

TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
THURSDAY – FEBRUARY 19TH, 2015
7:30 P.M. – TOWN HALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Gerike at 7:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Board members present: Chairman, Jeff Gerike; Supervisors, Steve Weiss, Ricky Strauch, Dean Solie and Lynn Norheim; Clerk, Patti Warner; Absent: Treasurer, Tamy Moss

Also present: Bernice Strauch, Tom Peterson, Fred Poss, Vic Werlein, Dawn Werlein, Eli Borntreger, Vaughn Nagahashi, Bruce Logterman, Christine Yellowthunder and Carol Peuse

Pledge of Allegiance

Motion to approve agenda was made by Lynn Norheim. Seconded by Ricky Strauch Motion carried: Steve Weiss (aye) Dean Solie (aye) Lynn Norheim (aye) Ricky Strauch (aye) Chairman Jeff Gerike (aye)

Public Comment:

Bruce Logterman: At the last meeting –he sat there listening – and he thinks some people in this mining committee sound like they are trying to promote their own personal agenda and whatever feelings they have are not all the feelings of other residents in the Township – re: ordinance how much extra money do we want to spend– In his opinion he stated your elected as the board and you should be the one to make the decisions. Feels they are asking too many questions. He understands you get 3 minutes to speak. He would like to see the meetings run that way instead of seeing a small committee trying to run the whole meeting.

Vic Werlein: He stated he feels Weiss & Strauch both want to hire another attorney – feel they are just trying to spend more tax payers money – not everybody feels that way – Re: Drost who spoke to the board a few months ago - he made comments about Chetek chain of lakes – Vic has fished those lakes his whole life – from Birchwood to Chetek and at that time you could always walk across it – this was back in the 80’s when those sand mines weren’t even there. Then you want to hire this other person – he doesn’t want to see us being sued by the sand mines. Sand mines have deep pockets we don’t. But just remember your paying your paying for all of this with our tax dollars

Christine Yellowthunder: Stated she is glad we live in the United States. She spoke about the article on the Houston county commissioners in Caledonia, Minnesota and how they passed a ban on frac sand mining in Minnesota. They had about 175 citizens come to their public meeting. Goes to a full vote on February 27th. She would like encourage the board that they still have an obligation to protect the health, safety and well being of citizens in this township. Also stated that the board should seriously look at the revision of the mining ordinance. We need to have experienced people guiding us especially when the state is trying to take away local authority.

The minutes were read and approved on a motion by Supervisor Dean Solie. Seconded by Supervisor Lynn Norheim. Motion carried: Steve Weiss (aye) Dean Solie (aye) Lynn Norheim (aye) Ricky Strauch (aye) Chairman Jeff Gerike (aye)

The financial report was presented and motion to approve was made by Supervisor Steve Weiss. Seconded by Ricky Strauch. Motion carried: Steve Weiss (aye) Dean Solie (aye) Lynn Norheim (aye) Ricky Strauch (aye) Chairman Jeff Gerike (aye)

Old Business:

Fred Poss – Spoke regarding the Eau Claire Lake Association and he wanted to share an update on work that they have been able to do being a volunteer organization – they are voluntary – private and non-profit. They have been able to write state, federal and county grants. And raise equal amounts of money themselves. They have three goals: 1. Create sand traps to stop sand coming into lake. 2. Install aerator system 3. To continue to build fish cribs so far they have built 151 fish cribs – DNR has given them data that the entire population of fish has increased over 3 yrs 300%. It used to be called a dead sea but not so true anymore. Lake District Protection & Rehab District President Marlo Orth stated they put levied for a tax of 1 ½ mils property tax – around 56K year. (This only includes properties around the Lake) They do the June 20th fund raiser – and this year they are starting a golf tournament. As of Tuesday they were successfully able to dredge up at Treble Waters and Gravel Pit. They have the capacity of 10K of sand and they removed 10,200 lbs. It is wet sediment when dry is 8K cubic yards. Very successful with winter dredging. Gravel pit is ½ size removed 4K cubic yds dry. And that's maximum capacity. They have an expert company from Antigo (dredging co). If we get normal size flood we will be fine. The association took on the task of installing fish traps, and aeration system. The Lake District takes on the task of maintaining it. The ND road is where the aeration system will be – the road is in already and power there. Hope to begin building in March. 15 aerators if budget can support - There is another new DNR person – David Hahn. He has surprised them by telling them that they have to build a boardwalk from pump house to lake. They have raised over 3K of private money for this but it could cost as much as 9K – doesn't know for sure. If ok by the board when their association has their next meeting in March. He'll provide a summary of their finances. He'll submit it at the end of March to the Town Board.

Ricky Strauch: Spoke about having an Ag enterprise area in our township – he stated that an Ag Enterprise is similar to farmland preservation. Last census reported losses like 30K/yr of Ag land to public. Greg Leonard is from the Eau Claire County Ag preservation office. Greg spoke and stated he does a lot of work with NRCS. Farm preservation is a tax credit on income taxes – it varies where land is located and how you are located. In a zoned township it is 7.50/acre. That is one way without a commitment. 2nd way is Ag Enterprise Area – where it is developed from a local community. Eau Claire, Osseo and Augusta – they are calling it the golden triangle. The idea behind it from state is you will have to come up with a reason to say it's important to this community. You come up with your own reason locally and why it is important. Focus Ag preservation in one area. Would give people the option to preserve their farmland. Farmland preservation now if included and your unzoned you could participate in it – it's voluntary – you sign an agreement for 15/yr to maintain land in farmland preservation. In unzoned area you would get tax credit 5.00/acre in zoned area and signed agreement you'd have 10.00/tax credit. In order to participate you must have 6K of gross revenue off your land.

