

**FREDENBERG TOWN BOARD
SAINT LOUIS COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
January 4, 2017**

**TIME & PLACE: 7:00 PM
TOWN HALL/COMMUNITY CENTER**

The monthly meeting was CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Jeff Blix. Treasure was not present. Ten individuals stood with the Board to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 1) ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR: No items from the floor.
- 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Jeff Blix moved to accept the minutes, Walter Rapp seconded; and minutes were approved with one correction on a road name.
- 3) TREASURER'S REPORT: The treasurer's report stated as of total funds available as of December 13 are \$407,193.91 which included the \$80,000 in CD.
- 4) CORRESPONDENCE: Four (4) total items of correspondence were received during the month and reviewed.
- 5) REVIEW OF BILLS: Jeff Blix moved to pay vouchers #8768 - #8786 in the amount of \$93,117.00, Walter Rapp, seconded and motion **PASSED**,
- 6) REPORTS:

Clerk – worked on the end of year reports, but was frustrated with the lack of heat in the building.

Road Report – the Road Foreman reported a relatively quiet month although there were some slippery road conditions. He did some research on culverts. Our township does not have a policy on them, but we might want to consider creating one. We can request that the land owner put one in, but they also have the right to refuse to do so. We will wait until spring thaw to see if the area of concern needs to be readdressed. Chinese knapweed – which is growing in an area along Birch Acres Rd is hard to get rid of. Clay Cich mentioned he had seen a lot of it along Lake Michigan and a patch along the Lavaque Rd.

Fire Department – Fire department members responded to seven medical calls and one mutual aid fire call during December. Members completed the initial flooding of the skating rink, provided fire safety demonstrations, trained on medical and fire scenarios as well as hands on auto extrication techniques using our hydraulic tools and two cars donated by Chesney's auto salvage. They also welcomed Caleb James as a new member on the fire department.

Law Enforcement - nothing to report

Cemetery – nothing to report

Parks & Rec - the clerk had a different individual from last month come and inquire about the rink position. The board voted to hire him as we had no other applicants.

Community Center – the heating system was down for most of the month with lines that got clogged from debris in the system. We are slowly bringing the system back up to temperature. Curtis Oil suggests that we have a more thorough maintenance agreement with them in the future to alleviate more problems. The issue will be addressed this spring, but we need to get heat back in the building for the time being. A more sophisticated filtering system was suggested. Walter Rapp refinished the cabinets in the kitchen. A plumber is needed to do some work on the sink in the kitchen – Clay Cich said he would speak to the custodians about it. The custodians are also doing much of the prep work for the renovations coming.

Recycling Center – with the new year we are no longer required to do a more thorough sort. Cans, bottles and plastic

will be put in the bins inside the storage shed and all paper materials will be placed in the outside dumpsters – we no longer need to separate the different types of paper. (newsprint, junk mail, cardboard)

Other Meetings – Clay Cich, Jim Ray and Deb Pawlowicz met with the attorney to have an orientation to townships. Jeff Blix also met with the attorney’s regarding the lawsuit.

7) OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Lawsuit** - PEO has been granted the use of the park until the suit is heard in August by the judge. The snowmobile club will be posting their trails as snowmobile use only and the DNR has stated that they will ensure that the postings are enforced. The signs that were put up initially by the club had an issue with the wording making them invalid, but new ones have been ordered and will be put up shortly. The county attorney is looking into whether the snowmobile trails are included in the injunction granted to PEO. A special meeting with the lawyers was tentatively set regarding the next steps. The clerk mentioned she had 2 messages from a reporter in the Cities who was requesting information about our Park Ordinance. Talk of handing the parcel of land back to the county and the Land Trust was mentioned. The cost is relatively small and perhaps it could be given back with stipulations attached to it.

8) NEW BUSINESS:

- a) **Protocol** - (added by the Chair after the meeting had progressed) The Chair asked why Clay Cich had requested a meeting with the attorney without notifying the rest of the board. It was also pointed out that if Jim and Deb had in fact taken their oath of office prior to that meeting, it would have created a legal problem by having a meeting of a quorum of township officers without notification causing the township to be in violation of the Open Meeting Law. The clerk noted that infractions can also be caused by answering with the “reply all” button in an email. That is why notifications and information go through the clerk. Clay Cich stated he wasn’t aware of that and that the meeting was very informative to the new board members. (**NOTE:** the clerk was requested to inscribe in the minutes the next bit as said). Then Jeff Blix called Clay Cich “...a lying sack of s**t...” An audience member stated that was uncalled for and asked if it would be in the minutes. Jeff Blix stated that. “yes, I want it as part of the official record...”. In the end Jeff Blix apologized for his outburst. The clerk explained that training was offered to new board members at the MAT training, and the fact that the township voted to move to November elections made the training time factor off from the original intent. Training will be offered in March and in the fall for the board as it always has been.
- b) **Taxes** – Ed Proetz asked from the floor why the township portion of his taxes went up when the township obviously has a surplus of money. A discussion on budget vs levy followed. While the board decides the budget, they only give a recommendation for the levy to the voters, who in turn decided on the levy at the Annual Meeting. That is what decides the township portion of the tax statement.

- 9) ADJOURNMENT: The board was reminded of all upcoming meetings. Jeff Blix moved to adjourn the meeting; Walter Rapp seconded and we adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri A. Armstrong, Clerk