

Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Solway Town Board meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Ronald Gajewski, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Also present were Supervisors Scott Welsh and Jeffrey Keppers, Clerk Tami McGregor and Deputy Clerk Regena Merritt, and five concerned citizens. Treasurer Cindy Moe was not present.

II. MINUTES – TOWN BOARD MEETING OF AUGUST 20, 2024

MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to accept the minutes from the town board meeting of August 20, 2024, as presented.

III. TREASURER’S REPORT – AUGUST 31, 2024

MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to accept the monthly Treasurer’s Report dated August 31, 2024, as presented.

Checking: 20097-20159

Beginning Balance	\$152,915.54	
Receipts	1,355.56	
Disbursements	<u>-52,006.22</u>	
Ending Balance	\$102,264.88	\$102,264.88

Money Market

Beginning Balance	\$91,158.19	
Interest/Deposits	76.86	
Withdrawals	<u>0.00</u>	
Ending Balance	\$91,235.05	<u>\$91,235.05</u>

Total Accounts **\$193,499.93**

IV. CORRESPONDENCE (Requiring Board Action/Discussion)

08/29 SLC Land and Minerals – Adjoining owner sale of state tax-forfeited lands (PID: 530-0250-00981 – Location: Between 4686 and 4690 Dow Road, Saginaw, Town of Solway). A private sale to adjacent landowners requires the approval of the municipality. If a response is not received within 30 days of the date of this letter, the proposed land sale will be deemed approved.

Following a review and discussion of the material, **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously that Solway Township has no objection to the adjoining owner sale of**

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tax forfeited lands (PID: 530-0250-00981). Clerk McGregor will relay this information to St. Louis County via email.

V. OUTSTANDING BILLS – In Treasurer Moe’s absence, Deputy Clerk Merritt reported additional bills for the Outstanding Bills List as follows:

- On Track Taxes - \$440.00 (09/10/24 Invoice RE: Aggregate auditing services)
- Federated Co-ops, Inc. - \$808.09 (Lime Pellets & Fertilizer)
- Rick Flesvig - \$50.00 (Deposit return for entrance culvert permit)
- Matt Conito - \$50.00 (Deposit return for entrance culvert permit)

MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously to pay all bills as listed on the Outstanding Bills List, and any additional bills presented by the town treasurer, for a total of \$32,771.05.

VI. CITIZEN REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

- A. Mark Munger – Introduction as MN House 3B Candidate – Mark Munger attended the meeting to introduce himself and provide background information. For more information, residents were invited to visit Mr. Munger’s website at munger4mn.com.

VII. ROAD

- A. Roadside Mowing – At the September meeting, Butch Lund reported that he is about halfway done with the second round of roadside mowing. Mr. Lund also reported that there are a number of large rocks on the Van Gassler Road following Mediacom’s fiber install. Supervisor Gajewski will contact Mediacom regarding resolution of this matter.
- B. Cedarway Cul-De-Sac – At the September meeting, it was reported that seeding of the Cedarway cul-de-sac has been completed and the area has been covered with straw.
- C. Sandberg Road (North) Branches – At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that the branches obscuring the speed limit sign have been removed by maintenance staff.
- D. Flesvig Driveway Culvert – 4052 Jeffrey Road – The Application of Entrance Culvert Permit at 4052 Jeffrey Road was inspected and approved by Supervisor Gajewski on September 3, 2024. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously to refund the \$50.00 deposit to Rick Flesvig following the final inspection of a driveway culvert at 4052 Jeffrey Road.**
- E. St. Louis County Township Road Maintenance Request – To insure there are no hazards for snowplowing, Supervisor Gajewski reported that all items on the county’s maintenance request have been completed.
- F. Oliver Culvert Extension Request – 3977 Sandberg Road – Supervisor Gajewski reported that the existing culvert is approximately 45-feet in length

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and should be adequate. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously that while the board sees no need to extend the culvert at township expense, the property owner may proceed at their own expense, within required specifications.**

- G. Conito Driveway Culvert – 4315 Tondryk Road – There was discussion regarding an outstanding entrance culvert permit application for Matt Conito at 4315 Tondryk Road. Supervisor Gajewski inspected and approved the current installation on September 10, 2024. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to refund the \$50.00 deposit to Matt Conito following approval of a driveway culvert installation at 4315 Tondryk Road.**
- H. Gravel Hauling – There was discussion regarding the need for additional gravel on the Wargin and both Hanson Roads. Following the review of remaining road funds, **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to apply additional gravel to the Wargin and Hanson (north and south) Roads, up to a maximum of \$15,000.**

