

**WOODROW TOWNSHIP
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 14, 2023 6:30 P.M.**

- 1) Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Clerk Cathy Dietrich.
- 2) All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3) Nominations were sought from the floor for a moderator. Citizen Lloyd Thielmann was nominated by Gordy Reher to serve as moderator. There were no other nominations. A show of hands from the floor indicated by a majority vote that Lloyd Thielmann would serve as moderator.
- 4) M/S/P Tom Larson/Dave Tanner approved the Annual Meeting Agenda.
- 5) M/S/P Gordy Reher/Tom Larson approved the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes. Meeting minutes were not read aloud.
- 6) Treasurer's Report; Treasurer read the treasurer report for 2022 Actuals from Schedule 1 Statement of Receipts, Disbursement and Balances. See Appendix A. The year-end balance of \$769,707.69 is balanced to the bank account and includes the Investment Balance of \$110,504.68 that will be used for future road projects. M/S/P Leann Reher/Deb Tanner approved treasurer report.

7) Discussion of 2023 Budget:

RECEIPTS

M/S/P	Fund	2022 Actual (\$)	2022 Budget (\$)	2023 Budget (\$)	2024 Proposed Budget (\$)
Tom Larson/ Gordon Reher	General Fund	90,110	57,775	57,775	67,779
Laura Jones/ Colter Peterson	Road & Bridge	355,175	205,000	205,000	205,000
Tom Larson/ Mike Schmitt	Fire	87,440	87,000	90,000	95,000
	Totals	\$532,725	\$349,775	\$352,775	\$367,779

DISBURSEMENTS

Fund	2022 Actual (\$)	2022 Budget (\$)	2023 Budget (\$)	2024 Proposed Budget (\$)
General Fund	72,731	54,100	66,320	103,620
Road & Bridge	484,282	182,700	224,700	369,200
Fire	86,371	111,372	86,371	94,075
Totals	\$643,384	\$348,172	\$377,391	\$566,895

Discussion on differences between Receipts and Disbursements;

For our 2022 receipts, actuals, we had a total of \$532,775. This difference is due to American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds received \$68,000, miscellaneous revenues from taxes that were delinquent and paid, agriculture, wetlands and gas tax added some revenue.

For the disbursements, you will see that for 2022 actuals, it's a little bit more than what we were taking in. Actuals were \$643,384 and that is due to utilization of a Certificate of Deposit (CD) to complete some planned road projects. And for 2023-2024 the Township will be wrapping up some larger projects.

The treasurer explains we need to keep 2 years of cash to keep the township running, which is a standard. The Township balance had crept up to \$1M for 1 month, which was due to saving for planned projects. We haven't had to raise taxes for years now, and we are beginning to complete projects and spending down the higher balance. You will see our balance take a dip now. We need to prep for more projects in the future.

Dave Tanner stated the Levy did go up by \$15K but we need to plan for inflation. The Township hasn't changed the gross levies by much over the last four years.

Gordy Reher explains, one of the things that we need to be looking forward to looks like this. The bankers use something that is called the rule of 72. What it refers to is working with the number 72, the number in percentage points of interest rate. When the 72 is divided by whatever that interest rate is, it comes out with a number, and that's the amount of time that it takes for something to double. If we were looking at an inflation rate of 18%, then I'd pick that because it's easy for me. OK, 72 divided by 18 is 4. What that means is if we have an inflation rate of 18 percent, it takes four years for that number to double. That's why Tim is looking at this and why we must look ahead, years and years ahead, because of everything. I'll just give one example; I got a call from one of our suppliers and the product that they supply this year is going up 32%. And we can work around that one year, maybe two years, but not indefinitely. So that's why we're here and why we're looking at what the levy is, setting what tax must be applied to our properties to establish the amount of money coming back from the county to let us pay the bills. And if the bills are going to double, that means something else must double too, and that's what we're having to deal with here. That's the purpose of the meeting.

