

2024 AVON TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING – TENTATIVE AGENDA

March 12, 2024; 8:15 PM

Avon Town Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon

Welcome to the 2024 Avon Township Annual Meeting. This meeting, like all Town meetings, is available live or virtually via Zoom (log in at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945>; Pass code: AvonTown).

Everyone present is encouraged to take part in the meeting, but *only residents of Avon Township are eligible to make motions or vote at this meeting*. For the record, please state your name prior to making a comment, proposing a motion, etc.

The Township website (<http://avontownship.org>) provides minutes, forms, and other Town information.

Township officials are:

Township Board of Supervisors

LeRoy Gondringer, *Chair*

Chad Klocker

Rich Sanoski

Additional Officers

Kelly Martini, *Treasurer*

Stephen Saupe, *Clerk*

Planning Commission

Craig Blonigen

Rich Sanoski

Stephen Saupe

Assistants

Paul Buttweiler, *Deputy Treasurer*

Marion Gondringer, *Deputy Clerk*

Andrew Wensmann

Lori Yurczyk, *Chair*

Town Meetings (*all occur at the Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon MN*):

- Board of Supervisors – 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:00 PM
- Planning Commission – Last Wednesday of each month, 7:00 PM

Tentative Agenda

1. Call to Order – *Clerk*
2. Pledge of Allegiance – *Clerk*
3. Welcome, Meeting Rules, & Introduction of Town staff present – *Clerk*
4. Nomination and election of meeting moderator – *Clerk*
5. Present, amend & approve the agenda – *Moderator*
6. Announcement of election results – *Moderator*
7. Avon Fire Department Report
8. Road Report – *LeRoy Gondringer, Supervisor*
9. Planning Commission Report – *Rich Sanoski, Planning Commission*
10. Joint Powers Board Report – *Rich Sanoski, Joint Powers Board representative*
11. Review/Approval of the Minutes of the March 2023 Avon Township Annual Meeting – *Clerk*
12. Reading of the 2023 Board of Audit report – *Clerk*
13. Township Levy for 2025
 - 2024 – *Levy approved by residents*: General Revenue – \$109,350; Road & Bridge – \$379,750; Fire Fund – \$150,000; Capital Reserve – \$5,000; **Total – \$644,100**.
 - 2025 – *The Supervisors recommend*: General Revenue – \$112,350; Road & Bridge – \$376,750; Fire Fund – \$150,000; Capital Reserve – \$5,000; **Total – \$644,100**.
 - a. Motion to approve General Revenue Levy
 - b. Motion to approve Road & Bridge Levy
 - c. Motion to approve Fire Fund Levy
 - d. Motion to approve Capital Reserve Levy
 - e. Motion to approve Total Levy
14. Decision on legal posting places (*currently the Avon Township Hall & The Store*)
15. Decision on legal newspaper (*currently Star-Post*)
16. Decision on 2025 poll hours (*currently 2 – 8:00 PM*)
17. Decision to set location and time for the 2024 Annual Meeting (*currently Avon Town Hall; 8:15 PM; 2nd Tuesday of March*)
18. Decision on budget amount for Town memorials, awards, community celebrations (*including Annual Meeting refreshments*), and recognition (*currently \$250*).
19. Comments/Discussion/Other Business – *from the Assembly (i.e., future Annual Meeting topics, opinions, concerns)*
20. Announcements
21. Adjournment

Thank you for attending the Annual Meeting. Mark your calendar for next year – Tuesday, March 11, 2025! All Town Meetings are available via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945>. Passcode: AvonTown. The Clerk may record the proceedings of this meeting to ensure accuracy of the minutes. The recording will be deleted upon completion of the minutes and will not become public (Resolution 01-03-18).

