

**ORONOCO TOWNSHIP
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 9, 2021 8:15 PM**

This was an in-person meeting. The published notice indicated the possibility of asking for a meeting continuance if attendance surpassed room capacity. Attendance was within room capacity with social distancing.

The annual Oronoco Township meeting was **called to order** on March 9, 2020 at 8:15 pm by clerk Lucy Shonyo. There were 10 people present. Kim Stanton presided as moderator. Kim Stanton noted that to offer or second motions, or to vote, attendees need to be residents of Oronoco Township and qualified voters in Minnesota.

The **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.

These documents were distributed: proposed agenda, minutes of the 2020 annual meeting, Board of Audit minutes from Feb 2, 2021, 2020 Financial Report including road expenditures, levy information; a report from Oronoco First Responders, a report on underserved broadband areas in Oronoco Township, and a map showing areas to be included in a broadband project with Bevcomm.

The **agenda** was accepted as presented.

The meeting paused to allow time for attendees to read the **2020 minutes**.

The **Board of Audit** met February 2, 2021. The minutes of that meeting were distributed. Kim Stanton explained the township's PFA notes for Kings Park and Cedar Beach septic systems. The Board of Audit examined these transactions. The monthly process of reconciling financial accounts between the clerk and the treasurer was noted. No irregularities were found.

Treasurer Kim Stanton reviewed the 2020 Financial Report explaining some significant activities and expenditures. Oronoco Township's total revenue was \$1,033,210, disbursements \$761,136 with an ending balance of \$812,967. Liabilities include the notes for King's Park Septic (\$40,488) and Cedar Beach Septic (\$240,662). The township has special assessments in place for these septic projects as well as road projects Shorewood Lane, River Hill and 18th Ave Extension. Shorewood Lane assessments will end this year.

2020 accomplishments are the Ryans Bay Road project done in partnership with Zumbro Township which will be complete this spring and an agreement with Bevcomm to get high speed internet to 320 households. \$40,000 of the \$50,000 levy voted in 2020 will fund this. \$10,000 was withheld to support future connection of hard-to-reach areas of the township. [At the meeting it was incorrectly stated that \$15,000 was withheld.]

Road maintenance and repair, including snow removal, continue to be the township's largest expense. There are about \$400,000 identified road repairs needed.

The financial position of the Pine Island Fire District has improved. One pumper has been replaced. A \$270,000 tanker is the next large piece of equipment needed. The PIFD 2021 proposed levy is down from 2020. First Responder's expense remains \$8,000. [Kim Stanton is PIFD's treasurer.]

Supervisor Ken Mergen gave the road report. Ryan's Bay Road is almost complete. Guardrails need to be installed and some grading needs to be finished. Sattre Drive, Fitzpatrick, Blakely Ct were repaired. Michael Clemens asked about All-Craft Exteriors and the wear 18th Av will see because of traffic generated by the business. Supervisors Charlie Lacy provided a recap of actions after 75th St became Hwy 63. There is an agreement in place for All-Craft to add rock every three years and chloride the road annually. The township's road advisors believe this will suffice.

Charlie Lacy is on the PIFD board and gave the report. PIFD was underbudget in 2020. The excess \$26,000 was put in the equipment fund. It is expected needed funds will stabilize or decrease over the next few years after several years of increases. PIFD has a track / wheeled rescue vehicle as well as an amphibious vehicle.

Chris Inman, Oronoco First Responders Director submitted a written report. There were 128 runs split equally between the township and city. There were no staffing or personal protective equipment procurement issues. He is "extremely happy with the performance of our membership and their flexibility in working through the additional safety and training requirements necessary in 2020."

Supervisor Charlie Lacy spoke about Oronoco Township Planning Advisory Commission (OTPAC). Work with Olmsted County on updating Oronoco Township's Land Use Plan continues. Adam Rucker was reappointed to OTPAC. They meet on an as-needed basis.

Supervisor Tammy Matzke submitted a report "Identifying Underserved Broadband Areas in Oronoco Township". In 2020 (before COVID) electors added \$50,000 to the levy to support high speed broadband in the township. COVID illustrated the importance of high-speed connections with working from home and distance learning for students. In December of 2020 the township entered into an agreement with Bevcomm to expedite providing high speed service to 220 households. [Later expanded to 230]. \$40,000 of the levy will be spent on this effort, with \$10,000 reserved for connecting remote households. A map was distributed of the area covered by this agreement. There was discussion of local providers and the pluses and minuses of their service, and of the areas not currently served. There is not a levy asking this year, but the board will continue to work with providers to cover Oronoco Township.

The **Proposed Levy** was discussed. The "Money Raised by Tax upon Taxable Property" was appropriated as follows: **General Revenue:** Neil Stolp made a motion to fund at the 2020 level, \$69,000. Michael Clemens second, motion carried unanimously. **Road & Bridge:** Ken Mergen made a motion to fund at the 2020 level, \$652,860. Charlie Lacy second, motion carried unanimously. **Fire and First Responders:** Tammy Matzke made a motion to fund at \$106,545, down 3.6% from 2020. Michael Clemens second, motion carried unanimously. The total levy approved is \$828,405.

A motion was made by Ken Mergen to set the **2022 Annual Meeting** time at 8:15pm, to be held at Oronoco City Hall/Community Center. Michael Clemens second, motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Charlie Lacy to authorize the Town Board to spend the yearly sum of up to \$1,000 for the purposes of **citizen or board member recognition**. Michael Clemens second, motion carried unanimously.

Other topics:

Establishing a **dog park** in the township was discussed. There are possible liability issues. Is a partnership with the city possible?

Having a **brush dump** was discussed. How would this be monitored?

Establishing a **solar farm** on the closed dump site was discussed. This could be a revenue source for the township. Decommissioning these sites is expensive.

Holding another **river cleanup** was discussed. Cost and liability issues might be issues.

The town board will explore the possibilities of these suggestions in the next year.

Ken Mergen made a **motion to adjourn** at 9:50pm. Charlie Lacy second, motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lucy Shonyo, Clerk

Kim Stanton, Moderator