

Oxford Township Meeting minutes
Regular meeting
October 10, 2023
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, Jennifer, and Linnea present at the town hall. Peggy Nelson attended via zoom meeting. Mike Miller made a motion to approve the October 2023 agenda and Harlan Bellin seconded the motion. September meeting minutes were provided to all supervisors prior to the meeting. Mike Miller made a motion to accept the minutes and Jennifer seconded the motion. Next, Peggy Nelson gave a treasurer's report including September account receipts and payables. Mike Miller made a motion to approve her report, minus the Shermik Tree Farm receipt, and Harlan Bellin seconded that motion. Mike Miller made a motion to approve the account receipt submitted by Shermik Tree Farm and Harlan Bellin seconded that motion.

Roads

Oxford received a request from a resident about Oxford township taking over Regulus CT NE which serves the Swanson addition plat. Mike Miller clarified that at this time there are not enough houses on that road for the township to take over maintenance.

There was a question raised over whether the township would be mowing the ditch this month. Mike Miller stated that we will not be mowing this month. Bart Perkins raised a concern over this decision. He stated that ditch spraying is in his contract and asked why this is being withheld. Mike said that due to the drought, there has been minimal growth for 2 months. Bart disagreed and feels like the roads need to be mowed. Bart also mentioned that his bigger concern is that Mike is asking other contractor's to bid. Mike clarified that he has talked to other contractors but just about tree work. Bart feels that Mike has taken that out of his contract, and he has pride in his work for the township. He feels like he is limited in performing his job at the quality level he wants to perform at, so he asked that the board accept his resignation. He is giving 30 days notice as specified in his contract. He also stated that the road maintenance for Oxford is too much chaos for him and he does not want to be Oxford's contractor anymore. The board unanimously stated that Bart has done a great job at grading. Chairperson Jennifer Perkins made a motion that the board accept Bart's resignation with a 30 day notice. Mike Miller seconded the motion. Next a resident requested brush cutting on Pigeon Loft as they have difficulty seeing cars coming and have concern about this limited visibility. Mike talked about Oxford's historical perspective. The Sentence to Serve (STS) group used to do all of our brush cutting and tree trimming for years at no cost. He stated that the brush and tree trimming is expensive, so now Oxford has another expense to budget for. Jennifer Perkins agreed that the board will need to dedicate money to take care of brush cutting moving forward. A resident asked if brush is in the ditch, can the residents cut it? Mike Miller said that the township is required to maintain the road and up to where the last snowflake falls when snowplowing. Chairperson Jennifer stated that she has gotten many complaints from residents about the state of roads and said that the township shouldn't just use Road and Bridge funds for blacktop. She said that the board needs to maintain all of the roads. Mike stated that he drives the roads weekly so he is aware of the issues.

Next the road count bid for the potential traffic study was discussed. Mike reiterated that the bid from MSA is over \$6,000 and that the board needs to decide if we want to spend this money on information he feels we already know. Mike suggested that we don't spend the money on another traffic study. Chairperson Jennifer felt we should look back at the 2021 road count and use that data.

The dust suppression application process review was discussed by Jennifer. She did some research and found a document that our township can modify from Becker county. Jennifer's thought is to take the template and post it since there is an application form for people to fill out. She also mentioned that the survey will be sent out this month and one of the questions on the survey is if residents would like dust suppression on their road. An example would be if >50% of the residents on a road want suppression, it could be approved. If there is not enough data, it is the resident's responsibility to get buy in. Mike would like to have a copy of this template that he can edit before this is approved. Jennifer will put into a template for review at our next meeting.

Old Business

Harlan Bellin gave the Fire District update. He said there were 44 runs in August, which is a decrease. The VFW in Isanti has applications for anyone interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter. Isanti Liquor store donations as well as other donations have allowed the Fire District to buy a new truck. There is also a general request from the firefighters- please check your emergency ID signs. If these signs are not readable, please clean up around the sign or straighten them out. Chairperson Jennifer did reach out to the Linwood fire chief and asked what it would look like for them to service the southeast part of our township. She would like to meet with him and also Al Jankovich to be transparent that we would like to move sections of our township to Linwood. The Linwood fire chief will provide an estimate of how much it would cost for Linwood to service that part of our township. We also need to understand what the Isanti Fire District costs would continue to be. Jennifer will continue to gather numbers and will also schedule a meeting where all supervisors can go and discuss this with Daryl (Linwood fire chief) and Al (Isanti Fire District chief). Harlan continued his report that the District is asking the townships to contribute more money so they can update their equipment and vehicles. Our fire costs will almost double and calculations at this point indicate it will be about \$6.30 more/month for each Oxford resident. At the next Fire District meeting, Oxford feedback is going to ask if all of the equipment needs to be updated this next year. We are going to request half of the improvements so it's not such a big increase for our budget. According to our contract, Oxford will have to give the Fire District a one and a half year notice before we move some sections to Linwood.

New Business

1. Isanti County Soil and Water Conservation District 2023 Nature Photo contest winner was Oxford township's Connie Thorpe! Linnea shared Connie's winning photo and also showed information regarding the November 8th webinar "Living large on a small lake". Linnea will post registration information on Oxford's website.
2. There is a request for second driveway permit from Bernie Cline. Mike Miller stated that there is enough room for two driveways so Oxford has approved the second permit.

3. Mike Miller next discussed the Deputy Clerk/treasurer position. He feels that we should get a backup for Peggy and Linnea that is trained with continuity. He asked Linnea to post the job on the website with the rates that have already been approved. If anyone is interested, please let the board know. Mike said that anyone interested in the position will be interviewed by the clerk and/or treasurer. The decision will be up to the clerk and treasurer to choose the person that will be trained. Ideally this person would like to take over the Oxford township clerk position after next year. Linnea stated that as of now, there are 15 months to train with her as she will not be running for office in 2024. Linnea will post the job descriptions on the website.
4. Oxford township received an email that a recently published new edition of the Isanti County Plat Book is now available. Mike miller made a motion to buy the 36" x36" Premium wall map of Oxford township at the \$199.00 price that was quoted and Harlan seconded the motion. Motion passed. Linnea will order the map and arrange for payment.
5. Mike Miller asked that we post notice for our road maintenance contractor. He asked Linnea to use the ad from last year and publish the County News, Cambridge Star, and North Branch Post.
6. A resident asked if a person wants a second driveway, what are the rules? Mike stated there needs to be a specific distance that is specified in our road standards (on Oxford's website). In addition, the resident needs to provide an apron so the paved road isn't chipped.
7. Mark Faust asked for clarification about when the 5 person board question will be on the ballot. Chairperson Jennifer replied that the question will be on the primary election ballot which is August 2024. Linnea will work with the county to get the ballot question on the primary ballot.
8. There was a request for the March minutes to be approved at the November regular meeting. Linnea will send to supervisors to approve next month. Mike Miller suggested checking with MAT and/or the lawyers to make sure that is ok. Chairperson Jennifer also mentioned that she took the contract for services document that Linnea gave her, and created an application for next year's annual meeting.
9. Bob Kollmer asked for clarification regarding whether or not Mike Miller contacted other companies for snowplowing and grading. Mike said that he had just talked to Josh about tree cutting. Oxford will put it the road maintenance contract out for bid.
10. The final question from an Oxford resident was regarding how far a person needs to offset a fence from the property line. The board replied that is a question for Isanti county zoning.

Jennifer Perkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mike Miller seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Linnea Lentz

Oxford Clerk

October 10, 2023