

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

### I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

### II. MINUTES – TOWN BOARD MEETING OF AUGUST 8, 2023

**MOTION** by Supervisor Welsh, seconded by Supervisor Gajewski, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the town board meeting on August 8, 2023, as presented.

### III. TREASURER’S REPORT – AUGUST 31, 2023

**MOTION** by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to accept the Treasurer’s report dated August 31, 2023.

**Checking:19558-19597**

Beginning Balance	\$287,005.47	
Receipts	4,825.84	
Disbursements	<u>-41,488.24</u>	
Ending Balance	\$250,343.07	<b>\$250,343.07</b>

**Money Market**

Beginning Balance	\$110,076.29	
Interest/Deposits	186.20	
Withdrawals	<u>0.00</u>	
Ending Balance	\$110,262.49	<b><u>\$110,262.49</u></b>

**Total Accounts** **\$360,605.56**

### IV. INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE (By date received)

- 08/09 Summit Supply Corp. of Colorado – 08/08 pickleball system quote- updated 8/29 (Discussion under “Park”)
- 08/09 MN Association of Townships (MAT) – 2023 LRIP (Road) Funding and Upcoming Webinar Notice (Discussion under “Road”)
- 08/10 Kevin Cornick, MAT District 10 Director Candidate – Candidate profile
- 08/10 SLFRF – Updates to Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Treasurer Moe will confirm that under the updated requirements, road projects qualify for funding.

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

- 08/11 St. Louis County – Township snowplow application renewal notice (Submission deadline: 09/15/23). **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to renew the 2023-24 contract with St. Louis County.** Clerk McGregor will complete and submit the application.
- 08/11 Cathy Rouleau, St. Louis County Association of Townships (SLCAT) – New meeting date of 08/22 for District 10 director candidate forum
- 08/13 Tim Newgard, MN/WI Playground – Notice of 2023 Community Champions Grant toward purchase of eligible equipment. After discussion, it was determined that there will be no action taken.
- 08/14 Brandi Sanner, Avenu – Analytics solicitation regarding short term rentals
- 08/15 Dale and Nancy Vanderscheuren – 08/14 letter of concern and questions to MN Dept. of Commerce and MN Power RE: Proposed HVDC Modernization Project (Discussion under “Citizen Requests/Concerns”)
- 08/16 St. Louis County – Notice of 2024 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Open House and Public Hearing on 09/12. After discussion, it was determined that this grant will not be pursued.
- 08/17 Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) – Notice of District 10 meeting and election on 08/24
- 08/21 Industrial By Products – Acceptance of Tanner Eckstrom application to apply wood ash and/or lime
- 08/21 Lori Johnson, Proctor School – Invite to welcome back picnic on 08/30
- 08/21 St. Louis County Auditor – Voting Operations, Technology & Election Resources (VOTER) Account; allocation amount for Solway Township: \$105.60. Request from county to retain funds toward administration of absentee balloting, with attached agreement for approval. (Agreement not in packet). **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to approve the agreement allowing the county to retain Solway’s \$105.60 allocation.** Clerk McGregor will return the agreement to the county, once signed.
- 08/22 Christine Clark (for Vic Lund), SLC Public Works – 2023 Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) funding opportunity information; notice of 8/24 & 9/6 webinars (Discussion under “Road”)
- 08/25 Vic Lund, SLC Public Works – Notice of SLC Railroad Crossing Safety Plan township workshop meeting on 10/24 at 6 PM, Cotton Town Hall (Project maps and lists not in packet) (Discussion under “Road”)
- 08/25 MN Dept. of Revenue – Reminder of fire safety surcharge increase for policies issued or renewed on or after 07/01
- 08/25 Suzanne Herstad, Duluth Area Townships (DAT) – Explanation for Rep Zeleznikar’s absence at 8/10 DAT meeting
- 08/28 MN Dept. of Health – Notice of grant opportunity for noncommunity transient public water systems available 09/01. Grant opportunity not applicable to township.
- 08/29 Summit Supply Corp. of Colorado – Updated 08/15 pickleball system quote (Discussion under “Park”)