VIII. FIRE DEPARTMENT

- A. Department Report – Chief Brandon Porter reported that current membership remains the same at 15 members. There were with no major calls within the last few weeks.
- B. Insurance (Engine #1-2005 Pierce Enforcer) Equipment Coverage – The MN Association of Townships Insurance Trust (MATIT) requested an equipment cost inventory in October 2023 to support a requested additional \$100,000 in coverage due to the equipment Engine #1 carries. Completion of a cost inventory has been on hold pending a determination regarding other potential insurance options.
- C. DNR Wildland Matching Grant – Chief Porter reported that the department has been approved for a 2025 DNR Wildland matching grant. These funds will be used to outfit the Unit #7 vehicle replacement. This is a \$10,000 matching grant, with the township having met their \$5,000 contribution with the recent purchase of the Unit #7 replacement.
- D. Purchase of Replacement Vehicle for 2004 Chevy Silverado (Unit #7) – At the September meeting, Chief Porter reported that upon personally inspecting the 2012 Ford 4WD F550 truck on August 26, 2024, that had been approved for purchase at the August meeting, there was considerable rust and hail damage on the unit that had not been visible on the photos; therefore, the unit was not purchased. The 2012 vehicle also had a cloth interior, which would have been difficult to keep clean, as well as a steel body, more prone to rust.

In lieu of the 2012 unit, a 2017 Ford F550 unit was purchased at a cost of \$29,000, which was \$1,000 more than the 2012 unit, with the additional amount being paid by the department. The 2017 unit has an undercoated aluminum chassis and new tires, without hail or rust damage.

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The 2004 Chevy Silverado (Unit #7) has been taken to Wisconsin Surplus for auction, and those proceeds will be utilized for outfitting the 2017 unit. The new truck is currently stationed at the fire hall. Chief Porter indicated that the largest purchases to equip the truck will be the \$20,000.00 skid and \$7,000.00 flatbed purchases, which have about a two-month lead time for ordering.

The department can get by for now with existing equipment, and after discussion it was determined that purchases to outfit the new unit will be placed on hold until after the sale of Unit #7, which should occur at the end of September, with funds being received two to three months later.

- E. Roundabout Speed Limit Signs (Hwy. #2 & #194) – At the August meeting, Chief Porter inquired regarding the possibility of reduced speed limit signs being placed at the Hwy. #2/Hwy. #194 roundabout due to safety concerns. At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that according to Jim Miles with MnDOT, they are unwilling to put in speed limit signs; however, there is a possibility of signage being placed on both sides of the road in advance of the roundabout, and prior to the Hwy. #194 bend and/or railroad trestle.
- F. Munger Shaw/Maple Grove Road Intersection – At the August meeting, Chief Porter inquired regarding a temporary 4-way stop at the Maple Grove and Munger Shaw Road intersection while it is being used as a detour for the Munger Shaw Road/Hwy. #2 intersection project. At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that the county is unwilling to make a temporary change as it may create more problems than it solves, and because the project is scheduled to be completed by the end of this month.

IX. RECYCLING

- A. Dumpster Padlocks – According to a September 6, 2024, email from Lori Blais with WLSSD, Waste Management can no longer obtain the padlocks that are currently keyed for our recycling center dumpsters. Going forward, all replacements will be keyed the same as the lock on the hall dumpster.

After discussion, it was determined that the best remedy would be to switch the recycling locks over to the style for which replacements will be available. The old recycling locks will then be used for the hall dumpster. Clerk McGregor will discuss this plan with Ms. Blais and see if WLSSD is able to provide us with three new style locks for the recycling dumpsters.

X. HALL

- A. Video Conferencing & Audio-Visual System – Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that Tim Aldrich began working on TV antenna installations on August 29, 2024, using an indoor antenna. Due to poor

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reception, Mr. Aldrich has ordered an outdoor antenna that will be connected to the upstairs TV and also tried for the downstairs.

For virtual meetings, Mr. Aldrich does not believe the OWL camera will be the best option, and he will continue to explore other options.

