

December 8, 2020

Town Chair Bryce Black called the regular Town Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2020. Due to precautions being taken for the Covid 19 virus pandemic, remote attendance for this meeting was an option.

Board members attending remotely were Bryce Black, Richard McDermott, Curt Stine and Josh Manor and Plan Commission Chair Don Gisch. Also attending remotely was Debra Fisher.

Town Clerk Maureen Manore was present in the Town Hall and was signed into the meeting on-line.

Minutes

The draft minutes from the November 17, 2020, meeting were examined. The minutes stood as submitted.

Financial Report

Treasurer's report for November was read. The ending balance for November was \$303,442.89.

Citizens' Concerns

Curt Stine relayed Lily Arbore's email to him concerning a reported death involving an ATV operating on a Pepin County highway in the Town of Stockholm. Bryce Black shared additional information about the accident, which involved a hunter traveling between neighboring leased hunting properties. Black spoke to former Plan Commission Chair Dwight Jelle and to Zoning Administrator Dan Fedderly concerning a question about building a house on a lot that is smaller than the minimum 10 acres, but existed before the Town's Zoning Ordinance went into effect. They concluded that the Ordinance says sub-sized pre-existing lots are grandfathered in, and building could be allowed as long as the initial use of the land is not changed. Some of the Board members thought that building a house would change the use. It was decided to put this subject on a future agenda.

Cemetery Maintenance Update

The Board received three bids for the removal of the large, dying pine tree in the Little Plum Cemetery:

Out on Limb: cut down - \$1500; cut down and remove all debris - \$2600.

Timber Ridge: cut down and chip brush - \$2000; cut down, chip brush and remove wood- \$2800; replace topsoil - \$450.

Expert Tree Service: cut down & chip brush - \$3000; cut down, remove all - \$4000; stump grinding \$150.

All three were insured to cover damages.

The Board discussed the options. Motion by Josh Manor, seconded by Curt Stine, to have Timber Ridge come in and cut the tree, chip the brush and leave the wood before the spring thaw. A vote was taken by show of hands, the motion carried with no negative votes.

Report on Other Meetings Attended

No other meetings were attended.

Plan Commission Report

Plan Commission Chair Don Gisch reported on the Plan Commission meeting held on November 18th. The Plan Commission began its review of the Comprehensive Plan making note of suggested changes that included updating the names of schools and hospitals, clarifying wording and adding ATV/UTV language. They discussed conducting another community survey and decided to revisit this topic after the 2020 census data comes out. The Plan Commission will meet on January 27th to look over the changes and possibly set a hearing date.

Road Reports

Black spoke with Pepin County Highway Crew Foreman Dale Carothers about recent road work. The snow fences have been put up on Gates Hill Road and Goatback Road. Some fallen trees in ditches have been cleaned up.

The Town has not received a bill from the County for the Bear Pen re-construction project. Bryce Black was uncertain if the LRIP grant that would reimburse part of this expense would expire at the end of this year. He will contact the County Highway Commissioner with these concerns. Black asked the Board if he could authorize the payment of the County Highway Department's bill if payment needed to happen this year to qualify for the grant. Motion by Richard McDermott, seconded by Josh Manor, to allow Bryce Black to authorize payment of the bill for reconstructing and black topping Bear Pen Road if the bill was within 20% of the estimate by the end of the year. A roll call vote was held. Josh Manor – yes; Curt Stine – yes; Richard McDermott – yes; Bryce Black – yes. Motion carried.

Richard McDermott asked if the Town had the authority to cut tree limbs overhanging a Town road if the tree itself was not in the right of way. Bryce Black replied that the Town was responsible for maintaining the roads and for safety.

Assessor Contract Renewal

The Board examined the renewal contract from Mark Garlick of Chimney Rock Appraisal. The contract contained a fee increase to cover a market revaluation in 2021 but it was unclear if the regular maintenance was included.

Motion by Curt Stine, seconded by Josh Manor, to renew the contract with the assessor for 2021 on the condition that maintenance is included. If not, the Chair will bring it back for further discussion. A roll call vote was held. Josh Manor – yes; Richard McDermott – yes; Curt Stine – yes; Bryce Black – yes. Motion carried.

Building Inspector Contract Renewal

The Board examined the renewal contract from Fred Weber of Weber Inspections.

Motion by Josh Manor, seconded by Curt Stine, to accept the contract from Weber Inspections. A vote was held by show of hands. The motion passed with no negative votes.

Durand Ambulance Contract Renewal

The Board discussed the Durand Ambulance Contract. They noted that there were two contradictory provisions. Number 3 stated that the contract was in effect "on each January 1st thereafter" while number 6 stated that the agreement was good for 1 year.

Motion by Richard McDermott, seconded by Curt Stine, to renew the contract with the Durand Ambulance Service. A vote was held by show of hands. The motion passed with no negative votes.

Command Central Hardware Maintenance Agreement

The Board reviewed the Hardware Maintenance Agreement with Command Central for the Town's voting machine.

Motion by Richard McDermott, seconded by Curt Stine, to accept the agreement and pay the accompanying bill. A vote was held by show of hands. The motion passed with no negative votes.

Board of Adjustment Appointment

Bryce Black appointed Curt Stine to serve another 3-year term on the Board of Adjustment and Marie Berger to serve a 3-year term as an alternate. The terms will run from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

Motion by Josh Manor, seconded by Richard McDermott, to confirm the appointments. A vote was held by show of hands. The motion passed with no negative votes.

Routes to Recovery Grant Update

Maureen Manore reported that the Department of Administration has updated the Town's expense reporter on-line for the Routes to Recovery Grant request. The report shows that there is no estimated available balance, which means that all the expenses the Town submitted for reimbursement were accepted. The Town requested \$1,490.96 of the \$5,804 grant. The balance of the grant money was allotted to the Village of Pepin and The City of Durand for their ambulance services.

Set Caucus Date

The caucus date was set for January 12th, 2021 to begin at 6:30 p.m.

Approve Payment of Bills

The Chair examined and approved the payment of the December bills.

Motion by Richard McDermott, seconded by Josh Manor, to confirm the payment of bills paid by check 10953 through 10969, totaling \$4,637.34. A roll call vote was held, the results as follows: Richard McDermott – yes; Josh Manor – yes; Curt Stine yes.

The next board meeting was scheduled for Tuesday January 12, 2021 following the caucus which begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Frankfort Town Hall. A tentative Town Board meeting agenda will cover: Town Board Minutes, Financial Report, Citizens' Concerns, Cemetery Maintenance, Report on Other Meetings Attended, Road Reports, and Pay Bills.

The Chair adjourned the meeting.

Time 8:26 p.m.

Maureen Manore, Clerk