Clerk Dietrich elaborates; Basically, what I'm hearing from Gordy, is the citizens can either take the budget number from 2024 proposed receipts or the citizens see inflation and decide the Township may need to increase the levy on the road and bridge by another 10,000. The citizens could motion to do that if they wanted to, because they know gas is increasing, which means that our payment to contractors that maintain our roads or do road projects will increase. So, is that true that the citizens can make that decision to increase?

Gordy Reher replied, that could be done, but treasurer is not recommending at this time. But I think we need to review as this happens again next year and the year following, when the numbers change, that should be in the back of everybody's head.

Treasurer Tim Mueller replied, the county auditor provided a report of a proposed calculation for a levy increase of \$50K, the way the report was run it would increase the annual taxes approximately \$8 per household.

Lloyd Thielmann questioned Treasurer; If our levy is a percentage of tax, and as our home values go up, that amount that we get increases. As our home values go back down, it's a breathing thing, just like a stock market. The treasurer responds, we went up a little bit in our take room bridge. We've stayed at \$205K for a while now, at least three years, maybe more. But our actual kick-in has gone up a little bit.

Citizen Pete T comments and Gordy Reher responds that the county is obligated by statute to keep their valuation close to market value. And if the property valuation goes up, what that does is to give them some room where they can change that multiplier. Just because the value went higher doesn't mean that the tax is going to go higher. But if it does have to, this may not have to change, but they change the multiplier. And that's part of why they're in there and they've got that whole big formula that Tim was talking about.

Dave Tanner responds, that isn't necessarily the case, because the county's budget expenditures, they aren't changing those expenditures very much. So, they're spreading that expenditure over a higher county-wide valuation. It doesn't really change your individual real estate tax rate very much. Now, individual houses or properties might change depending on the amount of increase or in some cases property values were lowered or not changed at all. The bottom line is that the same amount of money is spread over just a higher value. It doesn't really affect the taxes that are paid.

Citizen Ron B questions Treasurer Mueller, the receipts are \$367K, and you're spending \$566K. You said there was an expenditure of \$200K? Treasurer Mueller responds that we have a planned project and have a reserve of \$200K for the project. Gordy Reher explains we have not finalized this but currently where we are at for Timber Drive is that the Township would do a 10yr loan and to repay it there would be an assessment for property owners on that road. The attorneys are working on all of this since there are 3 different townships, the county is included such as they supervise this in how it should be done. Once this is approved by all involved and legal matters completed the county will collect the assessment and disburse to the townships. It's a specialized attorney group that does that and includes a certificate of indebtedness taken on by the township. Whoever loans the money then is assured that is tax-free interest to them. It needs to be discussed at the annual meeting by law. And the thing that needs to be brought out here at the annual meeting is that whatever its cost is, that cost will be borne by the people that have requested it and will be using it. So that there are 63 properties that are served by the road

and of those 63 properties some of them are state land in that state the state doesn't pay anything but there are 39 property owners and some of those owners have two or three parcels. So, we're looking at 60 some parcels. And those 39 property owners are willing to pay for this, but we want you to do the work so that it goes through the county and gets put onto the special assessment part of our property tax statement.

Clerk Dietrich states this is a separate agenda item so we should answer the question from Pete, basically we will be getting that money back eventually from the project from properties being assessed. For that road not all the township citizens are going to pay for that paving project.

Gordy Reher states, yes that's important. It's just going to be coming out on the front end to get the project done. That's what's planned for 2024, but not set in stone yet. The other part of the answer to his question is, to make this happen, paving should occur in 2023. The assessment to those property owners begins in 2024. That time in between must be covered by somebody. That's what we're looking at coming from the township. And it would come back to the township from the assessment collections.

Treasurer Mueller has one more note regarding the Fire budget, the general fund tends to be a little more than the two-year emergency. The reason we do this is in situations like the fire fund, when the two fire departments come to us and say, we need to raise cost by \$20,000, which has happened, then the township has a buffer. This is because we are allowed to take general fund money and put it in the road and bridge or fire, but we can't take money back out of those two funds. Once it goes in the road and bridge or fire it stays there. And the general fund allows for movement of money if needed to be put into another fund.

