problem and protect our lakes. Fredenberg would like to partner with Gnesen and work together to obtain the funding. Jeff reported that the minimum grant available is \$10,000.00 and that the DNR has a total of \$710,000.00 in funds available this year. Jeff said they would be looking at applying for a grant next year as the deadline for this year's grant is next week. There were suggestions to create one cohesive Island Lake Association that the townships could work with to spread information, help with maintenance of the boards once installed, etc. Chair Nelson asked Clay and Jeff to keep Gnesen in the loop as they proceed as we would be interested in assisting with this project.

Hemlock Drive Issue – There was discussion regarding attorney options and how the township would like to proceed. Supervisor Juten said he is not opposed to using Andrew Tiede for this abatement. Supervisor

Poppenberg said she agrees with Supervisor Juten and feels like Andrew is knowledgeable about township abatements and would be the best option to deal with this issue. Supervisor Poppenberg made a motion to work with Andrew Tiede for the Hemlock Drive abatement, second by Supervisor Juten. All vote in favor.

Using Drones for Zoning Issues – Supervisor Juten said he spoke with Sheriff Ramsay and invited him to come to a meeting to discuss this further. Supervisor Juten said that Sheriff Ramsay would like a list of questions to be sent to him prior to the meeting so that he can be prepared to answer them properly. Chair Nelson asked the zoning officers and the planning commission to send questions to Sarah so she can compile them and forward them to Sheriff Ramsay.

Chairs at Old Town Hall – Sarah said she and Beau checked out the chairs at the old town hall and do not want to bring them to the community center because they are not needed. Sarah asked for permission to donate or scrap the chairs, to which all three Supervisors agreed that we can get rid of them.

DNR Grant – Sarah provided the Supervisors a breakdown of “money” the township has spent so far. This is not just actual money spent but it also includes volunteer hours that have been converted to a monetary value, donated goods and equipment usage that have been converted to a monetary value, and actual monetary donations. This sum, which is approximately \$187,000.00, will be put towards the township’s portion of the grant. Sarah also discussed the list of projects that still need to be completed. This includes tennis court fencing, moving the basketball net, installing an ADA trail to the ball field, flagpole and skating rink lighting, parking lot and tennis court striping, and signs/kiosk. Sarah said that Holden Electric will be coming out on Wednesday to provide a quote for the skating rink and flagpole lighting and Ken Gilbertson will finish installing the signs this week.

NEW BUSINESS:

Road Report – Darin reported that there were several trees down after the strong winds earlier this week. The batteries on the grader have been replaced. The trees that St. Louis County said needed to be trimmed prior to snowfall have been trimmed.

Gnesen Community Center Report – Sarah said she contacted our insurance company and was told we do not get a reduction in insurance for installing an automatic fire monitoring system.

ZONING OFFICERS REPORT: Mike said that American Towers is inquiring about making some alterations to their existing towers. These alterations would not extend the height or footprint. Carol said there have been precedences set in the past that were signed off on by former Gnesen zoning officer Gil Kjorstad that say the tower company does not need permits for this kind of work. Rick said he has had several inquiries over some tax forfeited land that is located in Gnesen. Rick said that he has referred most of the calls to St. Louis County as the lot in question is mostly wetland. Rick also said he has been questioned about the land for sale on Needle Lane and what can be built on it. Rick said he was recently contacted by David Humes about his property located on Rice Lake Road and the possibility of a future walkabout to discuss current issues and plans to remedy them.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Email from FEMA and sample ordinance. This will be sent to the planning commission prior to their next meeting so they can review it then discuss it further.
- Email sent from St. Louis County Addressing regarding address changes for portions of Tracy Road.
- Email from St. Louis County regarding their proposed cannabis ordinance. This will be sent to the planning commission prior to their next meeting so they can review it then discuss it further.
- Email from Diane Holliday-Welsh regarding bystander training. Gnesen is on the list of townships interested in hosting this training which would be free CPR and/or mental health training available for anyone interested in taking it. This would be offered sometime in 2025.

Disbursement #16394 through #16434 and 4 EFTs were read, approved, and signed for payment for a total of \$32,731.44 with a motion by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg. All vote in favor of paying the disbursements.

No further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:23pm with a motion by Supervisor Juten, second by Supervisor Poppenberg. No objections, meeting adjourned. (This meeting is taped for transcribing purposes only.)

Visitors attending the meeting: AJ Jensen, Jay Haller, Carol Jacobson, Carter Williams, Clayton Cich, Jeff Monsaas, Tanner Wienke, JoAnne Wienke, Nate Horyza,

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

Employees absent: Hannah Jurek, Beau Halvorson

Upcoming meetings:

P&Z Meeting – November 20, 2024 - 7:00pm

Town Board Meeting – November 25, 2024 – 7:00pm

Signed: _____
Sarah Blix, Clerk

Mary Bjorklund, Treasurer

Jon Nelson, Chair

Date approved: _____