

Town of Gnesen-Annual Meeting Minutes-March 11, 2025

The Annual Town Meeting and Election for the Town of Gnesen was held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025. The polls opened at 5:00 p.m. and were closed at 8:00 p.m. Board of Canvass met at 8:15 p.m. Supervisor Nelson and Supervisor Poppenberg verified the results of the election. The Annual Meeting followed at 8:30 p.m.

Clerk Sarah Blix called the Annual Meeting to order at 8:30 p.m. The clerk and residents stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Clerk called for a nomination of a Moderator for the meeting. Mary Bjorklund nominated Jon Nelson, with a second by Gary Juten. Clerk Blix called for any other nominations. Hearing none, Clerk Blix called for a vote on Jon Nelson. Motion to nominate Jon Nelson as Moderator-all in favor-no objections.

Moderator Nelson then stated that the business of the meeting was for the following purposes:

- 1.) To elect the following officer:
One (1) Supervisor for a three (3) year term.
- 2.) To approve the Levy set at the Board of Audit Meeting that was held on February 10, 2025.
- 3.) To finish any old business.
- 4.) To transact any new business for the good of the township.

Moderator Nelson asked the Clerk to read the election results.

Clerk-Total votes cast were 75.

Gary Juten	74 votes
Mike Polzin	1 Vote

Supervisor for the three (3) year term-Gary Juten.

The Board of Canvass consisted of Supervisor Nelson and Supervisor Poppenberg. The Board met after the polls closed and the ballots were counted, to check over and verify the election results that the election judges-Sarah Blix, Carleen Nelson, and Terri Middleton turned in. The Clerk declared Gary Juten was elected Town of Gnesen Supervisor for a three-year term, ending in 2028.

Moderator Nelson mentioned that the minutes from the previous Annual Meeting that was held on March 12, 2024 were provided on the back table for anyone who would like to see them.

Moderator Nelson asked the Treasurer to read the Financial Statement of the Town of Gnesen for 2024. Mary Bjorklund read the Financial Statement report. Our balance beginning in January 2024 was \$434,202.78; total receipts for the year were \$437,217.98; total disbursements were \$593,2633.78; ending balance for the year is \$278,156.98. Gary Juten made a motion to accept the Financial Statement, second by Dick Haney, all in favor, none opposed.

The 2024 Road Report handout was provided. Gary Juten reported that in 2024 Island Lake Drive was deluxe crack sealed, 1200 yards of gravel was put on township roads, and there was a small ditching project done on Lakeview Drive. There is still 3600 yards of gravel remaining in the townships stockpile which should last another 3 years. Brushing will be an issue moving forward as St. Louis County is getting pickier with snowplowing and requesting that the township roads are kept clear so that when there is heavy snow load on trees they don't hang down and damage their equipment.

Moderator Nelson brought up for discussion the proposed levy for the year 2026, as proposed at the Board of Audit Meeting held on February 10, 2025.

GENERAL FUND - Total Levy for 2024 was \$104,000.00; beginning balance was \$230,244.08; actual expenses paid in 2024 were \$429,365.27 of which the expenses for the Planning & Zoning, Community Center, Fire Department and Town Hall were included. Levy for 2025 is \$104,000.00. Proposed levy for 2026 is \$104,000.00 plus \$66,000.00 budgeted for the Fire Department Contract for fire services, totaling \$170,000.00. Revenue for the General Fund for 2024 is \$246,053.26 which includes the taxes, liquor licenses, building permits/variance/conditional use permits/additional fees, town hall/community center rentals/deposits/security, newspaper ads, interest, GCC membership/donations/private donations. Ending balance for the General Fund was \$46,932.07.

ROAD FUND - Total Levy for 2024 was \$100,000.00; beginning balance was minus \$7,812.36; actual expenses paid in 2024 were \$96,459.09 which includes: culverts, snowplowing, gravel, chloride, tree removal, etc. Levy for 2025 is \$100,000.00. Proposed levy for 2026 is \$100,000.00. Revenue for the Road Fund was \$113,377.97. Ending balance for the Road Fund was \$9,106.52.

