

Rochester Township

Board Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Jamie Neisen.

Members present - Matthew Kitzmann, Jamie Neisen, Jeff Orth, Michael Melford, Nathan Clarke and Randy Staver.

Guests – Pat McGowan, Dean Thompson, Brandon Theobald, Stan Dee, Brian Mueller and seven members of the public.

Open Comments

- Stan Dee spoke to the board about snowplowing practices for gravel roads. He lives on 42nd Street SW. He has concerns that his road wasn't plowed recently and he has had problems getting plowed at times last year. Given where he lives there are problems with drifting. After speaking with the clerk, Mr. Dee is aware of the policy. Pat further explained the policy and the discretion he uses at times to determine when a road gets plowed.
- Jeff Orth spoke in support of Mr. Dee's concerns. He also explained the difference in blading on different pieces of equipment. The road grader used on gravel roads has more direct contact with the road surface and the potential to cause damage.
- Jamie thanked Mr. Dee for bringing his concerns forward.
- Brandon Theobald spoke to the board about the billing process for engineering services. Historically, services for engineering and legal expenses for development projects were billed to the township since those services are provided on behalf of the township. The developer ultimately pays for the expenses which means the township pays the bill and then bills the developer for reimbursement. Recently, the Board decided to have those expenses billed directly to the developer rather than use the township as a pass through.
- Nathan Clarke emphasized that it is important that firms providing services for the township need to maintain their independence.
- Nathan Clarke moved to revert the billing practice back such that the township will invoice the developer for reimbursement of services. Billing should occur on a monthly basis. Michael Melford seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Minutes – Nathan Clarke moved to approve the minutes for the December 14, 2023 meeting. Michael Melford seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Deputy's Report –

- Deputy Dean Thompson stated that there were 31 calls for service.

Treasurer's Report –

- Treasurer Randy Staver reported. There was no unusual activity to report.
- Randy reminded board members of the election filing period which ends at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, January 16th. He will be at the town hall from 1:00-5:00 pm that day.
- Jeff Orth moved approval of the treasurer's report. Matt Kitzmann seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Rochester Township Claims – Matt Kitzmann moved and Jeff Orth seconded to accept and pay Rochester Township claims #5431-5448 in the amount of \$39,251.98. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

JPB Claims – Jeff Orth moved and Michael Melford seconded to accept and pay Joint Powers Board claims #6422-6449 and the Rochester Township share in the amount of \$26,345.06 and a payroll share of \$13,290.94. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Road Maintenance Supervisor Report –

- Everything is in preparation for snow removal. He explained that he will often make decisions based on when to go out based on weather information and balancing use of resources.

Land Use Plan Resolution –

- Will be revisited in May 2024.

2630 Wild Rose Lane SW –

- Jamie noted that there is a pending sale offer on the property. The offer has been extended to December 31, 2024. Other than that, there was no other information to report.

Land Use Planning Workgroup –

- Nothing new to report this month.

Speed Study –

- Jamie Neisen distributed new data for east and west bound traffic on 8th Street.
- Pat will be moving the signs to Weather Hill.
- There was some discussion as to how much longer the road data will be studied before moving toward deciding what solutions to implement.

Subdivision Ordinance –

- Jered Staton spoke and said that the Planning & Zoning Commission approved the revised subdivision ordinance at their last meeting after holding a public hearing which had been published. They made one final edit that private roads would no longer be accepted other than by variance.
- Matt Kitzmann moved to ask GGG to add appropriate aerial schematics to complete the ordinance. Michael Melford seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.
- Matt asked about rescinding the moratorium. That action can be taken by the board at any time.
- There was some discussion as to who is responsible for maintenance of outlots. It could be a home owners association or the developer.
- Based on the suggested edits, Jered will create a revision and the subdivision will be brought back next month.

