

Oronoco Town Board
Monthly Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2024

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Oronoco Town Board held on **Monday, January 8, 2024** at 5:30 p.m. at the Oronoco Community Center, located at 115 Second Street SW, Oronoco, Minnesota.

Supervisor Ken Mergen called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

The agenda was accepted as written.

Oronoco Gold Rush

Supervisor Matzke spoke on behalf of Melissa Griggs who was unable to attend the meeting: "After a 51 year tradition of Gold Rush Flea Market, we are finding ourselves in a new age of community engagement where volunteers and recruiting board members is difficult. Oronoco is also at a time where construction and growth are challenging in the city limits. The Gold Rush committee is reaching out via social media, the City of Oronoco EDA, and tonight at the township to get feedback on what all residents and leadership across ALL of Oronoco have to say about Gold Rush and our future. Would Township and City residents like to see something more geared toward our community/downtown vs a vendor show? We all want to continue to raise money for the OFD, OFR, Oronoco Food Shelf, Lions Club, VFW, etc but we need to think of a new way of HOW. The Gold Rush committee would like us to complete a survey and help spread the word of the survey –that will be on the Citizens of Oronoco Facebook page and also citizens of the township and city can send comments to goldrushmnvolunteer@gmail.com."

T&M Properties Driveway

Supervisor Mergen stated that T&M Properties has completed the necessary access permit required by the townboard. Supervisor Mergen received a letter from Widseth Engineering stating that they recommend leaving the driveway in its current location for the following reasons: most of the vehicles would not have such a hard left turn into the driveway; exiting the driveway for most of the vehicles would be easier; site line issues would be less of an issue as there would be more room to avoid a conflict with another vehicle or parked car.

Supervisor Johanningmeier stated the report from Widseth addressed all issues he had with the location of the driveway. Supervisor Johanningmeier is wondering about overland flooding because of grading. Supervisor Mergen stated that there was a grading plan done with Olmsted County. Jason Kapper, G-cubed Engineering, stated that a 15" culvert is under the driveway, this is more than needed and there would be no issue with drainage.

Supervisor Mergen made a motion to replace the preapproved driveway location and approve the driveway at its current location, based on the recommendations by

Widseth Engineering, January 5, 2024, seconded by Supervisor Johanningmeier. The motion was carried unanimously.

Driveways

Supervisor Mergen looked at the proposed driveway location for Bill Brandmeyer, 156 Evergreen Dr NE, Rochester, MN 55906. Supervisor Mergen said that this is 350' from the end of the property line. Supervisor Matzke asked if it would come out a township road and if we need to worry about the size of the culvert. Supervisor Mergen stated that the driveway would come out on a township road and Scott Schumacher, Schumacher Construction, stated that a 15" culvert is standard.

Supervisor Mergen made a motion to grant driveway access for Bill Brandmeyer with the condition that a culvert is put in, second by Supervisor Matzke. The motion was carried unanimously.

Supervisor Mergen looked at a driveway access at 55th Ave and 90th St. Supervisor Mergen stated that it would be to access and widen out an existing driveway. Supervisor Mergen said that if the driveway access permit is filled out, he thinks this should be granted.

Supervisor Mergen made a motion to approve access on 55th Ave and 90th St if access permit is submitted, seconded by Supervisor Matzke. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission

Supervisor Matzke stated that Oronoco Township will lose the most acreage in this proposal (about 320 acres) and that does not include additional property that may be lost to unusable land remnants following the MMRT's taking of the land. Since Glenn's Motorcoach paid \$87,000 an acre for land off of Hwy 52, that gives us a good estimate of how much property taxes we stand to lose in the future if Xcel energy takes our land.

Dale Thomforde, New Haven Township, is trying to get the Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project to include a route option for Segment 4 that essentially follows the existing powerline route east from the North Rochester Substation (near Pine Island) to the Chester Junction. The MMRT Project is not very receptive to this route. The current 2 alternatives routes basically run either through New Haven Township and Oronoco Township, or Pine Island Township, the City of Pine Island, New Haven Township, the City of Oronoco, and Oronoco Township. Mr. Thomforde feels that if enough townships and cities request that this route be included in the alternative provided to the PUC, the MMRT Project would have to let the PUC select the best route on its merits. Mr. Thomforde would like the townboard to sign a resolution in support of a MMRT project segment 4 route.

Supervisor Matzke will talk to the legal team Malkerson, Gunn and Martin to look at plan and get feedback from them.

There is an Oronoco City Council Meeting, at 6:30pm, on January 16, 2024, Xcel Energy will be present. All Supervisors will attend this meeting. Clerk Schroeder will post that a quorum of Supervisors will be in attendance.

Supervisor Matzke made a motion to sign Resolution 2024-01, seconded by Supervisor Mergen. Supervisors Matzke and Mergen voted to approve; Supervisor Johanningmeier voted against the motion.

Moving Township Elections from March to November

Supervisor Matzke spoke with Zumbro Township, which merged with another township for elections. They currently share the cost for elections. Supervisor Matzke stated there are 2 major benefits to moving the elections from March to November; not having 2 elections to run, which would cut cost and the annual meeting could then be held earlier. Currently the annual meeting does not start until after the elections are done, around 8:15pm. Supervisor Matzke will reach out to the City of Oronoco to see if they would become administrators for the City of Oronoco and Oronoco Township. Supervisor Matzke will also reach out to Minnesota Association of Townships to see what is needed to move the township elections to November. Supervisor Johanningmeier will contact Luke Turner, Olmsted County Elections, to see if someone from the County can run the elections for the Township and City of Oronoco. Supervisor Johanningmeier suggested that moving the township elections from March to November be done at the annual meeting.