Property tax must be paid. His responsibility – anyone who applies must agree to follow the state standards. No wastewater coming off operation. Conservation. This has been in existence since late 1970's – The only way to for this tax credit to become an option is if there's an Ag Area Enterprise. You need to send a petition to the State and this is due by the end of April – if approved by state beginning 1/1/16 people in area the area could be able to sign up for tax credit. Ricky Strauch stated he looked at Bridge Creek and he said he could come up with 5100 acres easily that could qualify. In his opinion – that would have 6K in revenue. Feels Bridge Creek has a lot of agricultural land. Tax credit if you receive it helps stabilize farming economy. Tax credit would help on high years. Average age of farmer is 59 years old - trying to make it more economical to try to help beginning farmers. Steve Weiss stated with this area designated as an Ag enterprise area and new farmers starts looking for grants this would be bonus points to say that his land is in an Ag enterprise area. Dean Solie stated said he's completely in favor of it. Greg Leonard stated if you want to sign up and get the 5/acre it's totally voluntary. Tree farms and forestry land are also part of the ag land. Steve asked if land in CRP is also ag land but Greg stated that it is considered a different kind of revenue. If someone rents your farm and if they can show that your farm is making 6K you can also sign up but you would have to have the guy that rents it do the preservation & nutrient program. Chairman, Jeff Gerike asked Greg if farmer gets this credit where is this money coming from. Greg stated it is coming out of the state revenues. Steve Weiss asked if there is any chance of losing this funding in 5 yrs. Greg stated it has been funded since the 1980's and they went under a revamp in 2009.

After discussion Supervisor Dean Solie made a motion to pass a resolution that he agrees and supports the development of an Ag Enterprise Area. Seconded by Supervisor Lynn Norheim. Motion carried: Steve Weiss (aye) Dean Solie (aye) Lynn Norheim (aye) Ricky Strauch (aye) Chairman Jeff Gerike (aye)

Chairman Jeff Gerike brought up discussion regarding hiring an outside source to complete inspections at the sand mines. Discussion was held and Chairman Jeff Gerike stated that Kelly Jacobs from Eau Claire County already inspects the sand mines. Ricky Strauch asked if we could have Kelly come down and discuss her inspections. Chairman Jeff Gerike stated that she has brought up several issues that has went on out at the sand mines. At this time hiring someone outside to do mining inspections is tabled.

Tom Peterson –Spoke to the board regarding 4 possible outside sources to look at the mining committee's proposed changes to the sand mining ordinance.

Vaughn Nagahashi stated he contacted the following: Bill Mavity who is the co-Author of Stockholm's Ordinance – he agreed to do a review and give an informal opinion and would do it pro bono. Jim Drost he stated he would do it if the board gave the go ahead for him to respond to Schaumberg's comments. John Wagman, Attorney from Town of Garfield is willing to look at it and give his opinion or revamp it. Estimate of 1200.00 to do this. Glen Stoddard – he said he'd do a review for 250/hr. It might take a minimum of three hours - if you wanted him to do or rewrite the ordinance he would have to have discussion with you.

Tom Peterson stated the committee has not met - the request from board was just to find potential reviewers – he stated if you want committee to meet and review these comments they would but it is entirely up to the board. No action taken

After discussion Supervisor Dean Solie stated he felt there should be a meeting of the board and Attorney Schaumberg. He stated he has always represented Bridge Creek very well. He is a good lawyer and does not see the need for us hiring anyone else and leave him out of the discussion. Lynn Norheim also stated that he felt there was no need to have another attorney look over the proposed changes. Chairman Jeff Gerike stated the clerk will try and schedule a meeting with Attorney Schaumberg and hold a special meeting between the board and attorney. Clerk will let the board know of date and time.

Discussion was held regarding our dog ordinance: Lynn Norheim felt we could just stick with state statutes. Dean felt would be logical Supervisor Lynn Norheim made a motion to draft an ordinance stating the township will follow the state statutes only for the Township. Seconded by Ricky Strauch. Motion carried: Steve Weiss (aye) Dean Solie (aye) Lynn Norheim (aye) Ricky Strauch (aye) Chairman Jeff Gerike (aye)

Chairman Gerike brought up a discussion regarding purchase of a new pickup for the township. Dean & Lynn went and looked at one in Cadott. 2005 Dodge 2500 with utility box. This is gas with 4 wheel drive – 34K miles government owned vehicle - lift tail gate would need a hitch to haul trailer - Dale thinks they could put one on – Dale said a fuel barrel would be nice to put in there too the price is 17,500.00. Dean stated he asked him to sharpen his pencil a little but he's pretty firm on the price. Lynn has to go there tomorrow morning and tell them the board's decision. It has very little rust. Has vinyl floor mats and seats red truck. 5.7 liter hemi. Only downfall is gas engine. Would be handy too for hauling culverts. Ricky asked if they looked at other trucks. Dale stated yes they looked at a few already. There was one also on an auction that they were trying to bid on but didn't get it. Ricky Strauch made a motion to make the deal on the truck. 2nd by Lynn to purchase truck for maximum amount of 17,500.00 Motion carried: Steve Weiss (aye) Dean Solie (aye) Lynn Norheim (aye) Ricky Strauch (aye) Chairman Jeff Gerike (aye)

Dean Solie talked about being asked to get a permission slip for the guys to haul sand for the Lake Association – they were going to start hauling on March 26th. Dale Kirchoff stated that they have never required one before.

Chairman Jeff Gerike asked the board to go into closed session. Town Board went into closed session at 9:13 p.m. Resumed meeting at 9:33 p.m.

All bills were audited and paid.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Supervisor Steve Weiss. Seconded by Supervisor Lynn Norheim – Meeting adjourned 10:15 p.m.

Patti Warner, Clerk

