

Oxford Township Meeting Minutes
Regular meeting
February 13, 2024
6:30 pm

Chairperson Jennifer Perkins led the pledge of allegiance, then called the hybrid zoom meeting to order. Roll call was taken with Harlan, Mike, Peggy, Jennifer, Linnea, and Paula Bensen (deputy clerk in training) present at the town hall. Chairperson Jennifer made a motion to approve the February 2024 agenda and Harlan seconded the motion. Mike made a motion to accept the January regular meeting minutes and Harlan seconded the motion. Next, Peggy Nelson gave a treasurer's report including January account receipts and payables. Chairperson Jennifer requested specifics on which roads were graded in February and asked that we include this information as a monthly report for transparency. Chair Jennifer also asked for clarification regarding when engineering costs were taken from the general vs road and bridge fund. Mike made a motion to approve her report, and Harlan seconded that motion. All motions passed.

Prior to the February meeting, Chair Jennifer put together a 3 year budget synopsis and brought handouts for those residents in attendance. She asked if the board could have a reserve fund for any carryover money not spent the previous year. Oxford did have a reserve fund in past, and Peggy said that the board could decide to have a reserve again. If the board votes to create a reserve fund, Peggy will ask how to account for that in CTAS. The supervisors discussed the budget and road prioritization. Road and bridge budget specifics will continue to be worked on to better reflect anticipated spending for mowing, spraying for weeds, tree trimming, general road maintenance/improvement, and other. One of the residents collected levy and road information from other townships and has also spent time reviewing Oxford regular meeting minutes. She presented her data, and expressed concern with the Oxford tax increases over the last 5 years. Chair Jennifer encouraged the residents to come to the March annual meeting so that they can give input and vote on next year's levy. Chair Jennifer reiterated her request to have updates every month on what is graded and what we've done to spend the resident's money. Linnea will add this as a recurring agenda item for upcoming regular meetings.

Roads

Steve Winter from MSA attended the meeting via zoom to give an update on blacktop bids for Pigeon Loft. Steve shared the bids received and Knife River came in with the low bid at \$298,540.00. North Valley was at \$346,350.29 and Valley Paving was at \$365,915.00 with a distance to pave of 1.3 miles. Details of the road requirement were also included on the spreadsheet. Chairperson Jennifer asked how much gravel base we were going to put down before paving. Mike said only parts of Pigeon Loft would need more gravel to form the base that is recommended. Mike made a motion to accept the low bid and start the paving on Pigeon Loft. Chair Jennifer asked if that is all inclusive and Steve Winter said that the bid is the contractor cost and estimated an additional \$14,000 for engineering costs. Harlan seconded the motion. Chair Jennifer voted no. The motion carried. Steve stated he will send the notice of award of contract to Chair Jennifer for signatures.

One of the residents did a road data review that measured the mileage on Oxford township's roads and the number of residences on each road. She will share copies of this information for those interested.

Mike did not get the snowplow contract details completed.

Old Business

Harlan gave an update from the last Isanti Fire District meeting. The Chief of Linwood fire services will be at our regular meeting in April.

Chair Jennifer made a motion to approve mileage payment for our new flag volunteer, and Mike Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Peggy discussed the January reports that were completed by the treasurer and clerk. MATIT's 2023 Workers' Compensation Payroll report was submitted January 18, 2024. The SLFRF report was completed and submitted by January 16, 2024.

Chair Jennifer discussed using Read AI at our meetings as it gives a summary of what was talked about. She stated that this would be an unofficial record of the meeting. Mike had a question about what happens if residents are reading an AI version of our meetings and then read the official minutes and they don't match.

Oxford township's court case was heard on February 5th 2024. Road supervisor Mike Miller was called as a witness by the town lawyer Andrew Tiede. Andrew Tiede informed Mike that the small claims court referee ruled in favor of Oxford township, but the clerk did not receive written details as of the February regular meeting.

New Business

Tiffany Determann gave an update on a potential cause of the impaired water quality of West Twin Lakes. She also gave a brief summary of the partnership ISWCD has with Oxford to monitor the water quality in our natural environment lakes over the past few years. She stated they may have finally found out what is going on with West Twin Lake, and that there seems to be an abundance of fathead minnows in West Twin. These minnows can turn a clear water shallow lake into a turbid lake. There are ways that the DNR can control the minnow population, but Tiffany said that it doesn't need to change if the community doesn't want it to and that she attended our meeting to seek feedback. The clarity of the lake is an issue, but this water is filtered before it gets into the watershed so there is no immediate threat.

The Metro Lower St. Croix (LSC) watershed FY24-25 Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) Convene Meeting will be held February 21, 2024 at 1:15-2:15pm at the Washington County Public Works North Shop. Funding allocation is a major piece of this agenda. In past funding cycles, the metro group has elected to combine its allocation of WBIF grant funds with those allocated to the rural area of the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership to jointly implement the Lower St. Croix River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Organizations and municipalities located within the Metro LSC area that have a specific water quality improvement project to propose, can give details to their township officials to coordinate discussion at this meeting.

Chair Jennifer nominated Connie Thorpe as moderator for the March annual meeting, and Mike Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed. Linnea will send Connie agenda items prior to the meeting.

Oxford's current cleaning person is moving out of the area and has given her 3 month notice. Jennifer will spread the word about finding a new person to clean the hall by June 1st.

Peggy discussed that the Oxford town hall alarm system is working and when the alarm went off this past month, 2 board members and a former board member (Chilton Hagan) responded. In addition, the sheriff was at the hall within 10 minutes. Mike will work to change the contact information so that Chilton is no longer notified. One resident asked if the board has considered putting in a street light in front of the town hall. We currently have two motion lights that illuminate the parking lot and the board will make sure these are turned on for our meeting nights.

Linnea will check into a township credit card for town expenses and report back at the April meeting. Chair Jennifer will look into finding an expense policy Oxford can adopt. Mike made a motion to get a credit card with a limit for the township and Harlan seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Mike Miller made a motion to adjourn and Harlan seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

The public was invited to stay for the township annual audit and the audit was conducted by the supervisors with no discrepancies found.

Reviewed by Paula Bensen and

Respectfully submitted,
Linnea Lentz
Oxford Clerk
February 13, 2024