

Solway Town Board Reorganization Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Solway Town Board Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Scott Welsh, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Also present were Supervisor Ron Gajewski, Clerk Tami McGregor, Treasurer Cindy Moe, and five concerned citizens. Supervisor Clare Stromlund was not present at the meeting.

MOTION by Supervisor Welsh, seconded by Supervisor Gajewski, and carried unanimously to approve the rotation of Supervisor Stromlund to the position of Chairperson and Supervisor Gajewski as Vice-Chair for the coming year. In the absence of Supervisor Stromlund at this meeting, Supervisor Gajewski will act as Vice-Chair in running the meeting. Supervisor Welsh was re-elected to the Supervisor position at the Township election and took his Oath of Office prior to the commencement of this meeting.

II. MINUTES – TOWN BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 14, 2023:

MOTION by Supervisor Welsh, seconded by Supervisor Gajewski, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the Town Board Meeting of February 14, 2023, as presented.

III. MINUTES – PUBLIC BUDGET MEETING OF FEBRUARY 27, 2023:

MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the Public Budget Meeting of February 27, 2023, as presented.

IV. TREASURER’S REPORT: FEBRUARY 28, 2023

MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski, and carried unanimously to accept the Treasurer’s report dated February 28, 2023.

Checking:19270-19317

Beginning Balance	\$318,495.68	
Receipts	1,400.37	
Disbursements	<u>-39,536.36</u>	
Ending Balance	\$280,359.69	\$280,359.69

Money Market

Beginning Balance	\$109,627.11	
Interest/Deposits	0.00	
Withdrawals	<u>0.00</u>	
Ending Balance	\$109,627.11	<u>\$109,627.11</u>

Total Accounts \$389,986.80

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V. CORRESPONDENCE

- 02/27 Affidavit of Publication-Duluth News Tribune – Notice of Public Accuracy Testing (Not in packet)
- 02/27 Affidavit of Publication-Duluth News Tribune – Notice of Annual Meeting, Election, Board of Canvass & Regular Town Board Meeting on Different Date (Not in packet)
- 02/28 Affidavit of Publication-Hermantown Star & Proctor Journal – Notice of Public Accuracy Testing (Not in packet)
- 02/28 Affidavit of Publication-Hermantown Star & Proctor Journal – Notice of Annual Meeting, Election, Board of Canvass & Regular Town Board Meeting on Different Date (Not in packet)
- 02/28 Affidavit of Publication-Cloquet Pine Journal – Notice of Public Accuracy Testing (Not in packet)
- 02/28 Affidavit of Publication-Cloquet Pine Journal – Notice of Annual Meeting, Election, Board of Canvass & Regular Town Board Meeting on Different Date (Not in packet)
- 02/28 Audio Systems (Tim Aldrich) – Proposals for Town Hall audio visual system (To be discussed under “Hall”)
- 03/06 Affidavit of Publication-Pine Knot News – Notice of Public Accuracy Testing (Not in packet)
- 03/06 Affidavit of Publication-Pine Knot News – Notice of Annual Meeting, Election, Board of Canvass & Regular Town Board Meeting on Different Date (Not in packet)
- 03/06 Portable John – Notice of 10% increase in services effective 04/04 billing. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to accept the 10% increase on the Portable John bill and to continue using them as our vendor.**
- 03/07 MN Association of Townships (MAT) – Request for Officer List due by 05/01 (Itemization of list with personal information not in packet) Officers were asked to review their information, and if any changes, inform Clerk McGregor, who will submit the report to MAT.
- 03/08 MN Association of Townships (MAT) – Legislative Update & Advocacy Alert to support township transportation funding via a link to Representative Natalie Zeleznikar’s website. Supervisor Welsh responded and was informed that he will receive updates.
- 03/09 MN Association of Townships (MAT) – Registration and schedule information regarding State Auditor’s, “State of Main Street” 2023 Listening Tour, on March 13, 14 & 15, 2023. Sessions are designed to put together the State Auditor’s data and community expertise in order to make better decisions. No board action necessary or taken.
- 03/10 Motorola Solutions – Quote #2083577 for Solway Volunteer Fire Dept. for APX ARMER (Radio) Equipment. (Cost itemization only in packet. To be discussed under “Fire”)