Avon Township Road Report – 2023

1. Roads were inspected twice during the year (April & October) to assess their condition. In October, 47.6% of the roads were judged to be in excellent shape; 12.7% – very good; 22.2% – good; 14.3% – fair; and 3.2% poor. The average quality of all Township roads is 3.9 (*out of 5*).
2. Two Rivers Road from Co Rd 9 to 190th, 185th Ave, 190th Ave, and Red Oak Circle were resurfaced during the summer. The Two Rivers Road portion was a joint project with Holding Township. They convinced us that an excellent quality road could be created by adding a few inches of gravel to the old road and then this is milled, packed to form the base, and then resurfaced. They also preferred to avoid using an engineer to save money. The final roads are well-constructed, but unfortunately residents experienced significant inconvenience during the project. Because the companies started sooner than anticipated, we didn't send out a notice to alert residents about the impending work until too late. There was also a delay between milling and paving which resulted in poor road conditions for a while. The milling company needed to redo some of the work because large pieces of blacktop were not milled because they presumably were moving too fast during the process. Adding the additional gravel on the road before milling resulted in complaints about the road being too high and that some residents had difficulty accessing their driveways. As a result of this project, we plan to always hire an engineer for future road projects, hire the same company for paving and reclaiming, and ensure that residents are contacted well in advance of any roadwork. We believe the final roads are well-done, but we apologize for any inconvenience during the construction process that could have been avoided.
3. The Township submitted a Local Road Improvement Program Grant for about \$1.2 million to MNDOT to resurface Queens Road. We received about 80 letters in support of the project from residents, Albany School District, Avon Fire Department and others. We are awaiting the outcome of the grant request. However, considering the large number of applicants, we are not optimistic about our chances of receiving funding.
4. We plan to resurface 145th Avenue this summer.
5. The Township completed routine maintenance on about 38% of our roads (61 total roads), which included brushing, removing downed trees, trimming trees, filling potholes, shouldering work, and replacing signs.
6. Gravel roads were graded twice.
7. Ditches were cut twice.
8. Roads were plowed and/or salt-sanded on 29 days. A few residents continue to illegally (*a misdemeanor*) push snow across the road and move obstacles into the road right-of-way, both of which are hazardous to motorists and the plows.
9. We continue to do the majority of our own truck maintenance.
10. Residents on the south-side of I-94 have applied for a MNDOT grant to construct a barrier for noise abatement.

Summary: Overall, Avon Township roads are in decent shape. We encourage residents to alert Supervisors to roads that need of attention.

Respectfully submitted, *LeRoy Gondringer (Supervisor, Road Manager)*

Avon Township Planning Commission Report: 2023

1. **Meetings/General** – The Planning Commission (PC) met 11 times during the year, on the last Wednesday of the month. The February meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. Current members are Craig Blonigen, Rich Sanoski, Stephen Saupe, Andrew Wensmann, and Lori Yurczyk (*Chair*).
2. **Certificates of Compliance** – The PC considered two requests for a Certificate of Compliance (Lange, Pierskalla) and a recommendation was forwarded to the Supervisors.
3. **Conditional Use Permit** – The PC held a public hearing to consider a request for a CUP (Sanoski) and provided feedback to the Supervisors.
4. **Driveway/Access Permits** – The PC considered four requests for a driveway permit (Girodat, Lang, Rabideau, Sanoski) and recommendations were forwarded to the Supervisors. The PC also suggested revisions of the Township Driveway Policy to include field access.
5. **Encroachment Agreements** – The PC considered a request (Blattner) for an encroachment agreement to site a septic system in the township road right-of-way and made a recommendation to the Supervisors.
6. **Plats** – a preliminary plat was examined and a recommendation forwarded to the Supervisors (Sanoski).
7. **Transfer of Development** – The PC held a public hearing and provided feedback to the Supervisors concerning a TDR transfer to the Township from Holding Township (Sowada).
8. **Variances** – The PC held public hearings for three variances (Beckmann, Blattner, Michaletz) and recommendations were forwarded to the Supervisors.
9. The Planning Commission was assigned to **provide the Supervisors with feedback** and advice on a variety of issues/topics including: Township hiring policy, escrow agreements, vacation rentals in the Township, LRIP grants, and County Ordinances.
10. **Solar Moratorium** – The PC studied the pros and cons of solar gardens in the Township and made a recommendation to the Supervisors to make permanent their moratorium on solar gardens. The zoning ordinance (Avon Township Land Use & Zoning Ordinance – #6) was updated to include this change. In addition the ordinance was modified to extend CUP, IUP and variances from six months to one year.