Variance Request - Herring –

- Jered Staton explained the reasoning for the request and pointed to the staff report. The property is currently non-conforming. Based on lot lines and the existing structure, there have been no changes since 1927.
- Jered reviewed the nine criteria for consideration of a variance request. Staff supports the variance request.
- Since the board is acting in their capacity as the Board of Adjustment, the topic must be opened for public comment.
- Jamie opened the public hearing. Matt Kitzmann posed a couple questions to members of the audience. Jamie closed the public hearing.
- Matt Kitzmann moved approval of the variance request. Jeff Orth seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

RES2024_01_03 – Appointment of Election Judges –

- Supervisors Michael Melford and Nathan Clarke agreed to serve as election judges.
- Jeff Orth moved to approve RES2024_01_03. Matt Kitzmann seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

RES2024_01_02 – Appointment of Absentee Ballot Board –

- Supervisors Jeff Orth and Michael Melford agreed to serve as ballot board officials.
- Jeff Orth moved to approve RES2024_01_02. Michael Melford seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

RES2024_01_01 – Westhill Drive Maintenance Agreement –

- The City of Rochester has agreed to remit annual payment for maintenance of Westhill Drive SW on behalf of the city residents who live along the road. Previously, the city residents were billed individually.

- After Board approval, the agreement will also need to be approved by the Rochester City Council.
- Matt Kitzmann moved to approve RES2024_01_01. Nathan Clarke seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Annual Newsletter –

- Randy Staver presented copies of the annual newsletter and postcard invitation that were used in 2023. As was done last year, he proposed putting the newsletter on the township website and only mailing the postcard. He will work to develop content for the 2024 documents.
- Nathan Clarke moved approval of the newsletter / postcard process for 2024. Matt Kitzmann seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

2024 / 2025 Township Budget –

- Randy Staver presented the first draft of the budget for 2025 which also included a summary of actual expenses for 2023. The Board will have a budget work session on Friday, January 26th at 9:00 AM immediately following the quarterly Joint Powers Board meeting. The Board must approve the budget at the February board meeting so that it can be presented for voter approval at the annual meeting in March.
- After some discussion it was proposed that we use a 3.5% increase across all budget categories as a starting point. There was some discussion whether the baseline for an increase should be the 2024 approved numbers or the 2023 actual. Historically, the approved numbers have been used and will be again this cycle.
- Randy Staver pointed out the use of expected revenue sources, specifically bank interest and TCPA rent, to offset some of the increase.

Mayo Woodlands Third Variance Request –

- Jered Staton discussed. It was previously determined that he would contact the remaining owners and potentially bring forward a single variance request for those owners rather than one by one. That variance request would come before the Township Board serving in their role as the Board of Adjustment.
- Jered has not been able to contact all of the owners yet.

Snowplowing Equipment –

- Matt Kitzmann talked about new plowing equipment and more efficient clearing of roads.

Abandoned Cistern –

- Jamie stated that Nathan Clarke had followed up on a resident report of what looked to be an abandoned cistern. The board discussed potential safety hazards. Nathan will follow up with the property owner to discuss solutions for mitigating the hazard.

Reports:

TCPA Report –

- Michael Melford reported. Ethan Kaske began work in January and is in process of learning TCPA procedures from David and Jered. Compensation was established and there will be a review after 6 months.
- The overhead for TCPA is approximately \$40-42,000 per month.
- Oronoco township may wish to join TCPA. That discussion is ongoing.

Board of Appeals & Adjustment Report (Township Board) –

- There was no additional action requested this month.

Planning and Zoning Commission Report –

- No more information other than what was provided earlier.

Board Chair Report –

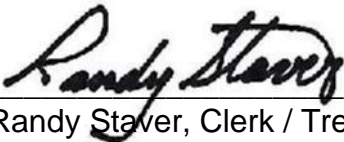
- No information to report this month.

Other Business –

- None

Meeting Adjourned – Jeff Orth moved to adjourn the meeting. Michael Melford seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Randy Staver, Clerk / Treasurer

Jamie Neisen, Chairman