

Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Board of Supervisors

February 7, 2024

Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN)

Call to Order: LeRoy Gondringer, *Chair*, called the meeting of the Avon Township Supervisors to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Main Chamber of the Avon Township Hall. This meeting, like other Town meetings, was also available virtually via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945>, Passcode: AvonTown.

Pledge: Two Boy Scouts, Sam Huston and Zack Kozlak, attended the meeting as part of a Civics badge. They graciously led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present – LeRoy Gondringer (*Chair*), Chad Klocker, Kelly Martini (*Treasurer*), Rich Sanoski, and Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*). Also present – Craig Blonigen (*PC*), Paul Buttweiler (*Deputy Treasurer*), Marion Gondringer (*Deputy Clerk*), Joe Koopmeiners (*Maintenance*), and Lori Yurczyk (*PC Chair*).

Approval of Agenda: Added to the agenda were reports from the Stearns County Sheriff's Department and the Fifth Monday meeting, and the correction of a typo (2023 to 2024). Sanoski moved to approve the agenda as amended. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes: Some typos were corrected. Sanoski moved to approve the minutes from the January 3, 2024 meeting as amended. Klocker second. Two in favor. One abstain (Gondringer, because he was absent). Motion carried.

Sheriff's Department Report: Officer Jace Rosenfeld reported that there were 91 service calls in the Township last month. Most calls (*about one-third*) were traffic-related. They included a DWI, sexual assault, and neighbor dispute in the Mobile Home Park, the latter of which required multiple visits. The Sheriff's department is hiring.

Public Hearings: *none*.

Public Comments: *none*.

Planning Commission (PC) Report – *presented by Craig Blonigen, PC Vice-Chair.*

Girodat Variance – Blonigen reported that the PC held a public hearing to consider a request from Rodney and Laura Girodat (33576 Shorewood Drive, Avon, PID 03.01477.0000) for a variance for their existing home, which is five feet too close to the road right-of-way. The hearing was posted and published and more than 50 letters were sent to neighbors. Only one person attended the hearing and had no particular concerns. No other public comments were received. The PC examined the Findings of Facts and recommend approval of the variance on the condition that there is no construction on the road-side of the home unless the residents get Township approval (*i.e.*, another variance). The Supervisors concurred. Klocker moved to approve a variance for Rodney and Laura Girodat, 33576 Shorewood Drive, Avon (PID 03.01477.0000) for a variance for their existing home, which is five feet too close to the road right-of-way on the condition that no construction on the home occurs on the street side of the house unless the residents first receive Township approval. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Sanoski moved to approve the PC report. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was read and the Cash Control Statement for the period 01/01/2024 to 01/31/2024 (*copied below*) was presented. Martini reported that there was an error in the December Cash Control Statement because Koopmeiners Workman's Comp time was not included. It was corrected and is the reason that the beginning balance of the January Cash Control statement differs from the end balance of the December Cash Control Statement.

For the Period : **1/1/2024 To 1/31/2024**

<u>Name of Fund</u>	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Total Receipts</u>	<u>Total Disbursed</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
General Fund	\$218,507.23	\$2,292.94	\$10,124.21	\$210,675.96
Road and Bridge	\$59,866.55	\$2,709.27	\$2,301.21	\$60,274.61
Demolition Escrow - Maciejewski	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Novel Solar Decommissioning Escro	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Novel Vegetation Plan Escro	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Road Damage Deposit	\$3,450.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,450.00
Fire Fund	\$33,357.00	\$655.51	\$43,086.50	(\$9,073.99)
General Capital Projects	\$46,275.35	\$15.91	\$0.00	\$46,291.26
ARPA Fund	\$181,613.30	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$181,613.30
Total	\$543,069.43	\$5,673.63	\$55,511.92	\$493,231.14

MAT dues have been paid. There was a discussion about W-2's and how to remove the Treasurer's name from W-2's. Martini said that it is a consequence of the new federal electronic registration system, and this is also how it is being done by neighboring (*i.e.*, Oak, Albany) townships that she contacted. In addition, she said that she contacted the IRS and they said it was OK. Yurczyk suggested that best practice suggests that only the employers name should be on the W-2, especially if the Treasurer should change in the future. Apparently, the previous Treasurer's name is still associated with the Township IRS account. Blonigen, Yurczyk and Martini will work together to attempt to sort out the W-2 situation and EIN number. We are ready for the Audit Board meeting tomorrow (Thursday) night. Because payroll, taxes, etc., have become so complicated, the possibility of hiring a payroll company with the appropriate expertise was suggested again.