Gordy Reher responds, one other thing that we should be aware of is that the township is served by Longville and Hackensack, and we end up with two bills. Tim and Dave have worked to figure this out. There's a lot of calculations that go into that which has been discussed at prior meetings. It isn't just a bill coming from one entity and saying, okay, here's the service, please pay up. They look at geographics, they look at housing density and valuations, and there's a lot of calculations that go into it to arrive at the two numbers. And then, as Tom pointed out, with Longville needing to buy the truck, there's an extra kicker on that.

8) Set 2023 Levy: M/S/P See above Receipts Total for 2024 levy set at \$367,779.

9) Set Time/Place for 2024 Annual Meeting: M/S/P Dave Tanner/Laura Jones to approve 2024 Annual meeting place/time at Woodrow Township Hall on Tuesday March 12, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

10) Gordon Reher presented a road report. See Appendix B and Appendix C attached.

- a. Question; Citizen Ann from Cuyuna Rock Club requested using gravel pit to find agates. This is a one-time event. Discussion on people climbing around gravel pit when there are no trespassing signs. There would not be heavy digging, just looking at surface and just one day on a weekend. This will be added to the April Monthly Meeting agenda to discuss.

11) Dave Tanner commended all citizens of the township for keeping up with the recycling area. Waste Partners appreciates all the work that has been done. During the summer things change, and we need to communicate with those people. This is not a garbage site and if anyone sees anything just write down the license plate and time and communicate it to the board. We'll review the cameras and communicate to the Sheriff. Last year, the owner of Waste Partners negotiated with the county to close a bunch of recycling zones and did close a lot of them, our township was fortunate to be able to keep ours open.

Regarding the Gravel Pit that Gordy touched on in his report, the township did test holes on other parts of the township property so that we could acquire gravel on what we already own since we are close to empty of gravel. Looking for rock that's suitable for making gravel. The township is starting the process of looking at alternate sites that we could use for purchase of gravel that don't involve long-range travel.

The December 16th and 17th storm created a lot of mess. We noticed a lot of trees draped over the roads and the trees would die and fall into the road. We did an inventory of all 40 miles of road together with the Deputy Sheriff and reported those. The township will be getting some financial assistance.

And I'd like to commend Cathy Dietrich our clerk who has taken on a new job and has done a terrific job of learning the ropes and working with a couple of, well, three old fogies, now two old fogies and one young guy. So, it's really a pleasure to have Cathy, our clerk, on board. So, thank you for electing her.

Dave Tanner also spoke with the County regarding the culverts on Knoll Road. The Township is hoping to receive assistance for the culverts.

Lloyd Theilmann commended the township board on the work they do. "The digging, the scrounging, filling out this form, filling out that form. Just going the extra mile. They are fantastic. We should consider ourselves very lucky to have them. And Bob was the same way. So, thank you to all you guys."

12) Woodrow Township Emergency Management Organization (WTEMO) presented by Tom Larson, the position of this organization is to meet the requirements of Homeland Security passed down to FEMA, passed down from the state of Minnesota to the county, and then the county to the township. If there is a disaster in the township such as the December storm, then we can get reimbursed. Submitting for a reimbursement has gotten much easier by submitting online or through phone. We have the emergency pamphlet that went out along with the Recycling pamphlet and is in the information rack in the hall. This is for a family or a couple of people, it tells you what you need to do, it's not long and drawn out. There's a place to include, Doctors, medical problems,

prescriptions and who to contact in case of emergency. This information will help first responders if you are unable to communicate.

The Township Hall now has the right fire extinguisher to meet insurance requirements. And there is training available if anybody's interested. There is also an AED, Automated External Defibrillator, right there on the wall with a big white heart. That is very important for here because the closest that we have for first responders is 15 minutes.

There's an app called Nixle, that you can put on your phone at no cost. You punch in your zip code, and if there's a storm warning, blizzard, power outage, somebody lost, whatever, it's an emergency response number to your phone. It keeps you informed. Everyone should be prepared and be able to take care of yourself for the first 72 hrs.

