

Oxford Township Meeting Minutes
Regular meeting
May 14, 2024 6:30 pm

The Pledge of Allegiance was said at 6:30

Jennifer called the meeting to order, and all members of the board were present at the town hall except for Deputy Clerk Paula Bensen.

Public Forum

- Donna Setter- Donna addressed the board on a number of concerns. Donna's main request was that the unofficial Oxford Facebook page be taken down and it was her opinion that posting should occur on the official website. She addressed the board about voting for the best interests of the townships, and expressed an opinion that the annual meeting was not run well.
- Barb Snee- Barb thanked the board for all of their support to get Baylor blacktopped. She stated that she made many calls to fight for paving, and wanted to say that many people on Baylor are thankful. She then asked the board to please look at the many intangibles of blacktop, including the health of the residents and plants along the road. She stated that she hasn't seen cars driving faster since it was paved. Barb is not saying that all the roads in the townships need to be blacktopped, but she thought the Baylor project went well because they talked to all of their neighbors and had a consensus before approaching the board. She feels that Oxford needs to spend money to improve our roads and that last year's \$100,000 R&B levy was for this purpose. Barb had a question about the 5 member board, and if it passed, would the board be taking on more tasks. Jennifer replied that it was a possibility that with a 5 person board they would be doing more.
- Danielle Wiener- Danielle talked about how she first got involved in coming to the meetings to see how local government works, and to suggest the Little Learning Library. She stated that she remembered when limerock was put on her road and when the dust issue was brought up, she was told that nothing could be done. She came away from that meeting not feeling good and not feeling heard. She feels that many concerns are not being answered and that it is important to make board decisions based on facts, logic, and forecasting. She recognized that there is also an emotional component but feels that things need to be done better.
- Bob Kollmer- Bob stated that he has been a resident for 26 years. It was important for him to live on a blacktop road, and he found a place right off of County Road 20. It is his opinion that Isanti County did a terrible job on pavement for County Road 20 and he feels County Road 9 is also a problem. He went on to say that MSA is a quality firm, and Bob has worked with them for a long time. He feels that their process is one of the better ones out there. He discussed the increase in taxes and stated that it isn't just Oxford township that contributes to the tax increase. North Branch school district and county taxes have also gone up. Finally, he discussed the 5 person board as being two extra people that will have to be paid, and this will also bring taxes will up so he is totally against the 5 person board. Bob spoke in support of MSA and their blacktop specifications, and in support of Mike Miller spending a lot of time making sure our roads are good.

- Deb Cramer- Deb stated that as she lives on blacktop, she has no skin in the game. But when she drove the roads in the past couple of weeks, every road she drove on had a dust cloud behind her. She feels something needs to be done about this and that the board needs to let the people know what type of dust control is going to be used. The problem with paving at the rate we are doing it, it will take 20 years to do all of our roads. She urged the board to create a road plan that tells us what are important roads, and which need to be done now.
- Susan Krietz- Susan lives on Potomac north side and 9 and told that board that someone in the area has started dumping things in her ditch. She called the sheriff who said the township would be alerted. She is requesting that someone please get the furniture out of the ditch so other people do not keep throwing stuff in her ditch. Following Susan, a few other residents talked about garbage being thrown in ditches by their houses as well.

Oxford Board Business

- Approve agenda
 - **Action requested: Supervisor approval of the May 2024 agenda.**
 - After a couple of additions were made to the agenda (Street Sweeping and Meadow Grass Acres second addition, Jennifer Perkins made a motion to approve the agenda and Mike Miller seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- Clerk's report –
 - **Action requested: Approve the minutes of the April regular meeting.**
 - Jennifer Perkins made a motion to approve the minutes of the April regular meeting and Mike Miller seconded the motion. Motion passed.
 - **Review request for change to annual meeting draft minutes from 2024 from Connie Thorpe**
 - Linnea stated that she did not recall Connie making the statements about voter eligibility and that she had talked to other members of the board about if they remembered it or not. Paula and Peggy did not recall the statement. In addition, Linnea stated that Connie Thorpe had signed the minutes as approved on March 15, 2024 without this statement in those minutes.
 - Jennifer Perkins said that she did remember Connie making the statement and that she trusted her so Jennifer made a motion to change the annual minutes and Harlan Bellin seconded the motion. Mike Miller voted no and stated that he did not remember Connie Thorpe making that statement. The vote was not unanimous, so the motion did not pass.
- Treasurer's report –
 - **Action requested: Approve the accounts receipts and payables for the month of April, 2024. Peggy received requests for posting outside- she will start on the claims and the cash control. Ask for an estimate to create another tab for the treasurer's report.**
 - Mike Miller made a motion to approve the accounts receipt and payables for the month of April and Harlan Bellin seconded the motion. The motion passed.
 - Linnea will ask Gary Larson for an estimate to create a separate tab for treasurer's reports on the website. The minutes tab is getting confusing with the minutes, road reports, and treasurer's reports all being posted under minutes.
- Reorganization of board and naming of vice chair
 - **Action requested: Reorganize positions for Supervisors.**