XI. PARK

- A. Safety Inspection Report – Supervisor Gajewski reported there were no safety hazards included in the September 5, 2024, report.
- B. Field Maintenance Report – At the August meeting, \$826.00 was approved for the purchase of lime pellets and fertilizer from Moose Lake Federated Co-ops. Clerk McGregor provided Federated Co-ops with tax exempt information and on September 11, 2024, obtained a final amount of \$808.09 from Federated Co-ops.

A check will be issued and dropped off by Horst Blumerich at the time material is picked up, which he estimates will be between September 29th and October 5th. Mr. Blumerich will notify Federated Co-ops several days in advance of pick-up to allow bagging time for the bulk material.

- C. Benches - Refinishing – Leon Forstrom reported at the September meeting that bench refinishing has not been completed; and will likely not be able to be done until spring. After discussion, it was determined that the benches will be left out for the winter, with refinishing hopefully completed next spring.

XII. CEMETERY

- A. Cemetery Rules and Regulations Revisions – At the August meeting a motion was made and carried to amend the cemetery regulations to include the eligibility for a cemetery plot to include a person “who is or has lived, in the township.” It was also determined that prior to that change being made, the regulations should be reviewed in their entirety to see if any other changes are necessary. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to review the cemetery rules and regulations in their entirety at the October meeting.**
- B. Request for Memorial Plaque – There was a request by a resident regarding the placement of a small memorial plaque, similar to a footstone, for an adult deceased child at the foot of an existing plot, although no ashes or body will be interred. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to allow for the placement of a small memorial plaque for an adult deceased child, similar to a footstone, to be placed at the foot of the parents’ existing plot.** Leon Forstrom will inform the family of the board’s decision.
- C. Cub Cadet – Butch Lund reported at the meeting that the deck on the Cub Cadet tractor used at the cemetery is getting pretty beat up. The tractor itself

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is running okay, but the deck needs work. No action was taken on this matter; however, other options may be explored regarding the potential for an upgrade in the future.

XIII. COMMITTEES

- A. Halloween Carnival – The Special Events Committee Halloween Carnival planning meeting will be held on Monday, September 30, 2024. Clerk McGregor will send out notifications sometime next week. A second planning meeting is also scheduled for Monday, October 21, at 6:30 p.m.

XIV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Insurance Review – Per a September 10, 2024 email from Bill Owens of Young and Associates, his agency does not have a market that can match the coverage and price of Solway's current policy at this time; however, he will continue looking for other markets. Mr. Owens was asked to contact the township should he find a competitive market.
- B. Aggregate Tax Audits - Amanda Nelson has been in the process of conducting aggregate audits covering the past six years as allowed by Minnesota Statutes. Ms. Nelson reported at the September meeting that she has reviewed 2017 records for Sathers. She is about halfway through Northland's records which include all of their pits, resulting in additional time, but expects to complete those records this week. She will then begin reviewing records from Shelton Excavating.
- C. Minnesota Power Rebates – On August 14, 2024, a Custom Commercial Rebate form was received via DocuSign from MN Power reflecting a \$364.80 rebate on the parking lot lighting and \$1,029.37 on the mini splits, for a total rebate of \$1,394.17. The document was electronically signed and submitted that same day. There was no update at the September meeting.
- D. Recognition Dinner Caterer Selection – At the September meeting, menu selections and pricing from Sarah Mae's Catering for the Recognition Dinner on November 7, 2024, were reviewed and discussed. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to select Menu F, along with the salmon and veggie tray appetizers.**
- E. Willow River Boot Camp – October 8th – Under the direction of Butch Lund, the Willow River Boot Camp will be assisting the township with projects on October 8, 2024. Mr. Lund reported at the September meeting that the camp will be unable to assist with the refinishing or moving of park benches. Outside hall areas, including the mound system and horseshoe pits, need to be cleaned up and there may also be some clean-up needed following completion of the Hwy. #2 project.
- F. Bobcat Credit Application – At the September meeting, Clerk McGregor reported that she was informed by Eric Allen with Bobcat on August 28, 2024, that they have implemented a new policy whereby they are no longer setting up credit accounts.

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XV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. General Election Judge Appointment and Resolution – Ten election judges, including alternates, are needed for the General Election on November 5, 2024.