## **Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023**

- 08/29 DEED (MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development) – Seeking public comments on state’s Digital Opportunity Program plan draft, including listening session information. The nearest listening session is on 09/19 in Two Harbors. After discussion, it was determined that nobody from Solway will attend.
- 08/30 MN Dept. of Revenue – Notice of Withholding Tax Updates webinars
- 08/30 Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) - 2023 Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) solicitation information; notice of 8/24 & 9/6 webinars (Discussion under “Road”)
- 08/31 MN Dept. of Revenue – Updates to 2023 MN Form W4-MNP
- 08/31 Michael Wall, YMCA – Notice of Election Judge Trainees Workshop (for city, townships, and county clerks/election staff) on 9/11 in St. Paul. After discussion, it was determined that the township will continue training through SLC Auditor’s Office.
- 09/06 Holly Olson (for Dewey Johnson, SLC Emergency Operations Center) – Request for initial damage assessment from 09/05 storm damage (Solway not affected)
- 09/06 Kevin McConnell, SLC Public Works – Reminder of 09/15 snowplow application deadline
- 09/06 Cathy Rouleau, St. Louis County Association of Townships (SLCAT) – Notice of meetings on 09/27 at 6:30 PM & 10/25 at 6:30 PM (Cotton Town Hall)
- 09/06 Lisa Utley, MN Association of Townships Insurance Trust (MATIT) – Quote for increased “Misc FF Tools & Apparatus” coverage (Discussion under “Fire”)
- 09/07 Dale & Nancy Vanderscheuren – Request for support via letter/comments to MN Dept. of Public Utilities RE: MN HVDC project; deadline: 09/13 @ 4:30 PM. HVDC project scoping comment form included. (Discussion under “Citizen Requests/Concerns”)
- 09/11 Red-D-Electric – Proposal for upstairs kitchen exhaust fan (Discussion under “Hall”)
- 09/12 Town Web Design – Notice of free informational webinar on 09/14 (Discussion under “Old Business-Website Update”)

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

- None

**MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor 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 amount of \$81,913.14.**

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

### VI. CITIZEN REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

- A. Dale & Nancy Vanderscheuren-MN Power HVDC Modernization Project - The Vanderscheurens submitted correspondence to the MN Department of Commerce and Dan McCourtney of MN Power on August 14, 2023, voicing concerns regarding the HVDC Modernization Project and requesting additional information.

The MN Public Utilities Commission (PUC) hosted a Public Information and Environmental Assessment Scoping Meeting on August 29, 2023, at the Solway Town Hall. Written comments will be accepted by PUC through September 13, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.

The Vanderscheurens attended the September meeting in follow-up to their letter to the board dated September 7, 2023, requesting resident support via a letter or comment to the PUC requesting project lighting and noise levels be kept as low as possible, and that every effort be made to leave the smallest footprint possible.

In response to Mr. Vanderscheuren voicing concerns to the PUC regarding notice of the Scoping Meeting and comment period, he was informed via email on the day of this meeting that additional notices would be sent out and the comment period would be extended to September 23, 2023.

After discussion, it was determined that the board will submit comments to the PUC regarding resident concerns prior to the September 23, 2023, deadline, and will continue to make residents aware of any future meetings at the hall regarding the proposed project via the website, electronic message center and/or the newsletter.

- B. Gaus Road Activity – Citizen concerns have been raised regarding new owner activity on the Gaus Road and whether proper permitting procedures are being followed. Citizens have been referred to St. Louis County for follow-up regarding any concerns.
- C. Ivy Black Weddings & Events – Noise Complaint – A letter was sent by Supervisor Gajewski to Ivy Black Weddings & Events on August 27, 2023, with a copy to St. Louis County Planning, making them aware of recent noise complaints that have been occurring at an increased frequency, and requesting they address noise issues with upcoming events to avoid ongoing complaints.
- D. Memorial Bench for Duane & JoAn Rands – At the August meeting, approval was given for a memorial bench in honor of Duane and JoAn Rands on the west side of the upper playground. The Rands family intends to order the 60” bench from “By the Yard” in Woodbury, MN, and install it this fall. To keep uniformity for future memorial benches, the family will provide order information to the township to keep on file for future reference.

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

It was agreed that the family will coordinate installation of the bench with Leon Forstrom. There was no update at the September meeting.

### VII. ROAD

- A. Jerry Road (Middle) Highline Project – Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that the Highline Project has been completed and does not appear to need any additional Class 5 at this time.
- B. Jerry Road Project (West) – Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that the driveway entrance culvert to be installed on the Jerry Road (West-6356) has been purchased and will be installed within the next couple of weeks. Authorization for this project in the amount of \$3,500 was given at the May meeting.
- C. Lindrose Road – Speed Limit Signs – Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that two signs, one near the Morris Thomas Road intersection and one near the St. Louis River Road intersection, have been installed by St. Louis County.
- D. Flood Damage - FEMA Reimbursement Grant Update - Two invoices from Rodda Grading and Excavating have been submitted for reimbursement consideration to date. One on May 16, 2023, in the amount of \$2,452.20, and a second and final invoice on June 15, 2023, in the amount of \$8,472.89.

On August 17, 2023, Solway's request to reactivate its unique entity ID (UEI) number from the federal government to obtain reimbursement was approved.

On September 6, 2023, Supervisor Gajewski and Clerk McGregor participated in an "Exploratory Phone Meeting" with John Menendez of FEMA to prepare for an in-person meeting scheduled for September 13, 2023.