- Mike Miller stated that he read the minutes of last month, and he heard her concerns about getting thrown into the chairmanship without training. Mike said he is willing to be the chair and asked if Jennifer wanted to be the vice chair. Jennifer stated that as long as the board is changing roles, she would like to switch everything up. Mike asked Jennifer for a suggestion, and she asked what the other members would like to take on. Harlan said that he would prefer to continue as fire representative and did not want IT or vice chair. Jennifer wants to continue to learn about supervisor roles and would like to take on roads. As the reorganization stands, Harlan will remain as fire representative, Jennifer will be the road supervisor and vice chair for the remainder of the year, and Mike is chair for the rest of the year.

Roads

- Pigeon Loft Road- [Mike](#)
 - Discuss re-bid process for Pigeon Loft paving project. Steve Winter sent the bids out to the board after the April 15 bid opening and showed the results on the zoom screen. Knife River is still the low bid, and Steve asked if there were any questions. Some of the residents couldn't read the numbers so Mike Miller read them off from the page that he had. Mike Miller made a motion to award the bid to Knife River and Harlan Bellin seconded the motion. The motion passed. Jennifer Perkins voted no, and talked about the money that we already spent and that we should have put some of the money away for other projects. Steve requested that the board sign the notice of award and send to him once it is signed.
- Monthly Road report - [Mike](#)
 - Discuss road maintenance performed. Mike drove around the township last night and stated that the roads are in fairly good shape. Mike asked for a report back from the grader on condition of road and has not yet received it. On 254th court crack sealing, Mike shared the estimates/proposals received (see below agenda item for the vote).
- Road contracts- [Mike](#)
 - **Action requested: Supervisors review road maintenance contracts and potentially sign road plowing agreement –**
 - i. The snow plowing contract (lawyer reviewed) with Josh Anderson has been shared with supervisors. Mike read the snowplowing contract front to back and sees no issues. Bob changed the dates, and we are covered financially. Mike would rather extend the contract in future that keep creating new contracts. Mike made a motion to accept the contract, and Harlan seconded the motion. Motion carried.
 - **Sign joint agreement with Stacy on Elmcrest Ave**
 - i. Lawyer reviewed contract has been shared with supervisors. Mike made a motion to move forward with the Elmcrest Avenue joint agreement with Stacy and Harlan Bellin seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Comprehensive road plan update – [Jennifer](#)

- Jennifer went over a handout that she had prepared and shared with all of the supervisors. She feels the worksheet will help to set a budget, but that there is no need to make a decision on it tonight since the example was one that Jennifer got from Fish Lake township. She also talked to some other supervisors and would like to work on a concrete plan and scope of work. The other board members agreed that Jennifer could bring a scope of work to the June meeting to discuss.
- Crack sealing on 254th Ct. – [Mike](#)
 - **Action requested: Potentially sign crack filling agreement**

There are two different company bids- Mike went to Linwood and talked to them about the benefit of wide repairs. After driving on some of the roads, Mike did not see a big difference and didn't feel it was worth spending twice as much money for the wide repairs. Jennifer was told that the more expensive quote was because of the depth of the cracks on 254th Court, not necessarily the width and she feels strongly that we need to do this right. Mike stated that Astech was going to router the cracks, but SealTec was just going to blow them out and fill. Steve Winter said that router is usually for bigger cracks and does not recommend going with SealTec's recommendation. Mike would like to go with the cheaper bid and Mike made a motion to accept Astech's bid. Harlan seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- Removal of traction chips from Bart Perkins' location
 - Josh could not get ahold of Bart and Jennifer to come pull the traction chips out. Bart would like Josh to come get the chips and gave a date/time for this to occur: May 22nd between 7am-3pm. The board will let Josh Anderson know.
- Removal of fallen tree from Pigeon Loft Rd
 - Mike stated that this is already done so no action needed by the board.
- Street sweeping
 - Jennifer got a call from a resident on Upper Birch Lake. There are a bunch of chips all over the road and the garbage truck driver stated that they wouldn't pick them up anymore. Mike and/or Harlan will go out and look at Oxford's paved road as he does not agree that there are a lot of chips. In the meantime, Jennifer will get some prices/estimates on street sweeping and bring to the next meeting for discussion.

Old Business

- 2023 Water Report Update
 - Tiffany Determan was present at the meeting and shared her presentation over the Zoom screen. She stated that the objective is to gauge the health of our natural resources and was approached in 2016 by the township to monitor 7 of our lakes. She gave a brief overview of why and what they are monitoring. The handout includes results from all 7 lakes, and will be posted on the Oxford website. Tiffany also wanted to share with us the extra monitoring of aquatic plants this past year. The biologist that was contacted to conduct the survey was very excited to find some very rare aquatic species in some of our shallow environment lakes. The most

exciting finds were shared at the meeting and will be posted on the Oxford website under the lakes monitoring tab.

- Isanti Fire District update- [Harlan](#)
 - Harlan gave an update on the fact that training and standards are being changed for the fire district and things are becoming more expensive. He mentioned that the next fire district meeting is tomorrow night at Station 2.
- Oxford town hall rental policy- [Jennifer](#)
 - **Action requested: Approve town hall rental policy**
 - i. Jennifer sent the board a draft of the new town hall rental policy. Paula did a nice review and made a couple of changes before sending to Bob Ruppe. The new rental policy will include a \$50 rental fee and a \$50 damage deposit. Mike Miller made a motion to approve the new policy and Harlan seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- Linwood Fire Chief - [Jennifer](#)
 - Harlan and Jennifer met with Linwood's fire chief back in January. Daryl stated that he is also an Oxford township resident and lives off of Typo Creek Drive. Linwood has 31 firefighters, (also 5 applicants) and they are all EMT's. He said that Isanti fire district is a very good fire department and clarified that Linwood has a mutual aid agreement with Isanti. For all of Linwood's calls, the fire chiefs go to the scene. Average firefighter/response is almost 6 per call and they had 13 fire calls last year, Linwood has mutual aid partnerships with many surrounding cities and for some structural fires, they can have up to 5-6 departments respond. Daryl talked about the equipment that Linwood has currently. He also said that he talked with Mike/Oxford about 10 years ago about servicing the south end of Oxford township. He said that before Linwood would even consider contracting with Oxford, Typo Creek Drive had to be paved. Now Daryl lives on Typo and said he is reaping the benefits of the paving. Mike brought up that we also did not have mutual aid 10 years ago. Daryl mentioned that Linwood does not charge anything for residents in Linwood when they respond to a call. He stated that some departments have started charging for medicals outside their demographics.
- Meadow Grass Acres second edition
 - Robert Hesse brought in the Meadow Grass Acres second edition plat for the board to review. Mike made a motion to accept the final plat and Jennifer Perkins seconded the motion. The motion passed. Linnea will send an excerpt of the minutes stating that Oxford has signed off to the county for their records.

New Business

- Summary of MAT short course – [Linnea](#)

Linnea gave a powerpoint presentation summarizing some of what Peggy, Paula, and Linnea learned at the 2024 MAT Spring Short Course. The powerpoint will be posted on the Oxford township website. The basic requests coming from the MAT learnings are listed below:

Create a policy for data requests/record review

- Linnea talked about the importance of protecting personal and sensitive information that is in Oxford's files and stated that we have now started to lock the cabinets.

