

**New Hartford Township  
MINUTES  
for the Monthly Meeting  
August 10, 2023, 7:00 pm  
New Hartford Town Hall**

**Attendance**

Supervisors: Joe Baumgartner, Richard Johnson, Larry Moldenhauer

Clerk: vacation

Dep. Clerk: Caroline van Schaik

Treasurer: Michael Moor

Maintenance:

Fire Chief: Cody Gehrke

Guests: Bob and Pat Bruno, Jeriss Heyer, John Maass, Arlen Spore, Ed Walsh

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Chairman Joe Baumgartner at 7:05 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of July 13, 2023 regular meeting minutes - Motion by Richard Johnson, second by Larry Moldenhauer; all approved.

**Public Comment**

- a. Bob Bruno inquired about Richmond Township employing Willie Erdmann for about 2 weeks of grading. He also said a survey is coming about how better to get fire departments reimbursed when an excavator and other large equipment is needed for fire control. Primary fire departments cannot file for Insurance of these costs, Bob said, so Richmond and Homer townships have amended their contracts to be able to bill a homeowner, backed by the township. There was discussion of fire departments sharing a big bill that doesn't get reimbursed.
- b. Arlen Spore asked about signs on Dakota Valley. Joe Baumgartner said it was a county project. He also inquired about the proposed cell tower and whether it would improve coverage in the valley; the board moved this agenda item forward with an explanation of the proposed project and the public hearing set for Thursday, Aug. 17, 2023 at 7 p.m. at the Winona County Office Building. There was discussion about community concern for how close to St. John's Lutheran School the cell tower is proposed to be built, and about coverage for valley residents and fire/First Responder dispatch. The board read aloud and signed a statement of continued support for the project while requesting a location further from the school; the statement will be sent to the Winona County Planning Commission as part of public input. Fire Chief Cody Goerke and volunteer firefighter Bob Bruno explained that fire radios and pagers use repeater panel towers on I90, not cell towers, which are less technologically advanced than the fire radio system.
- c. John Maass said four driveways on Lanes Valley Drive including his were not dust sprayed; the board moved this agenda item forward. Ed Walsh asked if the township has a dust spray policy and what it would cost to dust spray all roads. Joe Baumgartner said this year's \$5,200 bill paid for perhaps 2 of the township's 27 miles of road, and that the driver ignores even road flagging and color-coded maps. There is only one company that does this work in our region, he said.
- d. Jerris Heyer and Ed Walsh asked about speed limit signs. Bob Bruno said to contact the county engineer, who will do a road survey and use federal recommendations to determine the

appropriate speed, which is enforceable by the county sheriff department. Ed Walsh volunteered to call the county and County Commissioner Marcia Ward, who sits on the county Roads and Bridges Committee.

- e. Ed Walsh asked about cutting roadside vegetation as a safety issue for seeing deer. Joe Baumgartner said it is usually done in the fall so that Willie Erdmann can safely spot rocks and stumps while driving the expensive "reach mower."

### **Fire Department Report**

- a. Chief Cody Gehrke reviewed the purchase of new batteries for the old radios, LED lights, a discounted set of fire pants/jackets, and four tourniquets; truck, pumper, and tanker repair needs and scheduling; and the ongoing problem with the new radios. Andrew Teske will attend the Oct 23, Fire 1, Fire 2 class. There was discussion of putting a Kwik Trip fuel/oil card in each truck. Joe Baumgartner made a motion to do so, second by Richard Johnson; all approved.