Respectfully submitted, *Lori Yurczyk (Planning Commission, Chair)*

**Township of Avon
County of Stearns | State of Minnesota
Audit Board Report for 2024**

The Board of Supervisors for the Town of Avon met on February 8, 2024 in their capacity as the annual Board of Audit as required by State Law. All claims submitted to the Town during 2023 were brought before the Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors divided up roles to ensure different people were involved with the different parts of this internal audit review. Claims were randomly selected and examined in detail. A listing of the specific claims examined in the audit accompanies the 2024 Audit Board Minutes. A listing of all claims against the Township accompanies the monthly Clerk minutes. No discrepancies were found. No claims were denied for payment. Receipts submitted to the Town were similarly reviewed. A listing of specific receipts examined in the audit accompanies the 2024 Audit Board Minutes. A listing of all receipts received by the Township accompanies the monthly Clerk minutes. No discrepancies were found and the receipts were verified.

The financial records (year-end cash control statement & bank account summary) maintained separately and independently by the Treasurer and Clerk (Deputy Clerk) were identical. As a result of this audit, no discrepancies were found.

The year-end cash control statement for the Township as of December 31, 2023 is given below:

For the Period : 1/1/2023 To 12/31/2023

<u>Name of Fund</u>	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Total Receipts</u>	<u>Total Disbursed</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
General Fund	\$181,798.30	\$129,434.41	\$92,725.48	\$218,507.23
Road and Bridge	\$224,340.41	\$402,093.08	\$566,566.94	\$59,866.55
Demolition Escrow - Maciejewski	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Novel Solar Decommissioning Escro	\$0.00	\$262,500.00	\$262,500.00	\$0.00
Novel Vegetation Plan Escro	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Road Damage Deposit	\$2,950.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$3,450.00
Fire Fund	(\$3,709.69)	\$80,153.19	\$43,086.50	\$33,357.00
General Capital Projects	\$41,476.52	\$5,997.83	\$1,199.00	\$46,275.35
ARPA Fund	\$181,613.30	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$181,613.30
Total	\$630,468.84	\$881,678.51	\$969,077.92	\$543,069.43

The funds in Township Accounts as of December 31, 2023 are summarized below:

American Heritage Bank:	
Checking:	\$ 240,653.62
MMR:	\$ 282,990.97
Magnifi:	
MMR:	\$ 21,029.91
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TOTAL:	\$ 544,674.50

The Supervisors analyzed the receipts and disbursements for 2023, the budget for 2024, and then determined a budget for 2025. Based on their analysis, the Supervisors recommend the following levy amounts for 2025: Total levy – \$644,100; General Revenue – \$112,350; Road & Bridge – \$376,750; Fire fund – \$150,000; and Capital Reserve – \$5,000.

Conclusion: The Township is in good financial. A surplus is being maintained to provide a cushion for future anticipated expenditures especially a new snow plow(s) and road resurfacing. The Township also has \$181,613.30 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Some of these monies are pledged to Stearns County to improve broadband infrastructure.

Signed by the Supervisors, March 6, 2024

2023 AVON TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2023

Call to Order: Clerk Stephen Saupe called to order the 2023 Annual Meeting of Avon Township at about 8:15 PM in the Main Chamber of the Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN). This meeting, like all Township meetings, was also available on Zoom at the following URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945> (Pass code: AvonTown).

Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge was recited.

Welcome & Introductions: Saupe welcomed approximately 25 residents to the Annual Meeting and introduced Town staff. These included: Craig Blonigen (*Planning Commission, PC*); Paul Buttweiler (*Deputy Treasurer*), LeRoy Gondringer (*Supervisor*), Marion Gondringer (*Deputy Clerk*), Joe Koopmeiners (*Maintenance*), Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*), Rich Sanoski (*Supervisor & PC*), Kelly Martini (*Treasurer*), Andrew Wensmann (*PC*), and Lori Yurczyk (*Planning Commission, Chair*).