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- 03/14 MN Association of Townships (MAT) – Notice of Spring Short Courses (Duluth session on 04/07 at DECC) **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously that anyone wanting to attend the Spring Short Course in Duluth may do so at Township expense.**
- 03/14 Fire Chief Brandon Porter – Request for Ball Valve Purchase to repair fire truck in-house. This purchase was approved by Supervisor Welsh on 03/14 and Chief Porter was informed that the part will be ordered by Clerk McGregor once a link is provided.
- 03/15 SLC Public Health & Human Services-Community Partner Survey – Post-COVID survey on community partnerships; survey closes on 04/07. This survey will be reviewed by Supervisors following the meeting.
- 03/15 MnDOT-Hwy #2 & #194 Resurfacing & Roundabout Construction Project - Request to use Hall on 04/18 for a public meeting. (See additional information under “Hall”)
- 03/16 SLC Assessor’s Office – Meeting data and material for Solway Local Board of Appeal and Equalization (LBAE) meeting on 05/11.
- 03/16 SLC Association of Townships (SLCAT) – 2023 Dues Statement - **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously that 2023 SLCAT dues are authorized for payment.**
- 03/20 Carlton County Attorney’s Office – Victim’s rights letter regarding Post Office theft currently pending settlement. Solway did not suffer any loss as a result of the crime; therefore, no board action necessary or taken.
- 03/20 SLC Public Health & Human Services-Medical Assistance (MA) – Notice of meetings for community partners regarding anticipated surge in Medical Assistance renewals following end of pandemic-era rule ending on 07/01 that ensured continuous insurance coverage for MA recipients. No board action necessary or taken.

VI. OUTSTANDING BILLS: Treasurer Moe reported additional bills for the Outstanding Bills List as follows:

- St. Louis County Association of Townships (SLCAT) - \$1,402.94 (Annual Dues)
- Proctor Chem Free Grad Party - \$100.00 – Donation

MOTION by Supervisor Welsh, seconded by Supervisor Gajewski, and carried unanimously to pay all bills as listed on the Outstanding Bills List, and additional bills presented by the Town Treasurer, for a total amount of \$18,953.07.

VII. CITIZEN REQUESTS AND CONCERNS:

- A. Proctor Softball Association - Kelly Johnson with the Proctor Softball Association attended the meeting to request permission to set up a temporary pitching mound 30 feet from Homeplate to meet the requirements

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of the U8 and U10 groups. The temporary mound is rubber and should stick up no more than one-half inch and should not interfere with pitching from the permanent plate that is 45 to 60 feet from Homeplate. After discussion, it was determined that the temporary plate could be used.

Practices typically begin in mid-May, and once a schedule is available, Kelly will submit that to the Clerk for reservation purposes. Although the Solway field will mostly be used for practices, it may be used in July for some playoff games.

Ms. Johnson also inquired about a pitching machine they are missing that may have been left in the Solway dugout storage area. After discussion, it was confirmed that the machine is in the dugout storage area, and Ms. Johnson was given the code so that she can pick up the machine once the storage area is accessible. Ms. Johnson was also given permission to share the storage area code with the other three coaches within the organization.

VIII. ROAD:

- A. Highway #2 Driveway Access – Following discussion at the December 2022 meeting, Victor Lund, St. Louis County Traffic Engineer, acknowledged there are significant challenges to two of the previously submitted concepts (#1 & #2) due to firefighter parking, electrical and septic system issues.

According to Mr. Lund, the project team is now evaluating another option. Due to another commitment and his continued coordination with MnDOT, Mr. Lund was unable to present this option at the March meeting; however, is planning to present it at the April 11th meeting.