### **Road Reports**

- a. Salt order update, delivery preparation – Delivery should be within 10 days of Aug. 8, 2023, when an order number was issued.
- b. Man sand (not lime screenings) bids brought by Willie Erdmann – Richard Johnson made a motion to accept the lower of 2 bids, from FTX Trucking and La Crescent Rock, second by Larry Moldenhauer; all approved. Joe Baumgartner will ask La Crescent Rock to submit their verbal bid in writing for full consideration.
- c. Rock invoices update – Joe Baumgartner confirmed that the township will not get the customary road names associated with rock delivery due to problems on the company end.
- d. Dust spray update – see Public Comment
- e. Post removal on Lost Valley Drive update – not done
- f. Pothole at the start of Lanes Valley Rd per Paul Thicke – Paul reported the pothole repaired.
- g. Ed Walsh sends thanks for gravel on Lanes Valley and Lost Valley roads plus speed limit signs along Lanes Valley Road, dust control on Lost Valley Drive, cutting vegetation adjacent to township roads – see Public Comment
- h. Local Road Improvement Program grant information only, input – The consensus was that the township should apply to help pay for seal coating. The clerks will inquire.
- i. Grader door opener – no action
- j. Forster Road culvert seeding – no action
- k. Culvert update on Dakota Valley Drive – done. Joe Baumgartner noted that after sealcoating, the county sprayed and it appears to be holding.
- l. Permit to replace short culvert on Lanes Valley Rd. - Joe Baumgartner said there is no room to install a bigger culvert and he proposed spraying instead of replacing the culvert (by an old house). He thinks it will still require a Department of Natural Resources permit.

### **Old Business**

- a. Refrigerator update by Richard Johnson – A new refrigerator is installed and working.
- b. Insurance claim filed through MATIT update - Joe Baumgartner said the homeowner with the now-replaced window broken in last fall's mowing accident refused the MATIT reimbursement check and instead is seeking reimbursement through their own insurance.
- c. Cornerstone Certificate of Insurance, contract for mowing update – Deputy Clerk Caroline van Schaik said a contract was sent with payments along with a repeat request for Proof of Insurance as required in the contract.
- d. Electrician for manhole, wiring, septic light indicator update by Willie Erdmann, Joe Baumgartner, all – Electrical work on the septic alert and air compressor at the shop is

- completed.
- e. Awning over townhall door by Joe Baumgartner – no progress
  - f. Approve Claims – Deputy Clerk Caroline van Schaik presented financial statements and claims, noting that Clerk Andrea Erdmann completed the financial statement before the bank statement arrived and that she will update and present in September as needed. Motion by Joe Baumgartner to approve all claims including pending MiEnergy (1) and Cornerstone (2) bills, second by Larry Moldenhauer; all approved.

### **New Business**

- 1. Clerk's Report
  - a. Cell tower public hearing – see Public Comment
  - b. Winona County real estate assessment fees - \$6,625 information only
  - c. MN Town Aid Certification for 2024 - \$3025, comparable to 2023, information only
  - d. Hokah Oil contract – The board committed to make a decision at the September regular meeting. Joe Baumgartner will seek a second bid.
  - e. Credit card for Kate Reese – Clerk Andrea Erdmann suggested this as a way for Kate to purchase cleaning supplies directly. Secretary Michael Moor asked about the annual fee per card. The board is supportive; clerks will investigate fees.
  - f. Dehumidifier hose update – Continuous drain into the sink works better.
  - g. Aug. 2, 2023 district meeting – Richard Johnson reminded everyone to take pictures at accident and fire scenes.
  - h. Aug. 9, 2023 bi-monthly district meeting at Wilson townhall – Richard Johnson reported that County Commissioner warned attendees that with state gas tax collection down and construction costs up, road conditions were likely to suffer.
  
- 2. Treasurer's Report
  - a. Starting balance tonight \$335,945.64
  - b. Spent tonight \$53,938.69
  - c. Balance tonight \$282,006.95
  - d. This month last year Aug. 11, 2022 \$273,245.02, which included the seal coat payment made
  
- 3. Other - none

Motion to Adjourn the regular meeting at 8:54 p.m. by Joe Baumgartner, second by Larry Moldenhauer; all approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Caroline van Schaik 9/14/2023

Approved by:

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Chairman Joe Baumgartner  
Witnessed:

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Dep. Clerk Caroline van Schaik

Date: