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Lutsen Township Board Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2024
Lutsen Town Hall

Present: Ashley VanDoren, Carl Friesner, Sharon Hexum-Platzer, Lollie Cooper, Ginny Storlie, Steve Duclos, Samantha Mcquatters-Spangle, Matt Kartes, Tom Rider

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Chairperson, C Friesner at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Agenda: L Cooper made a motion to approve the October agenda, C. Friesner seconded. Motion passed.

Approval of September Meeting Minutes: C Friesner made a motion to accept the meeting minutes, L Cooper seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner's Report: Ginny Storlie:

- Commissioners are currently in the process of working to lower the levy which is currently at 9.68% from the originally set 9.8% with the goal being closer to 5% or 6%. A lot of additional factors to consider are what is needed for all departments to run efficiently.
- Dusty Nelms retired at the records office this last month after 45 years. Her associate Holly has been hired in her stead.
- Commissioner Storlie after talking with the Cook County Emergency Management Director have appointed Lutsen township Lolli Cooper to become the main contact point for his Hazard Mitigation Emergency shelter project on Lutsen behalf.
- Highway department presented the commissions with a few policies they are putting together;
 - including a policy for subordinate districts for each issue presented from the 9 subordinate districts to be presented by a single representee instead of have a whole group of people presenting one issue.
 - A policy currently in progress is the work to be done on county signs; many of which have duplicates or missing information signs such as "curve ahead".
 - A policy about amount of chloride used on roads. The recent rise in price of chloride went from about a dollar a gallon 4 years ago to 1.69 per gallon today. Concern over price the highway department has initiated car counts to estimate the amount of traffic for specific roadways and the most impacted roads needing chloride. Additionally, how it is distributed to the road and amount of coverage.
- Commissioner Storlie was invited to attend a meetup in Virginia MN this last month for the new IRRRB chairman Ida Rukavinak. Attendees included Senator Grant Hauschild as well as over 200 other representatives. Commissioner Storlie personally thanked the IRRRB grant program for the architectural designs for the new North Shore Waste building east of Grand Marais
- Cook County auditor-treasurer Brady Powers presented the commissioners with the 2025 proposed unorganized fire levies including the Lutsen that explained the additional firefighting equipment needed such as air packs.

Clerk's Report: S. Mcquatters-Spangle **Deputy Clerk:** S. Hexum-Platzer

Correspondence: 4 voice messages forwarded to fire and one to west end book club; 4 new townhall rentals booked; Wood Lake Fire Facts Sheet for Monday, September 16. firehouse station; forwarded to fire chief. Wood Lake Fire Facts Sheet. OSA Weekly Update. Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program – Local Solicitation Webinar; forwarded to supervisors. North Shore Women in Leadership; forwarded to supervisors. PERA Employer Newsletter: Fall Edition. AAAA Newsletter. OSHA "Emergency Response Standard" on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 from 9:30am-4:30pm public hearing. Fire State Aid and Police State Aid Update - 2024 Aid Amounts Posted. BWCAW Campfire Restrictions & Modified Wood Lake Fire Closure.

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Superior NF Closes Cloquet River Bridge for Safety. Superior National Forest Issues Closure Order for the Shell Lake Fire.

- A. MAT's Annual Conference in St. Cloud on December 13-14.
- B. Letter of support written for Northern Lights Entertainment, dba Papa Charlies, Lutsen Mountain Corporation, dba Summit Chalet, Lutsen Mountain Corporation, dba Chalet Bar/Rosie's Café
- C. Supplies ordered for fire/EMT
- D. Plowing and sanding contract notices published
- E. Cartway closed out, files backed up

Treasurer's Report: Deputy treasurer Philip Creighton: As of September 30, 2024;

North Shore Federal Credit Union-Checking \$232,956.39; General Building Fund-savings \$35,752.92; Fire/EMS truck fund \$150,835.26 totaling \$419,544.62; CD investments;

- 13-month CD at Grand Marais State Bank \$100,000.00
- 29-month CD at Grand Marais State Bank \$100,391.47
- 200,391.47 in CD's still acquiring interest

Total funds including CD investments \$619,936.09

Year to Date Receipts \$206,897.53; Year to Date Disbursements \$283,424.54.

2024 General town Budget \$41,450.00, 2024 Fire District Budget \$201,645.00 for a total budget of \$243,095.00.

2024 General town Levy \$30,000.00, 2024 Fire District Levy \$145,000.00 for a total 2024 Levy of \$175,000.00

C Friesner made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. L Cooper seconded. Motion passed

When originally presented the proposed levy to the Cook County Auditor-Treasurer Brady Powers Lutsen treasurer presented 2 possibilities; the levy where Lutsen received the FEMA grant and one where Lutsen did not receive the FEMA grant. Unfortunately, Lutsen did not receive the grant, treasurer VanDoren will inform Mr. Powers and the updated levy will be presented to the county in addition be available on the lutsentownship.com website.

Supervisor Friesner addressed the success of invested the Lutsen fire truck fund being invested in CDs through the bank; currently a 7-month CD matured adding an additional \$2,946.47 to the fire truck fund savings account and requested treasurer VanDoren to look into investing in another CD with similar interest rates. Treasurer VanDoren will discuss with both Grand Marais State bank and North Shore Federal Credit Union about available CD investments.

Review and Approval of Claims:

- Clerk S. Mcquatters-Spangle provided the invoiced October Claims. Details; 13 claims for a total of \$8,398.75 This included \$1,460 to Mobile health services for the basic physical SCBA, quantitative fit testing. \$2,976.40 to Alex Air Apparatus for fixes to current air packs and \$2,564.36 for federal quarterly taxes.

C Friesner made a motion to approve claims, L Cooper seconded. Motion passed.

- Clerk provided October payroll 4 Claims for a total of \$1,840.58

C Friesner made a motion to approved payroll. L Cooper seconded. Motion passed

- Claims approval and Payroll distributions were signed by Supervisors; copies are on file in the town office.

Fire and EMS Chief's Report: (Steve Duclos)

- Over the last month Lutsen emergency response teams received 5 fire calls and 6 EMS calls including a few calls that will require the fire team to punch in extra hours for a fire on Moose Mountain, Woodlock fire and the North Shore laundromat fire in Grand Marais.
- Practice landing helicopter sessions in the Lutsen ball field
- New recruit Alissa Elliot currently undergoing the EMR courses; once each of the currently new recruits finishes their courses, they will receive new fire gear, currently they are using older used gear.

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- Fire crew finished testing the rest of the fire hoses; tester will be going to Grand Marais next; tested the truck engines, pack testing, finished physical testing at the end of September; results to be out near the end of October. EMS completed truck and supply checks
- Next year EMS team will be getting a portion of those physicals as well including EKGs and stressor testing
- Fire chief Duclos requested approval from the board to look into purchasing two additional radios as the few on stand by have been given to new recruits.
- EMS and fire computers will be merged into one as the two have now merged into one department; will be requesting help from Sundew Technical for help with that.
- Air packs; the 3 air packs that went out of service, two have been returned the third that has been out of service for 8 months is still not passing inspection and had to be send back for repairs again. The fire department did not receive the FEMA grant for new air packs and the town board will proceed with the plan discussed during the continued annual meeting in case the grant was not approved as air packs are an essential piece of equipment while fighting any type of fire. The quote from MacQueen is initially lower than anticipated at \$99,546.13 and MacQueen is willing to accept payment after the new year and ship the new air packs out in November of 2024. The money currently invested in 13-month CD is scheduled to mature in February. Fire Chief Duclos is requesting permission from the board to order the air packs and will be checking in with the other departments that did not receive the grant to figure out why. The current Alex Apparatus air packs used can be appraised and sold to other fire departments that are currently more in need. Sharon Hexum-Platzer will follow up with the FEMA grant coordinators on additional details about why the grant was rejected. **L Cooper made a motion to order the needed air packs, C Friesner seconded. Motion passed.** Treasurer VanDoren will inform Auditor Powers about the planned budget and levy Lutsen township will be following through with.

Supervisors' Report:

C Friesner:

- Coordinated with Danniell on fall celebration event planning; Sharon acquired the Lutsen fire sign as a base for a fall celebration sign. Supervisor Homyak will be donating a portion of supplies
- Researched staining for the shed at townhall; will send purchase information to clerk

L Cooper:

- Worked with WTIP for updates with Lutsen township
- Corresponded with Mr. Keyport on his hazard mitigation plan

C Homyak:

- Unable to attend in person due to EMR training Supervisor Homyak emailed; Insurance update – we should have received a check for the first amount of the insurance claim. Once the work is done on the fire door replacement and we have sent in the invoice they will send the rest of the amount. The quote from overhead was for about \$9k. We will be reimbursed about \$8700 total. We are still waiting on a quote for the light.
- Supervisor Homyak is unable to attend the fall celebration but will donate a portion or ordered items

Old Business:

- Consideration to make Lutsen township suitable for emergency shelter; generator. (Discussion located under commissioner report) **Supervisor Friesner will contact Hank and Mal on getting a slab poured and possibly getting the generator ordered. Will call and talk to North shore plumbing about connecting generator to building needs and heating requirements; Supervisor L Cooper will be the main contact for Mr. Keyport about his hazard mitigation request.**
- Review of townhall insurance and look into new insurance companies. Supervisor Homyak will continue to liaison with other insurance companies to compare costs and coverage of needed items.
- **Fall celebration planning date selected for Saturday October 26th, 2024 from 1pm-4pm**, planned potluck with supervisor Homyak providing hot coco, apple cider, hotdogs and brats; costumes welcome! *C Friesner and Danielle will head the planning and decoration.*

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- The shed currently needs to be stained and seeding around the shed take place before winter sets in; **C Friesner advised a contractor who is fully insured and would only need supplies to be purchased; material have been purchased by clerk.**
- Overhead garage fire bay doors damaged; **C Homyak filed a claim with insurance information posted above.**

New Business:

- Air Packs; posted above
- Fire Hydrants ownership discussion requested by Tom Rider; new fire hydrants have recently been installed after the old ones had been unusable over the last few years due to improper installation and breaking. Throughout the process Mr. Rider expressed the though that is would make more sense for the township to own the fire hydrants and take over the easement assesses in case any ownership of the businesses changes hands. Having the maintenance personnel and the fire department be in control at all times. At the moment Mr. Rider is looking to start a conversation about who should own the fire hydrants. Supervisor Friesner question if there is a current easement for access; currently there is a legal easement for the water district to access the pipeline and fire hydrants, the township does not.

Supervisor Friesner; how does owning the fire hydrants look on paper, maintenance fees, insurance needs, required documentation needed? Fire chief Duclos; at the moment the only maintenance they need is flushing throughout the year which can be done without an easement. A currently issue that needs to be added is the finding out what the psi is of the lower hydrants are, there is a possibility of while the ski hill runs the big pump for snow making the psi of the lower hydrants being ineffective. Further testing will need to be conducted for a comprehensive evaluation. A Cook County resident with extensive experience did express interest in being available for any needed repairs on the hydrant; the hydrants being the same model as the ones currently installed in Grand Marias means we can order parts through Grand Marais. However, Fire Chief Duclos did question at what point does the liability start, fire hydrant, pipe line or components? Additionally, ski hill does pull from the pipe line for snow making purposes throughout the year and the water district owns all the underground components, at what point would the townships liability start and end?

Mr. Rider; a clear bill of sale and understanding could be worded to solely be the fire hydrants and the components to the hydrant. In terms of fire resource since the pipe line goes up hill and if for any reason the pumps aren't working there is around half a million gallons of water in the pipe that would drain back. Fire chief Duclos; static pressure in the line is between 30 to 40 thousand gallons. Supervisor Friesner suggested looking into the ramifications of owning the fire hydrants and liability would be before the next meeting and talk with the township attorney about the subject. **C Homyak will discuss the ramifications of owning fire hydrants with the township insurance company.**

Donations: Rodney Young, North Shore Winery LLC; Thank you! **C Friesner made a motion to accept the donations, L Copper seconded. Motion passed.**

Citizen Comments:

- Former Lutsen Township supervisor Merland Hansen passed and will be greatly missed.
- Fire chief Duclos thanked the township board for supplying the fire/EMS department with all the equipment that keeps them safe and functioning well; it helps with recruiting new people and maintaining moral, the new turnout gear is much lighter and more flexible and make the job better overall.

Adjournment: C Friesner made a motion to adjourn; seconded by L Cooper. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

S Mcquatters-Spangle; Townhall Clerk

Carl Friesner; Chairperson