Claims, Receipts & Payroll: The claims (4627-4646) totaled \$8,000.78. The payroll was \$4,400.06. The check (11045) for the retainage from Knife River was voided. The 2024 State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Annual Report is due in April; Martini will complete. Martini said that the Workman's' Comp payroll audit is complete. MATIT insurance coverage is extended until June 30, 3024; it is not clear to what this refers. The invoice for the Avon Compost Site was received; Avon Township residents will be able to use the site in 2024. We will keep track of election expenses for reimbursement from the State. The Supervisors agreed to move any road damage deposits older than two years into Road & Bridge. A check for sod has not been cashed; Martini contacted them to determine the status of the check. Martini reported that the federal mileage reimbursement is now \$0.67/mile. Sanoski moved to approve the receipts, payroll, and claims. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Town Hall Report: Koopmeiners presented the Town Hall report. He reported that he is working on the inventory. He will photograph serial numbers and some items to document their condition. The Hall and Shop were cleaned and a toilet repaired. LP is at 58%. The electric bill is high, likely due to the in-floor heat in the shop. In the past we received quotes for insulation in the shop, but they were also high and likely wouldn't have been particularly effective in lowering electricity costs. Klocker will look into some alternatives. AlbanyTel internet service is now extended to the Town Hall. Gondringer will follow up to determine the monthly cost and request our free hookup.

Road Report: *Koopmeiners presented the Road report.*

1. **Snow Season** – roads were plowed or salt/sanded four times.
2. **Monthly Update** – work this month included maintenance on the plows and tractor, cleaning up a downed tree on 355th, and removing a tire from the 365th road right-of-way.

3. **Tree Removal** – a quote was received from Weavers Tree Service to remove trees on 175th and Shorewood Drive. The Town can save a considerable amount if we chip the brush ourselves. Koopmeiners was authorized to get another quote.
4. **LRIP Grant** – Klocker reported that Stantec engineer Jeremy Mathiassen said there were many proposals from our area and that there is only about 6 million in available funding. The chance that our Queens Road request is successful seems remote at this time. It was suggested that we stockpile money this year to complete the Queens Road project next year.
5. **145th / 140th Avenue** – Sanoski moved to authorize Klocker to contact Stantec for a quote on engineering services for resurfacing 145th and the cost for milling the remainder of 140th Avenue. The approximate cost for reclaim mill and overlay, shoulder, and engineering is about \$55 per foot.
6. **Vehicle ID Cards** – were received. Koopmeiners will put them in the vehicles.
7. **CDL Update** – no new information is available.

Sanoski moved to approve the Town Hall & Road reports. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Business:

1. **Board of Appeals** – The Stearns County Assessor’s office scheduled the Board of Appeals meeting for April 15, 2024 at 7:00 PM, but requested an earlier starting time. The Supervisors agreed to set the 2024 Annual Board of Appeals and Equalization meeting for April 15th at 6:00 PM. The Clerk will contact the Assessor and publish/post.
2. **Fire Board** – the meeting is scheduled for February 29, 2023. All three Supervisors plan to attend. The Clerk will post.
3. **Employee Handbook** – no progress was made this month on an *Employee Handbook*. The Clerk will contact MAT and other clerks for potential samples/templates to begin our own handbook.
4. **ARPA** – There is approximately \$181,000 available, though some of the funds are promised to Stearns County for broadband. No decision was made on using the funds, though the Supervisors are now considering using the monies to resurface 145th Avenue.
5. **Elections** – the Public Accuracy Tests for the Presidential Nominating Primary (PNP) and Township Election will be held on Saturday, March 2 at 10 AM and Saturday March 9 at 10:15 AM, respectively. Martini will be available for the tests. Absentee ballots are now available from the Township for the Township Election (contact the Clerk or come to the Town Hall during the scheduled open hours for an absentee ballot). Absentee ballots for the PNP are obtained from Stearns County. Sanoski moved to set the second alternate date for the Town election and meeting on March 20, 2024. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.
6. **Permits** – the County sent a listing of permits issued by Township in 2023 for the Town to edit. The list appears accurate, though septic encroachment agreements were not included. The Clerk will inform the County.

