

**New Hartford Township  
MINUTES  
for the Monthly Meeting  
December 14, 2023, 7:00 pm  
New Hartford Town Hall**

**Attendance**

Supervisors: Joe Baumgartner, Larry Moldenhauer, Richard Johnson

Clerk: Andrea Erdmann

Dep. clerk: Caroline van Schaik

Treasurer: Michael Moor

Maintenance: Willie Erdmann

Fire Chief: absent

Guests: Ed Walsh

Meeting called to order by Chairman Joe Baumgartner at 7:01 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Nov. 9, 2023 regular meeting minutes - Motion by Joe Baumgartner, second by Richard Johnson; all approved.

**Public Comment** – During the discussion on electing versus appointing a clerk (*see New Business*), Ed Walsh asked why the board was considering such a change. Joe Baumgartner said that the change in governance would allow the board to hire a clerk in the event that no one runs for the position. Clerk Andrea Erdmann said it would guarantee certain accounting skills, and that the hired position would qualify for benefits that an elected person does not.

**Fire Department Report**

- a. Joe Baumgartner confirmed that the board-approved Fire Department Christmas party includes a stipulation that no alcohol be purchased with township dollars. He said that a CPR training will take place in the township hall lower level. He also clarified that pumper truck repairs were on hold pending parts.

**Road Reports**

- a. Permit to replace culvert on Lanes Valley Rd. update by Richard Johnson – Joe Baumgartner reported that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) predicts a 2-3 month delay due to understaffing.
- b. Gopher State On Call update by Andrea Erdmann – in process
- c. Other – Runway Drive will need a new 5-foot culvert in the spring, according to Joe.
- d. Willie Erdmann will be cutting trees in the next few weeks; the board cautioned against tree cutting alone.

**Old Business**

- a. Township hall door awning update by Joe Baumgartner (January 2024?) – Joe is hopeful!
- b. Protocol for Township Acknowledgement Form requests and other issues to allow for resident input update – Clerks reported that they have not been able to research this sufficiently, but will follow up for next month.
- c. Approve Claims – Motion to pay the bills by Larry Moldenhauer, second by Richard

Johnson; all approved.

- d. Department of Justice allegation – The township submitted detailed responses to the Department of Justice letter. The board discussed the process, including cost in staff time, and directed clerks to keep this item on the monthly agenda going forward.

### **New Business**

1. Township hall rental on pause due to Department of Justice allegation – Joe Baumgartner reported that the township lawyer advised this pause until the DOJ allegation is resolved. It is in effect now until further notice.
2. Clerk's Report
  - a. Updated resolution designating polling location – The board signed an updated resolution designating the township hall as the township polling site until further notice. This puts the township in compliance with changes at the state level.
  - b. Appointed (versus elected) clerk option – After discussion, on a motion by Richard Johnson, second by Larry Moldenhauer, the board approved a resolution to ask township voters to adopt Option B, which would change the township government to allow the town board to appoint (hire) the clerk. This question will appear on the Mar. 12, 2024 township election ballot. If passed, it will negate the outcome of the clerk election on the same ballot and remain in place until the board and electors decide to revert to an elected clerk. If the question fails on Mar. 12, 2024, the outcome of the clerk election stands. The clerks advised a preference for a township resident to do this job though it is not required for an appointed person. *(Note: Please call any supervisor with thoughts and see the website for details.)*
  - c. Election updates – There are two positions open. Clerk Andrea Erdmann is not running for re-election; supervisor Larry Moldenhauer is.
  - d. Short-term CD update – The board signed the bank paperwork for a 6-month Certificate of Deposit (CD) that will build up the seal coat fund in time for work next summer.
  - e. Postcard update – The board agreed that the just-approved ballot question should be added to the postcard, which is expected to be mailed in December.
  - f. MN withholding tax – Taxes will now be filed annually.
  - g. Mileage reimbursement rate in 2024 – Unknown yet; time sheets will be printed once it is announced.
  - h. MN sick leave act - Elected officials are not eligible for this new state benefit. Hired staff are.
  - i. Other – Andrea recommended that the Fire Department submit its training time pay requests by mid-January since she will be away in late January/early February.
3. Treasurer's Report
  - a. Starting balance tonight: \$354,609.24 *(includes a county payment of \$99,055.63)*
  - b. Spent tonight: \$33,523.94
  - c. Balance tonight: \$321,085.30 *(\$100,000 will be invested in a short term CD. See Clerk's report above.)*
  - d. This month last year: Dec. 8, 2022 - \$283,572.82 *(included an approximate sum from the county that had not yet been received)*
  - e. Other – Treasurer Michael Moor asked if the township or the fire department will respond to the \$1000 contribution for a control burn. He also reminded everyone to cash their checks before the end of December, and noted a single outstanding bill before the year ends.

Motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:04 p.m. by Joe Baumgartner, second by Richard Johnson; all approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Caroline van Schaik 1/11/2024

Approved by:

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Chairman Joe Baumgartner

Witnessed:

Date

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Dep. Clerk Caroline van Schaik

Date