SOLWAY TOWNSHIP RESOLUTION #2024-9
Appointing Election Judges/Head Judge for General Election

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes Section 204B.21, Subd. 2, requires the Town Board, as the governing body of the town, to appoint Election Judges for the General Election scheduled to be held Tuesday, November 5, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the election judges must meet the qualifications set out in Minnesota Statutes 204B.19 including eligibility to vote; and

WHEREAS, the minimum number of required election judges for the November 5, 2024, General Election pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 204B.22 has been determined to be four for the Town of Solway.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of Solway Township, St. Louis County, Minnesota, that:

1. Leon Forstrom, Ronald Gajewski, Amy Johnson, Richard Johnston, Theresa Johnston, Leonard Lund, Regena Merrit, Cindy Moe, Scott Welsh, and Bonnie Siiro be appointed as election judges for the November 5, 2024, General Election; and
2. Regena Merritt be appointed as head judge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Solway hereby authorizes any election judge to be compensated as required by Minnesota Statutes Section 204B.31, in an amount set by the Town Board at \$17.00 per hour for election judges, and \$17.00 per hour for the head election judge, which is not less than the prevailing Minnesota minimum wage, plus mileage. The clerk may make election judge appointments to fill vacancies should they occur.

Supervisor Ronald Gajewski moved the adoption of the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Scott Welsh, and it was declared adopted on the 10th day of September, 2024 upon the following votes:

Yeas: Supervisors Gajewski, Welsh and Keppers – 3
Nays: None – 0
Absent: None - 0

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- B. Leon Forstrom – Retirement – At the September meeting, Leon Forstrom indicated that he will be retiring effective January 1, 2025, and there was discussion regarding other options. Current maintenance staff, including Horst Blumerich and Leonard Lund, are not interested in the lead worker position. Other potentials may include Paul Dunaiski and Pete Hildre. This topic will be discussed further at the October meeting.
- C. Repair of Blacktop at Base of Hall Front Stairway – Due to frost, the blacktop at the base of the hall front stairway has heaved and needs to be repaired. The repair area could also include the area running around the corner to the foot of the ramp on the south side of the hall. This item will be tabled for discussion until the March meeting.
- D. Agenda – Change to Order – There was discussion regarding a revision to the meeting agenda order due to citizen requests/concerns typically being presented following the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski, and carried unanimously to change the agenda order as follows:

- I. **Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**
- II. **Citizen Requests/Concerns**
- III. **Minutes: Town Board Meeting**
- IV. **Treasurer’s Report**
- V. **Correspondence**
- VI. **Outstanding Bills (Claims List for Approval)**
- VII. **Road**
- VIII. **Fire Department**
- IX. **Recycling**
- X. **Hall**
- XI. **Park**
- XII. **Cemetery**
- XIII. **Committees**
- XIV. **Old Business**
- XV. **New Business**
- XVI. **Sign Checks/Adjournment**

- E. Correspondence Register Items – The Correspondence Register and all associated correspondence are currently included in the minutes and public meeting packets, which is redundant. The register includes an itemization of incoming and outgoing correspondence during the month leading up to the board meeting, and a master copy is initialed by board members at each meeting, and retained for three years pursuant to the state records retention schedule.

Following discussion, **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski, and carried unanimously that effective immediately, all incoming and outgoing correspondence will be recorded on the Correspondence**

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Register which is included in the public meeting packet. The original register will be initialed by the board at each meeting and retained pursuant to the state records retention schedule. Copies of the correspondence itself will only be included in the public meeting packet and referenced in the minutes when board action or discussion is required. Correspondence not included in the minutes or public meeting packet will be available during board meetings and kept on file pursuant to state record retention guidelines.

- F. MN Association of Townships 2024 Legislative & Research Committee Meeting – Due to scheduling conflicts, Solway officers are not able to attend the L & R Committee meeting that will be held on Friday, September 13, 2024, in St. Cloud.
- G. Newsletter – The October newsletter will be completed by the end of September. Other than items typically included in the issue, there was a suggestion by Supervisor Welsh that information relating to the Mediacom installation within the township be included.
- H. Firewood – Leon Forstrom reported that the firewood supply used for Winter Fun Day has been exhausted and inquired whether he and Paul Dunaiski could use the township trailer to haul wood from outside the township. **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski, and carried unanimously to allow the use of the township trailer by Leon Forstrom and Paul Dunaiski to replenish the wood supply used for Winter Fun Day.**

XVI. SIGN CHECKS/ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to adjourn tonight's meeting with the signing of checks. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.