13) New Business from Floor:

- a) Gordy Reher discusses Timber Drive. Looking and pointing at the map in the hall, "the northern boundary of the township is here, the eastern boundary is here and this right here is Timber Drive. If we're looking at this corner going this way, that's going into Kego Township and there are six properties right in here that are affected. And just over here on this part, this is Wabado Township, and there are 11 properties that are affected. So, it is not just the people who live down here, but it's also these two groups of people there." The Township maintains approximately 1.8 miles. "So, this is one of three in Woodrow where we could justify paving. They're all about the same length, about a mile and three-quarters. And we're beginning with timber because those property owners filed a petition, they asked the town board to explore the process of doing this. And we went from the petition, through the public meeting stage, and went to the attorneys and started doing all the stuff. So, we've jumped through a lot of hoops. And the project's likely to go ahead. Plowing snow, cutting grass along the edges and ditches and whatever, that still stays with Woodrow and has to be paid just as it is now. So, to get the paving, there would be an assessment to the property owners in those groups, and as I said, on timber for the cost of paving, but no increase in property tax and levy for other Woodrow residents."

Citizen Denise asked who is responsible for maintenance on the pavement 5 or 10 yrs from now?

Gordy Reher states this gets decided from the start, either the Township will take over maintenance or the property owners affected will need to pay again for resurfacing.

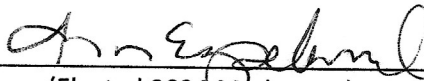
Citizen Tom asked what the status is with paving Interlachen and Gordy Reher responds with zero. No one has come forward with a signed petition to begin looking into it.

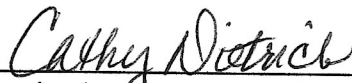
- b) Audio/Video equipment in hall. Lloyd Thielmann thanks Bob Hankey and Mike Schmitt for getting the equipment set up. Clerk Dietrich thanked Gordy also since Bob left and Gordy took over working with Mike.

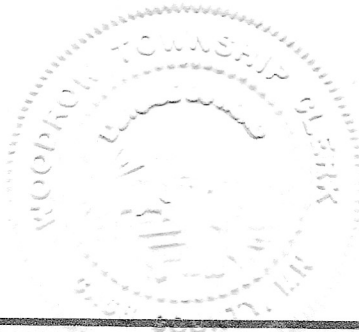
Adjourn: MSP LeAnn Reher/Tom Larson to adjourn meeting at 8:20 p.m.

NOTE: For meeting attendance sheet please contact Clerk Cathy Dietrich.

Approved 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes attested

BY:  DATE: 3/12/24
(Elected 2024 Moderator)

BY:  DATE: 3/12/2024
(Cathy Dietrich-Woodrow Township Clerk)



As on 12/31/2022

Fund	Beginning Balance	Receipts	Sale of Investments	Transfers In	Disbursements	Purchase of Investments	Transfers Out	Ending Balance	Investment Balance	Total Balance
General Fund	169,675.47	90,109.90	0.00	0.00	72,731.14	0.00	0.00	187,054.23	0.00	187,054.23
Road and Bridge	374,836.09	204,805.89	0.00	150,368.74	484,282.00	0.00	0.00	245,728.72	0.00	245,728.72
Other Federal Programs	34,915.68	34,915.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	69,831.35	0.00	69,831.35
Fire	150,714.85	87,440.17	0.00	0.00	86,371.51	0.00	0.00	151,783.51	0.00	151,783.51
Gas Tax	0.00	37,495.38	0.00	0.00	37,495.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Investment Fund CD	4,805.20	2,217.26	150,368.74	0.00	0.00	2,217.26	150,368.74	4,805.20	110,504.68	115,309.88
Total:	734,947.29	456,984.27	150,368.74	150,368.74	680,880.03	2,217.26	150,368.74	659,203.01	110,504.68	769,707.69

Appendix B

2023 Annual Meeting

The people of Woodrow have, in my opinion, been fortunate to have had a Board that worked well together and brought a varied expertise to bear on the problems of our Township. Last year, Bob Hankey, who had been on the Board for eight years, resigned and passed away shortly thereafter.

We have a new Supervisor elected to fill the seat held by Bob, Colter Peterson; Colter brings a different set of skills to the Board, and we are also fortunate to have him. Dave Tanner is our chairman. He is a former township attorney (not Woodrow) and well versed in all aspects of Township business.