Reports:

1. **Funding Opportunities Workshop** – No one was able to attend today’s workshop sponsored by Rep’s. Demuth and Howe. Martini reported that she heard from Albany Township Clerk Diane Noll that it was helpful. and that Diane may have handouts she can share with us.
2. **Fifth Monday** – Sanoski reported that transportation services will be contracted out beginning July 1st. It will cost \$50-100,000 more. but is necessary because they can’t find drivers. There will be a 2-year initial contract and that the company is buying their buses, but the district can buy them back if the contract doesn’t work out. County Road 57 to Freeport will be redone next year. The plan is to remove the old trestle and widen the road. The trestle will be removed and may be donated to the Pioneer Club. There is a new gun shop and coffee shop in Albany. Albany Township will hold a public hearing on limiting storage containers in yards.

Announcements:

1. No requests for **911 signs** were received.
2. **Construction Site Permits** were issued Gertken (35961 165th Ave, residence & lean-to on existing shed); Beckmann (32679 Nutcracker Lane; 100 x 75.5 shed); Thelen (36592 188th Ave; 6 x 12 addition); Laing (35703 Co Rd 155; 20x48 shed addition); and Schwalbe Dairy (36335 Co Rd 9, 128 x 30 lean-to).
3. A **Special Assessment Search** was conducted for Spencer (36685 160th Avenue).
4. No **feedlot permits** were received.
5. A **Provisional Use permit** was issued to Hentges (19357 Red Oak Circle) for a vacation rental.
6. The County Commissioners approved the accessory structures changes to Ordinance 439. The changes become effective March 1, 2024
7. Township Day at the Capitol will be April 8 & 9.
8. One of the MAT Spring Short Courses will be held on March 26 in St. Cloud.
9. A Road Order request was received from Cody Rieland, Survey Coordinator, Bogart, Pederson & Associates for 145th Avenue.
10. Avon Township was mentioned in the *Minnesota Township Insider*, Winter 2024, regarding the noise barrier, though there were some inaccuracies.
11. Two catalogs from *Uline* were received.
12. A notice was received from CenterPoint Energy announcing a rate hike (5.3%).
13. A Chase Business Checking Account ad was received.
14. A brochure from MBA Group Disability & Life Insurance was received.
15. We received an electronic copy of the signed fire contract with the City and Collegeville Township.
16. A gambling permit was signed for a St. Anna Sportsmen’s Club raffle.
17. Klocker announced that the City is planning to resurface 1st St. and is waiting to learn if their LRIP proposal is funded. They plan to reconstruct the road in 2025 and will contact the Town to see if we want to complete our portion of the road.

Old Business: Culvert mapping project with County app; 135th Avenue project with St. Wendel; Windows; Case to display old documents; Window treatments; Exterior sign for the Hall; hiring HR / payroll company; salt shed overhang/awning; culverts (Pelican Lake Road, Shorewood Drive, 145th Avenue); CDL License changes.

Signatures / Documents / Treasurer: Documents were signed as necessary.

Announcement of Next Regular Supervisor Meeting: The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2024. Klocker will not be able to attend this meeting.

Other Upcoming Meetings/Events: *(meetings are available on Zoom at the URL above):*

- a. Planning Commission meeting – February 29, 2024
- b. Presidential Nominating Primary – March 5, 2024 (7 AM – 8 PM)
- c. Public Accuracy Tests: PNP – March 2, 10 AM; Town Election – March 9, 10:15 AM
- d. Town Hall open to accept absentee ballots – March 9 (10 AM – 12 PM) & March 11, 2023 (1-5:00 PM)
- e. Township Election, Annual Meeting & Board of Canvass meeting – March 12, 2024
- f. Qualification Meeting – March 20, 2024 (7 PM)
- g. MAT Short Course; St. Cloud – March 26th.
- h. Township Day at the Capitol – April 8 & 9, 2024
- i. LBAE meeting – April 15, 2024, 6:00 PM.

Adjournment: Sanoski moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM. Klocker second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen G. Saupe, Clerk

date: February 20, 2024

Supervisor Signatures:

date: _____

LeRoy Gondringer, Chair

Chad Klocker

Rich Sanoski