- B. Road Inspection Date (Roads, Parking Lots & Basketball Court – Due to the amount of remaining snow, it was determined that inspections will occur somewhat later than in other years. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to schedule Road Inspections for Friday, May 5, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**
- C. Culvert Steaming – The culvert on the north end of the Sandberg Road, off Morris Thomas Road and above Jerry Road, has been spewing water. Supervisor Gajewski requested that St. Louis County add this culvert to their steaming schedule, and other culverts will continue to be monitored.
- D. Township Streetlight – Intersection of Hwy. #2 & Munger Shaw Road - Leon Forstrom suggested removing the Township streetlight at the intersection of Hwy. #2 and Munger Shaw Road since there is also a MnDOT streetlight at this intersection. There has also been discussion regarding the lighting of the Hwy. #2 driveway entrance, and possibly the light at the intersection could be moved to that location. This matter will be added to the May agenda when we may have more information regarding MnDOT's project involving the Highway #2 driveway entrance.

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IX. FIRE DEPARTMENT:

- A. Department Report – Chief Porter was unable to attend the meeting due to another commitment and submitted updates via email.
- B. Building Signage Update – Authorization was given at the February meeting to pursue the purchase of signage for the south and west sides of the Fire Hall from Eagleview Metalworks corresponding to the price of \$4,900 based upon the quote presented on February 14, 2023, and pending selection of the color scheme. Chief Porter will have samples of the signage and a final rendering for the April meeting. The Department would also like to install some type of sign on the east side of the building.
- C. DNR Grant – Wildland Fire Gear – All Wildland Gear listed in the grant has been purchased. Some of the gear has already been received, and the rest should arrive within the next couple of months.
- D. Fire Protection Issues (Insurance) – There is a possibility that the Township may be exploring alternative insurance options. Chief Porter has requested that the Department’s current provider, Young and Associates, requote their policy in May. The Fire Department and Town Board agree that it is a good idea to coordinate insurance reviews in order to avoid duplicative coverage.
- E. Damage to Unit #6 on 02/18/23 Fire Call – There was no update on this matter at the March meeting.
- F. APX Armer Equipment – The Fire Department is requesting consideration of a seven-year municipal “lease to own” program for 22 Motorola portable radios and one base station for the Fire Hall. Radios would be insured during the full term of the lease program, and after seven years, would be owned by the Department. If approved, annual lease payments are \$19,000, with the first payment due one year after contract acceptance. After exploring multiple options, Chief Porter believes the submitted proposal is the best option for the Department. Outright purchase of the units would be \$111,000. Clerk McGregor was asked to communicate with Chief Porter before the April meeting to see if upgrades during the lease period are included.

X. **RECYCLING:** There was no business discussed under recycling.

XI. HALL:

- A. Video Conferencing Equipment Update – DADS Electronics submitted proposals on February 10, 2023. The estimate for the upstairs is \$8,349.35, and \$7,099.45 for the basement.

Tim Aldrich of Audio Systems came to the Hall and submitted proposals on February 28, 2023. Depending on options selected, the upper level proposals ranged from \$7,465.00 to \$7,835.00 and the lower level proposals ranged from \$6,505.00 to \$6,915.00. After discussion, it was determined that Mr. Aldrich will be asked to attend the April Board meeting

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to present and answer questions regarding the various options and which of those would be best suited to our needs.

Additional information will be requested for video conferencing/Zoom capabilities.

After discussion regarding the two vendors, the Board elected to continue working with Audio Systems rather than DADS.

- B. Security Camera Repair Update – Red-D-Electric – Rick Flesvig of Red-D-Electric has ordered a replacement camera which has not yet arrived.
- C. Mini-Split/Furnace Usage – The mini-split units have been working very well and have been turned on again to supplement heat from the boiler.
- D. Roof Vent Over Stage – There has been an intermittent leak in the ceiling of the stage area due to snow coming in from the Whirlybird roof turbine. Due to weather conditions, resolution of this matter will be discussed again at the May meeting.
- E. Sale of Previous Message Sign – After discussion regarding the sale/disposal of the old message sign, it was determined that Leon Forstrom will attempt to sell or dispose of the sign via social media.
- F. Hall Rentals – Individuals vs. Families – There was discussion regarding rental fees for “first rental in calendar year” and “additional rental,” and whether usage is based upon a family unit or an individual. After discussion, it was agreed that usage will be based upon a family unit.
- G. MN Dept. of Health – Water/Back Flow Preventer Testing - Larry Peterson from the MN Dept. of Health collected Town Hall water samples on March 16, 2023, as required for compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Rules. Results will be sent once they are available.
- H. MnDOT Hwy #2 & #194 Resurfacing & Roundabout Project - A Public Meeting hosted by MnDOT will be held at the Town Hall on April 18, 2023, from 5:30–7:00 p.m. Notice of this meeting will be posted on the Solway website, included in the April newsletter, and added to our electronic message center one week prior to the meeting.
- I. MN Power HVDC (High Voltage Direct Current) Modernization Project – An Open House hosted by MN Power will be held at the Town Hall on April 19, 2023, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. Notice of this meeting will be posted on the Solway website, included in the April newsletter, and added to our electronic message center one week prior to the meeting.

