

# 2024 AVON TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

March 12, 2024

**Call to Order:** Clerk Stephen Saupe called to order the 2024 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; via Zoom*); Paul Buttweiler (*Deputy Treasurer*), LeRoy Gondringer (*Supervisor*), Marion Gondringer (*Deputy Clerk*), Chad Klocker (*Supervisor*), Joe Koopmeiners (*Maintenance*), Kelly Martini (*Treasurer*), Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*), and Rich Sanoski (*Supervisor & PC*).

**Nomination and Election of Moderator:** LeRoy Gondringer nominated Will Huston to serve as Moderator for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Joe Koopmeiners. All in favor. Motion carried. No other nominations were made. In a voice vote, Mr. Huston was elected unanimously to serve as moderator. He 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 Chad Klocker. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Election Results:** Bryan Rassier was elected to fill a three-year term (2024-2027) as Supervisor. Stephen Saupe was re-elected to a two-year term as Clerk (2024-2026).

**Avon Fire Department Report:** Assistant Chief Chuck Swenson was scheduled to attend this meeting, but was unable to do so because of a large Mutual Aid Fire. In lieu of his attendance, Assistant Chief Swenson and Chief Joel Swanson emailed a brief written report to Rich Sanoski, our Fire Board representative, to present at the meeting. Sanoski reported that the City is building an addition to the Fire Hall. It will cost roughly \$2.5 million and that the township share of the cost is \$70-75,000 per year. The Department responded to 282 calls, which was down from last year's record of 328 calls. In the Township there were 93 total calls (9 fire and 84 medical responses). Collegeville Township had 34 calls (6 fire/28 medical) and the City had 129 calls (9 fire/120 medical). There were three fundraisers (golf outing, Spunk Days raffle, and the yearly calendar). Someone asked if there had been any fundraising specifically for the new addition. Sanoski said, "not much." Future goals of the Fire Department are to complete the expansion, replace Units #6 and #11, and continue fund-raising efforts for grants (*i.e.*, FEMA, AFG, DNR). The department is currently at 27 members with three in training. All members are certified and licensed fire fighters and emergency medical responders. One member has been with the department for over 30 years, four members for more than 20 years, and two are retiring this fall with 20 years. The fire department requests that residents keep trees and brush cut back from both driveways and 911 signs to help them more easily locate residents and to be able to get a big truck in /out of driveways in case of an emergency.

**Road Report:** Supervisor LeRoy Gondringer presented the 2023 Road Report (*appended to the agenda*). In addition to routine maintenance (weed control, grading gravel roads, mowing ditches, snowplowing/sanding), during the past year the Township resurfaced Two Rivers Road from Co Rd 9 to 190<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 190<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 185<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Red Oad Circle. The contractor started sooner than anticipated which meant that residents weren't notified in a timely manner about the impending work. Milling the road surfaces prior to resurfacing left large chunks of blacktop that needed to be removed and made driving difficult. Because gravel was added to the road surfaces prior to milling, some residents complained that the final road surface was too high making it difficult to access their driveway. The Supervisors apologized any unanticipated inconveniences. The Township plans to resurface 145<sup>th</sup> Avenue this summer. In all, routine maintenance was completed on about 38% of our roads. The Township also applied for a \$1.2 million grant from MNDOT to resurface Queens Road. The likelihood of receiving funding is low because of the large number of proposals received by MNDOT. Residents on the south-side of I-94 have applied for a MNDOT grant to construct a barrier for noise abatement.

**Planning Commission (PC) Report:** Rich Sanoski presented the 2023 PC report (*appended to the agenda*). He reported that the PC met 11 times and provided input to the Supervisors regarding resident requests for plat approval, certificates of compliance, access (driveway) permits, conditional use permits, variances, a transfer of development rights, and encroachment agreements. The PC also studied the Township solar garden moratorium and recommended making it permanent, which the Supervisors did in enacting Avon Township Land Use and Zoning Ordinance #6. This ordinance also included extensions for CUP, IUP and variances from six months to one year.

**Joint Powers Board Report:** Rich Sanoski, the Township representative to the Joint Powers Board, reported that the Board met once during 2023 to consider a request for a solar garden in the joint powers area (not permitted due to Township moratorium that was in effect), and to discuss the potential renewal of the joint powers agreement that will expire in 2025 and the Fire Hall addition.

**Minutes of the March 2023 Meeting:** The Clerk briefly summarized the minutes of the March 2023 Annual meeting. Kelly Martini 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. Chad Klocker second. Motion carried. Martini moved to approve the minutes from the March 2023 Annual Meeting of the residents of Avon Township. Chad Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**2024 Board of Audit Report:** A copy of the 2024 Board of Audit Report including the year-end Cash Control Statement was provided in the agenda packet. The Clerk read the report which shows the Town's financial status. There was an inquiry about the escrow funds listed in the Cash Control Statement. These were collected from Novel Solar for their Gertken farm project to ensure the proper disposal of panels at the end of their lifecycle and to ensure that the site is revegetated. LeRoy Gondringer noted that the escrow funds cannot be spent, but that the Township retains any interest on the monies.

**Township Levy for 2025:** After developing a budget for 2025, the Supervisors recommended the following levy amounts for 2025: Total levy –\$644,100; General Revenue – \$112,350; Road & Bridge – \$376,750; Fire – \$150,000; and Capital Reserve –\$5,000. LeRoy Gondringer reported that the 2026 Fire Fund levy will need to increase to about \$170,000 to account for the higher than anticipated bond payment. The Township budget will be okay in 2025 even though the levy is suggested at \$150,000 because there will be carryover from this years' bond payment. Future years will need to raise the Fire Fund levy to include both annual service and the bond payment. Gondringer also suggested that the Township may need to increase the Road and Bridge levy in the future because the cost of roads is increasing (*about \$270,000 per mile*). Someone asked if ARPA funds can be used for road projects. The answer was 'yes,' though a portion of the ARPA funds are promised to the County for extending broadband to some unserved areas in the Township.

Paul Buttweiler moved to approve a 2025 **General Revenue** levy of \$112,350. Kelly Martini second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Kelly Martini moved to approve a 2025 **Road & Bridge** levy of \$376,750. Craig Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Paul Buttweiler moved to approve a 2025 **Fire Fund** levy of \$150,000. Kelly Martini second. All in favor, Motion carried.

Kelly Martini moved to approve a 2025 **Capital Reserve** levy of \$5,000. Chad Klocker second. Motion carried.

Kelly Martini moved to approve a 2025 **Total Levy** of \$644,100. Rich Sanoski second. Motion carried.

**Posting Places:** Kelly Martini moved to approve keeping the Avon Township Hall and *The Store* as the legal posting places. Chad Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Legal Newspaper:** Kelly Martini moved to approve keeping the *Star-Post* as the legal newspaper for the Township. Dean Martini second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**2025 Poll Hours:** Kelly Martini moved to hold the 2025 Annual Township Election from 2:00 – 8:00 PM. Dean Martini second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**2025 Annual Meeting Time/Location:** The 2025 Annual Meeting will occur on the second Tuesday of March (March 11, 2025). Rick Pogatschnik moved to hold the Annual Meeting in the Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN) at 8:15 PM. The motion was seconded. 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. Chad Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Additional Comments:** none

**Adjournment:** Will Huston moved to adjourn the 2024 Annual Meeting of the residents of Avon Township at about 9:30 PM. Joe Koopmeiners second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Saupe, *Clerk*

date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTEST**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Will Huston, *Moderator*

date: \_\_\_\_\_