Nomination and Election of Moderator: Joe Koopmeiners nominated Bob Yurczyk to serve as Moderator for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Richard Bresnahan. All in favor. Motion carried. Mr. Yurczyk took a seat at the dais and ran the remainder of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Rich Sanoski moved to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Kelly Martini. All in favor. Motion carried.

Election Results: Chad Klocker was elected to fill a three-year term (2023-2026) as Supervisor. Kelly Martini was elected to a two-year term as Treasurer (2023-2025).

Avon Fire Department Report: Supervisor Richard Bresnahan presented the Fire Department report because no one from the Fire Department was able to attend tonight's meeting. He reported that in 2022 in the Township there were 105 medical and 13 fire calls, and that these required 1091 and 263 hours, respectively. The Township fee for fire services in 2023 was \$86,173 and the proposed fee for 2024 is \$99,981, which is approximately \$10,000 more than the Supervisors had planned for at the audit meeting. We've been running deficits for a few years in the Fire Fund. Membership is currently at 23-24 firefighters. The department would like to increase the number to 26-30 and is seeking gender-equity. The department needs more space for equipment, including isolation and cleaning areas to remove toxins to which they are exposed during calls. A Fire Hall expansion (about 60 x 80) is being planned. A committee has been formed that includes members from the City and both townships. Gohman, Inc. was selected as the design/construction firm; they provided the best presentation, lowest cost, and have the advantage of having a firefighter on their staff as a project manager. Drawings should be ready later this year. The City has about \$272,000 in reserve that could potentially be put toward the addition. Our share of the project cost is estimated to be \$75,000 per year for 20 years. ARPA funds could potentially be used to buy down Township debt.

Road Report: Supervisor Rich Sanoski presented the 2022 Road Report (*appended*). In addition to routine maintenance, during the past year the Township resurfaced half of Parkwood Circle and reconfigured two cul-de-sacs (Plum Hill Lane and Parkwood Court). The Supervisors are committed to resurfacing 1-2 miles of road per year. Costs have gone up significantly in the past few years with a mile of road costing roughly \$250,000. This summer, the Supervisors are focusing on the NW corner of the township. They plan to resurface 190th Ave, Red Oak Circle, 185th Ave, and Two Rivers Road. The latter will be a joint project with cost sharing with Holding Township. The Township bought a new ditch mower (the old one was repaired and will be sold at auction this spring) and a tractor. Sanoski reminded residents to not push snow onto roads and to give plow trucks a wide berth.

Planning Commission (PC) Report: Lori Yurczyk, PC Chair, presented the 2022 Planning Commission (PC) report (*appended*). She reported that the PC met 11 times and provided input to the Supervisors regarding annexation, plats, certificates of compliance, driveway permits, and encroachment agreements. The PC also held public hearings to consider an after-the-fact variance, as well as an interim use permit for a 1 MW solar garden (Gertken/Novel Energy). Specific activities are outlined in the appended report. Yurczyk said that the PC is looking for new blood and it is a good way to learn about township governance.

Joint Powers Board Report: Richard Bresnahan, the Township representative to the Joint Powers Board, reported that the Board did not meet during 2022 – there was no business to necessitate a meeting.

Minutes of the March 2022 Meeting: The Clerk briefly summarized the minutes of the March 2022 Annual meeting. Craig Blonigen moved to not require the minutes to be read aloud since a copy was provided in the agenda packet and that residents could read the minutes on their own. Joe Koopmeiners second. Motion carried.

2023 Board of Audit Report: A copy of the 2023 Board of Audit Report including the year-end Cash Control Statement and

proposed budget was provided in the agenda packet agenda and is appended. The Clerk summarized the report which shows the Town's financial status. Lori Yurczyk moved to not require the report to be read aloud and to approve the report as written. Will Huston second. All in favor. Motion carried.