- Linnea reviewed the information from Bob Ruppe regarding the fact that Oxford township is not subject to the Data Practice Act and the recommendation by MAT and Couri and Ruppe that Oxford adopt a data management policy. Part of this policy could include a data request form/application.
- Bob shared that the board must provide one copy of supplemental material shared with the board in preparation for discussing agenda items at the regular meeting. This copy must be available for public viewing while the board conducts its business.
- Linwood township's data management policy from 2023 was shared with the supervisors.
- Bob Ruppe suggested that we adopt business hours for when residents would like to review the minutes. The clerk suggested 5:30-6:30 pm the second Tuesday of each month, but Jennifer asked for time to do some research on how other townships handle business hours.
- Bob Ruppe also stated that his office admin is willing to work with Oxford to scan and archive all our minutes free of charge. Linnea is working with Bob to get copies of old minutes to Couri and Ruppe so that we have electronic backup for all township minutes.
- Linnea asked that the board consider reimbursing board members for office supplies since we are printing out agenda packets now. This month Linnea printed out over 60 pages and Peggy printed out close to 40 pages in preparation for the meeting.
- **Action requested: Supervisor review of MAT information sent and be prepared to discuss/modify sample policy shared by Linwood township**
- Jennifer volunteered to modify Linwood's data management policy and have a draft ready to review at the June regular meeting.
- Mike Miller made a motion to reimburse board members for time and supplies related to printing off agenda packets. Harlan seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Resolution for public meeting rules

- Linnea shared information from the 2024 MAT handout and sample resolution on Meeting Rules of Procedure.
- **Supervisor review of MAT information sent and be prepared to discuss/modify sample resolution from MAT**
- Jennifer volunteered to modify the MAT sample resolution for discussion at the June meeting.

Resolution and process for harassment concerns

- Linnea shared information from MAT handout and the MAT sample policy. She also shared that the clerk, deputy clerk, and treasurer have all felt either threatened or harassed in the past 9 months in serving as township officers. This supports the importance of the board setting a policy and creating a procedure to handle any harassment concerns.
- **Supervisor review of MAT information sent and be prepared to discuss/modify sample harassment prevention policy from MAT. Assign supervisor to work on procedure to address harassment concerns.**
- Jennifer volunteered to look at the policy and start on procedure to review at the June meeting.
- Peggy spoke about what she and Paula learned during the CTAS part of the MAT training. She stated that even the MAT expert does not fully understand the budgeting

capabilities of CTAS. However, MAT is working on training material for CTAS and budgeting that they hope to have available in the coming year.

- Deputy Clerk Paula Bensen- [Linnea](#)
 - Linnea stated that Paula has completed her training and signed the Oath of Office after the MAT short course training. The supervisors asked for a recommendation on compensation for Oxford's Deputy Clerk, so Linnea and Paula will put together a proposal for the June meeting.
- No gopher feet bounty- [Peggy](#)
 - This was inadvertently missed at the annual meeting. The budget set in 2023 had the gopher bounty in it so 2024 is covered, but 2025 will not be addressed. Mike Miller suggested that we look at the budget in January and make a decision at that time. For now the gopher bounty continues at \$2.00 per gopher.
- Oxford email hacked- [Jennifer](#)
 - Jennifer informed everyone that Oxford's Microsoft account was hacked, and a lot of people were sent messages that didn't actually come from the township. At this point we are not using the Oxford township email, and we need to figure out how to fix it. Bob Ruppe's recommendation is to have a township email account, and Jennifer feels like we should just set up a new account. Jennifer will look into it how to do this and keep everyone posted.
- PNP and SLFRF reporting – [Linnea](#)
 - Linnea reported that Paula, Peggy, and Linnea were able to meet and submit the PNP costs for Oxford's March 5 election. In addition, Linnea attended a 2 hour webinar on the SLFRF reporting for this year where experts walked everyone through how to submit if there was 0 spend in the past year. Linnea was able to complete and submit the report prior to the April 30, 2024 deadline, so Oxford remains in compliance this year. There will be one more year of submission requirements, then Oxford will have fulfilled its obligation for the SLFRF funds received.

Mike made a motion to adjourn and Jennifer seconded the motion. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Linnea Lentz
Oxford Clerk
May 14, 2024