CAPITAL PROJECT FUND - Total Levy for 2024 was \$6,000.00; beginning balance was \$23,774.31 actual expenses paid out in 2024 were \$67,439.42, which included the bond principal and interest. Levy for 2025 is \$6,000.00. Proposed levy for 2026 is \$6,000.00. Revenue for the Capital Projects Fund is \$77,786.75 from taxes. Ending balance for the Capital Project Fund is \$34,121.64.

Total Balance for all funds was \$278,156.98. Bond loan will be paid off in 2029.

The levy did not increase for 2025 but with overall cost increases and added rules such as sick and safe time and family paid leave it is likely that the township will see an increase in the levy in the future. Staff wages increased by 3% and meeting rates by \$5 per meeting. Moderator Nelson asked if there was any other discussion on the proposed levy. Gary Juten made a motion, second by Dick Haney, all voted in favor of the proposed total levy for 2026 in the amount of \$344,000.00.

Carter Williams, Pete Bergman, and Carol Jacobson were all being recommended for re-appointment this year and this will be sent to the Town Board meeting that is scheduled for March 24, 2025. Planning and zoning was busy in 2024 working on updating their floodplain ordinance in order to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. A subcommittee of the planning commission was created to work on verbiage and a public hearing was held on February 24, 2025 where the presented ordinance was adopted. This ordinance will act as a stand-alone ordinance so that any amendments in the future can easily be made. This year it was discovered that past CUP's were not recorded. A few members of the Planning Commission worked hard to straighten out the CUP's and they have all now been recorded. The township did a successful abatement of a property located on Normanna Road. Nancy Poppenberg thanked all the Planning Commission members for their hard work. Supervisor Nelson also thanked the Zoning Officers Rick Hogenson and Mike Polzin for their hard work and staying caught up on zoning. The building permit report was available as a handout for anyone who was interested.

Gary Juten reported that the Old Town Hall lease was renewed for another year at the March 10, 2025 Town Board meeting. The other buildings that are located at the Pioneer Road location are currently being used as the township equipment garage and the small garage is being leased out.

Jon Nelson reported that the DNR grant project was wrapping up. This grant included a new playground, resurfaced parking lot and tennis courts, enhancements to the nature playscape, lighting around the skating rink, signage. In 2025 new flooring will be installed in the community center. This project will start early June and be completed in time for National Night Out. CTC fiber is

currently being installed, and some residents have even been hooked up. The township is still working on securing grant funding to provide fiber to the Northwest side of Island Lake. Gary Juten thanked all the volunteers and the Gnesen Volunteer Fire Department for their hard work getting the skating rink up and running and also keeping the warming house open.

Moderator Nelson asked if there was any other old business. Hearing none, Moderator Nelson moved on to New Business.

- 5.) Motion from Mary Bjorklund for authorization to expend the same amount of township funds for National Night Out that was spent last year which was \$1200.00, Nancy Poppenberg seconded the motion, all voted in favor. National Night Out will be held on August 5, 2025.
- 6.) Motion by Dick Haney to set the location for the next annual meeting to be held at the Gnesen Community Center and set time to convene and call to order the next annual meeting to be held on March 10, 2026 directly following canvassing the election results. Nancy Poppenberg seconded the motion, all voted in favor.

During the coming year, the Township notices will run as legal ads in the Duluth News Tribune. They will also run in the Gnesen Community Newspaper when the time frame works. Posted notices will be at the Community Center, Gnesen Convenience Store, and the Island Lake Inn.

Our bank will be Wells Fargo.

Moderator Nelson stated that the Certification/Reorganization Meeting would be held on Monday, March 24, 2025 at 5:45 p.m.

Moderator Nelson asked if there was anything else the residents wanted to discuss. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m. with a motion by Gary Juten, second by Nancy Poppenberg, all voted in favor.

Residents attending the meeting were: Jon Nelson, Gary and Staci Juten, Mary and Gary Bjorklund, Jay & Marcia Haller, Steve Franckowiak, Richard Haney, Bryan Gray, Bruce Smith, Carol Karalus, Rick Hogenson, Jeff Franckowiak, Mike Polzin

Signed: _____
Sarah Blix, Clerk

Jon Nelson, Moderator