ARPA Report: Supervisor LeRoy Gondringer reported that the Township received about \$260K in ARPA funding. To date, some of these monies have been used to purchase a tractor, computers for town staff, and have been promised to Stearns County to help expand broadband in the Township. There is approximately \$186,000 remaining in the account. Craig Blonigen and Mark Casey both suggested using the remaining funds for 'necessities' such as a new snowplow and buying down debt. Kelly Martini moved to recommend using the remaining ARPA funds to help cover any Township debt for Fire Hall expansion, and if not used there, recommends to apply the funds to roads needing repair. Mark Casey second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Township Levy for 2024: The Supervisors recommended the following levy amounts for 2024: Total levy –\$644,100; General Revenue – \$109,350; Road & Bridge – \$379,750; Fire –\$150,000; and Capital Reserve –\$5,000. This represents an increase of more than \$100,000 from 2023. The majority of the increase is due to an increase in cost of Fire Protection Service and to cover the anticipated share of the Fire Hall renovation – approximately \$70,000 annually. After discussion, residents made motions to approve the following levy amounts:

Will Huston moved to approve a 2024 **General Revenue** levy of \$109,350. Lori Yurczyk second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Craig Blonigen moved to approve a 2024 **Road & Bridge** levy of \$379,750. Kelly Martini second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Paul Buttweiler moved to approve a 2024 **Fire Fund** levy of \$150,000. Mark Casey second. Vote tied. Motion failed. The results of the vote were discussed. Those opposing the motion suggested that an even higher Fire Fund levy was necessary since the fund has been persistently short. Those in favor suggested to wait and see actual costs of the Fire Hall expansion prior to committing even more tax money. After discussion, Will Huston moved to approve a 2024 Fire Fund levy of \$150,000. Paul Buttweiler second. Motion carried.

Craig Blonigen moved to approve a 2024 **Capital Reserve** levy of \$5,000. Mark Casey second. Motion carried.

Joe Koopmeiners moved to approve a 2024 **Total Levy** of \$644,100. Craig Blonigen second. Motion carried.

Posting Places: Paul Buttweiler moved to approve keeping the Avon Township Hall and *The Store* as the legal posting places. Will Huston second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Legal Newspaper: Will Huston moved to approve keeping the *Star-Post* as the legal newspaper for the Township. Lori Yurczyk second. All in favor. Motion carried.

2024 Poll Hours: LeRoy Gondringer moved to hold the 2024 Annual Township Election from 2:00 – 8:00 PM. Frank Himsl second. All in favor. Motion carried.

2024 Annual Meeting Time/Location: The 2024 Annual Meeting will occur on the second Tuesday of March (March 12, 2024). Will Huston moved to hold the Annual Meeting in the Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN) at 8:15 PM. LeRoy Gondringer second. All in favor. Motion carried. The Board of Canvass meeting will be scheduled after the Annual Meeting.

Decision on Budget Amount for Memorials & Celebrations: Kelly Martini moved to approve a budget of \$250 to be used for Town memorials, awards, recognition, and community celebrations. Rich Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Additional Comments: LeRoy Gondringer recognized Ms. Bernadette Larkey, wife of Lee Larkey who served as moderator of the annual meeting for many years. Rick Pogatschnik recommended lighting in the parking lot, especially during voting. There is lighting available – the Clerk apologized for forgetting to turn it on during voting and will be sure to include it on our voting checklist for the future. Steve Saupe applauded Township residents for their commitment and gracious attitudes. Mark Casey said that the Township was lucky to have had fewer and lower tax increases than surrounding areas. LeRoy Gondringer thanked Richard Bresnahan for his outstanding service to the Township as Supervisor and on the Planning Commission.

Adjournment: Will Huston moved to adjourn the 2023 Annual Meeting of the residents of Avon Township at about 9:45 PM. Richard Bresnahan second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Signed & approved by Bob Yurczyk, Moderator; March 17, 2024