I am Gordy Reher. My duties on the Board largely deal with roads; my Supervisor position is also called Road Liaison. The title is not very specific because I deal with so many things. Woodrow Township contracts all work done. Other townships contract or have equipment and employees to do the work.

Sometimes the Road Liaison job is as simple as taking a phone call about a tree downed on a township road then calling our contractor to have it taken care of. Sometimes it's not so simple, a call like; "I think the turnaround for your road is in my front yard and I'm going to block it." Then we need to do the corresponding surveys and work with legal to do the agreements, have the contractor move the road, put up right-of-way signs etc. etc. I am working with Colter to share what I have learned in my time in this position.

When I came into this position several years ago, there were a number of projects on the books to be done and for which funds had been allocated. In those several years, all those projects have been completed and, of course, we have acquired new projects.

Woodrow maintains nearly forty miles of gravel roads in the Township and there are many more miles of gravel roads not maintained by the Township. One of the most important things about maintaining gravel roads is drainage, avoiding problems by preventing water from puddling on the roadway and preventing water from washing over it. In addition to periodic gravel, regular grading, and new culverts, last year, we solved three ongoing major drainage problems. For example, with every major rainfall, one road had its gravel regularly fill a property owner's garage, resulting in regular clean-up and re-grading (and an unhappy

resident who hated rain). We engaged engineering to design storm water plans for this and for three other problem areas; with changes to ditching and to culverts and with short runs of paving, we have permanently solved those long-term problems.

We are working with the County to replace culverts where the Boy River passes under town roads. This is significant because big culverts are expensive and when we can get the County to allocate a large part of the cost, again everyone wins. Many of you have seen the project on 17th Avenue, where the Boy River leaves Big Deep lake. That project will finish this spring with the last scheduled short run of paving, completing the last storm water plan. The County paid nearly \$120,000 toward that project. We are discussing another such project with the County. We have also begun to learn how to recover costs of storm damage when those costs can be reimbursed by FEMA; for example, we recovered more than \$15,000 in 2022 road washout damage. That single recovery alone paid the salary stipend and meeting costs for the 3 supervisors for the whole year.

Next is turnarounds. Every dead-end road should have a turnaround for fire and emergency vehicles as well as for the snowplow truck or grader to turn around. In the last year, Woodrow has added several new turnarounds and one more will be completed before summer. What has to be done for each of these is to have an easement from the property owner allowing the Township to use the land. In every case, we have to find out what Woodrow can do to make things right for the property owner, so everyone wins.

Last, the gravel pit. Woodrow is one of the few townships to have its own gravel pit. We have been fortunate to have benefitted from that wonderful resource for more than 40 years. Unfortunately, it is nearing the end of its life. We have been able to hold taxes down for a long time by using our own gravel. The Board now has to plan how to deal with loss of its gravel, since buying gravel and having it delivered will be frightfully expensive.

One such method is by paving an entire road, rather than just a short run. We will be looking at that and will be addressing that here this evening for Timber Drive.

Thank you. I thought it was appropriate to let you know what we are doing with roads, what we need to do, and where your tax money is going.

Appendix C

Timber Drive

As many of you know, Woodrow is investigating paving Timber Drive. There are three roads in Woodrow where paving could be justified. We are beginning with Timber because the property owners on Timber filed a petition asking Woodrow to explore the process.

The project is likely to go ahead as 100% of the affected property owners are willing to substantially pay the expenses of paving, similar to 14th Avenue where paving costs were paid by the DNR when they built the public access on Baby Lake. Timber will remain a township road and Woodrow will still be responsible for its maintenance. There will be an assessment to the property owners on Timber for the costs of paving, but no increase in the property tax levy for other Woodrow residents.

Depending on the advice of the attorneys, there may need to be a special Annual Meeting pertaining to this paving of Timber. If a special meeting is determined to be necessary, it will be published and posted; those costs will be assigned to the Timber project. However, the meeting will pertain to details of the project. Everything is above board; there will be no increase in the property tax levy for other Woodrow residents.