XII. PARK:

- A. Safety Inspection Report Update – Supervisor Gajewski reported that there were no issues included in the March 8, 2023, report.
- B. Tennis/Volleyball Net Update – The tennis and volleyball nets ordered from Summit Supply in Colorado have been received and given to Leon Forstrom, who will see to their installation this Spring.

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- C. Basketball Court Blacktop Overlay Update – This item will be included in the Road Inspection scheduled for May 5, 2023.

XIII. CEMETERY:

- A. Memorial Day Observance - The Memorial Day Observance at the Solway Cemetery will be held on May 29, 2023, beginning at 12:00 p.m. The ceremony will include the Proctor American Legion Honor Guard and a nondenominational prayer service led by Pastor Stafford Thompson of Hope Lutheran Church. Notice will be posted on the Solway website, included in the April newsletter, and added to our electronic message center prior to the observance.

XIV. COMMITTEES:

- A. Special Events - Winter Fun Day Update – The Winter Fun Day was held on March 5, 2023, with a great turnout. The mild weather resulted in more people participating in the outdoor activities.

XV. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Insurance Review Update – In follow-up to a Motion made and carried at the February 14, 2023, meeting, the Township will be exploring alternative insurance options. As stated earlier, the Fire Department and Town Board agree that it is a good idea to coordinate insurance reviews in order to avoid duplicative coverage. Supervisor Welsh will begin gathering information for review and consideration by the Board.
- B. Northland Fire & Safety – Annual Inspection of Fire Extinguishers – Service, maintenance and re-certification of portable fire extinguishers and CO2 tanks was provided on February 13, 2023. Some units needed to be recharged, with loaner units left in their place. All work has now been completed and original units returned.

XVI. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Insurance Coverage – Special Events – There was discussion regarding whether individuals providing services, such as train/hayrides at Special Events are covered under the Township’s liability policy. Clerk McGregor will look into this matter with MATIT, our current insurer; however, this will also be reviewed as part of our overall insurance review.
- B. Donations From Annual Meeting – In October 2022, the Township received a donation request from the Proctor All Night Grad Party Committee (ANGPC). A donation in the amount of \$100.00 was approved by the electorate at the Annual Meeting on March 14, 2023. Treasurer Moe will issue a check in the amount of \$100.00 payable to the Proctor Chem Free Grad Party.

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- C. Computer Repair/Back-Up – There was discussion regarding electronic file back-up and repair/replacement of the Clerk’s laptop, which has been having some issues, and coincidentally crashed during this Board meeting. **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski and carried unanimously to approve the purchase of a new laptop at a cost of up to \$1,000. MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski and carried unanimously to approve the purchase of an external hard drive with 2TB of storage space.**
- D. Aggregate Tax Audits – In the past, there have been discussions regarding aggregate tax audits; however, we have been unable to locate an auditor who performs this type of service. There was discussion regarding this matter again and Supervisor Gajewski suggested that we contact the Couri & Ruppe law firm, who specialize in Township matters for their input. Clerk McGregor will follow up on this matter.

XVII. SIGN CHECKS/ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh and carried unanimously to adjourn tonight’s meeting with the signing of checks, and review of the SLC Public Health & Human Services Community Partner Survey. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.