Supervisor Matzke will start a Facebook page for Oronoco Township. She will post the meeting dates, agenda and other important dates and information for Oronoco Township Residents.

Road Report

Scott Schumacher said they have been cleaning ditches and trimming trees. They had Jetter Clean unplug culverts on 60th Ave. Schumacher put up signs on 125th.

If the weather holds, Schumacher said they will be trimming pine trees on Frederichs Drive. Supervisor Mergen asked that Schumacher reach out to Dan, Premiere Artisan Design and Build, LLC before trimming the trees.

Supervisor Mergen reached out to Rich Baine, Olmsted County Public Works, about a missing road sign on Kuisle Lane.

Supervisor Matzke is working with Olmsted County Public Works to see if access can be revoked on 11th Ave for Boelter Estates Development. The second exit from the development is part of the third phase of the project. Supervisor Matzke does not want any more traffic on 11th Ave.

Supervisor Matzke said that when the roundabout is done at 75th St, beginning in 2025, all traffic will directed to 55th St. She suggested getting a traffic count maybe this fall to see how much of an impact there will be in the area. Supervisor Matzke said that maybe they should consider closing 11th Ave during this road construction project.

Russel Young, 7805 11 Ave NW, Rochester, MN 55901 said that the work that was done on 11th Ave is good and it improved the end of his driveway.

Supervisor Johanningmeier stated the new signs on 125th to Uncle John's are bright, he has heard good comments about them.

Supervisor Mergen stated there is a horse trailer on Pine Crest Lane. He has been in contact with Sherriff Rinn. The owner has been identified and the trailer should be moved.

Supervisor Mergen told Schumacher that if you don't have to salt the end of Postier's Point Dr then don't. Homeowners are worried about the sodium levels in their well because of salt put on the road.

Supervisor Mergen said there is a camper in a yard on Thunderbluff Lane. Supervisor Mergen called Kristi Gross, Olmsted County Planning. Sewage cannot be dumped into a septic system. Supervisor Mergen will reach out to Rob Mathias, Zoning Enforcement Officer, on this.

The tentative date for the Oronoco Township Road tour is March 28, 2024.

Minutes Approval

Supervisor Mergen made a motion to approve the minutes for December 11, 2023 monthly meeting, Supervisor Matzke seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report-Brandi Lind

Oronoco Township Supervisors are looking into switching banks.

Supervisor Johanningmeier went to Think Bank. He was not able to talk to anyone when he was there. He did not get any call or response back from them.

Supervisors Matzke and Mergen looked at Premier Bank. They are similar to Fransden Bank as far as free checking, safety deposit box rental fee. It is recommended to do ACH deposits; the cost is \$30/mo and there would be a per transaction fee as well.

ONB Bank seems to be the most competitive with interest rates for checking, CD's and money market. Supervisor Matzke will reach out to MAT to find out about a conflict of interest if funds are moved to ONB Bank, where Treasurer Lind is employed.

The YTD Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances as of December 31, 2023 shows: receipts \$962,080.86, disbursements \$105,494,65 with an ending balance of \$1,704,661.85.

Treasurer Lind is still not matching with the bank and CTAS, the discrepancies are still due to MN dcp reporting. Treasurer Lind is working with Hemann and Grover to correct this.

Supervisor Matzke made a motion to approve the treasurers report, seconded by Supervisor Mergen. The motion was carried unanimously.

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ARPA

Treasure Lind has still not been granted administrator to the account. Treasurer Lind sent an email to Lori Stalker, MAT, who stated that it looked like they were still awaiting on access approval.

Approval to pay payroll and claims including electronic transfer

Supervisor Mergen will contact Widseth Engineering about the invoice dated on December 20, 2023, for T&M Properties Driveway. Clerk Schroeder will not send out payment until she has heard from Supervisor Mergen.

There was a motion made by Supervisor Mergen to approve the payroll and claims including electronic transfers for January 8, 2024, seconded by Supervisor Matzke. The motion was carried unanimously.

OTPAC

December meeting was a discussion on priorities for Land Use planning in 2024.

Supervisor Johanningmeier asked more questions to Olmsted County Planning about the floodplain and shoreland ordinance, he feels the ordinances should be separated. He has not yet received a response back from Olmsted County Planning.

Clerk Notes

The candidacy for Oronoco Town board opened on January 2-January 16, 2024 at 5pm. The township election will be Tuesday March 12 from 5-8pm. The annual meeting will be Tuesday March 12 beginning at 8:15pm.

The Reorganizational Meeting will be Monday April 8, 2024 following the regular townboard meeting

The tentative road tour date is March 28, 2024.

The board of Audit will be February 12, 2024.

Clerk Schroeder is still waiting to get a date set for the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting, this date is set by the county.

Clerk Schoeder is working with Andrew Wilcox, Nex Gen Technology to create a new website. The cost of building a new website would be \$1500-\$2000. The monthly fees would be \$100. Clerk Schroeder will ask Mr. Wilcox if the monthly cost could be lowered if Treasurer Lind and Clerk Schroeder update the site as needed.

Board Member Comments

Supervisor Johanningmeier received some information from the Oronoco First Responders. He has sent an email back with further questions. This is just information gathering at this time. All

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decisions to increase payment to Oronoco First Responders will be made at the Annual meeting
March 12, 2024.

**There was a motion made by Supervisor Mergen to adjourn the meeting, second by
Supervisor Matzke. The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm**

Respectfully Submitted:

Clerk Jody Schroeder

Tammy Matzke

Ken Mergen

Joel Johanningmeier