Following the exploratory meeting with Mr. Menendez, Clerk McGregor completed the registration process to access the federal Grants Portal, and uploaded Solway's Damage Inventory and Contract Work Summary Record spreadsheets. The township must also register with the state to access their portal as federal funds are initially disbursed to the state, who in turn issues them to the township. Clerk McGregor will set up the state account.

- E. Roadside Mowing & Mowing Tractor – At the September meeting, Butch Lund reported that he has completed the second round of roadside mowing on Van Gassler, Jerry, Lindrose, and Stonelake Roads, as well as a portion of the south Sandberg Road. The second round of mowing is about halfway completed, and work on this will continue.

Mr. Lund also reported that the rear tires on the mowing tractor are worn down and could be replaced. The cost for two new tires, including mounting,

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

would be about \$1,000. After discussion, it was determined that this will be discussed at the October meeting as a potential winter project.

- F. Fire Hall & Soccer Field Ditching/Culvert Replacement/Contaminated Soil Removal – Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that the county has ditched from the Munger Shaw Road driveway culvert to the Hwy. #2 corner. They will also be ditching from the north end of the culvert to the soccer field to avoid water damming issues in that area. Although the county noted some additional residue during ditching, they believe it will dissipate and will not need to be dug out.

The county has cleaned the driveway culvert and will be running a robot through it to see if there are any breaks. Depending on the condition of the culvert, a rubberized liner may be an alternate solution to replacement.

- G. Highway #2 Driveway Access Lighting System & Highway #2/Munger Shaw Road Intersection Project – On September 7, 2023, Supervisor Gajewski and Clerk McGregor met with Vic Lund, SLC Traffic Engineer and Megan Goplin, Engineer with LHB, the firm assisting the county with the design of the turn lanes at Highway #2 and Munger Shaw Road.

Mr. Lund's recommendation for the Hwy. #2 entrance lighting is a wood pole with a luminaire, which he believes will provide plenty of light. The township will be responsible for the cost of installation by MN Power, and Mr. Lund indicated that the county and Ms. Goplin will assist with the application permitting process. The pole will be owned by MN Power, and the monthly fee will include power and maintenance, with the maintenance cost also covering repairs should the pole be hit and damaged. Mr. Lund estimates the cost for a wooden pole to be approximately \$2,000 to \$5,000, which is about half the cost of a metal breakaway pole. Another disadvantage of a metal pole is that it would be owned by the township, and therefore, would need to be maintained by the township via a third-party provider. **MOTION by Supervisor Welsh, seconded by Supervisor Gajewski, and carried unanimously to install a wood pole with a luminaire at the Hwy. #2 entrance.**

At the September 7, 2023, meeting, Mr. Lund also indicated that construction on the Hwy. #2/Munger Shaw Road intersection project is estimated to begin between May and August of 2024, taking one month to complete. As part of the intersection project, a longer culvert will be installed at the Hwy. #2 entrance, along with reflective markers.

The current plan is to permanently close Old Hwy. #2, east of the Munger Shaw Road; however, it may be kept open to use as a detour during the intersection project. Mr. Lund expects the Munger Shaw Road south of Highway #2 to be closed during the intersection project, with the Munger Shaw Road north of Highway #2 remaining open.

- H. South Berquist Road – Logging is being done on both sides of the Bergquist Road. At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that all

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

railroad ties have been removed from the western ditch. Clean-up will continue to be monitored, as it appears the project is close to completion.

- I. Heine Road Rocks – At the August meeting, Butch Lund reported a complaint regarding large rocks on the edge of the Heine Road. Mr. Lund reported at the September meeting that he is hoping to assess the situation this week to see if the removal of the rocks is something the township can handle.
- J. Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) Funding, Webinar and SLC Meeting – MnDOT has provided a notice of funding opportunity for the 2023 LRIP. If a township applies for MnDOT LRIP funding, they must be sponsored by the County and SLC would act as the fiscal agent for awarded township projects, and project costs would flow through them. Projects should be ready to be constructed between 2024 and 2026. The program does not require a local match.

Prior to submitting their LRIP application, townships are required to obtain a county board resolution from the SLC Board of Commissioners. To ensure obtaining the county board resolution prior to the application deadline, townships must submit a request to SLC for sponsorship by November 1, 2023. Applications for funding must be filed by December 8, 2023.

Supervisor Gajewski and Clerk McGregor attended an informational LRIP webinar on September 6, 2023. They met with Vic Lund, SLC Traffic Engineer on September 7, 2023, and Mr. Lund indicated the county is agreeable to sponsoring the township and in assisting with the resolution that must be submitted by November 1, 2023. Mr. Lund asked that a formal request be submitted by the township.

Applications for LRP funding are open effective September 13, 2023. Applications must include an engineer's cost estimate; however, SLC is not able to prepare cost estimates for townships. Engineering costs are non-reimbursable and Mr. Lund estimates that cost at about \$2,000 - \$3,000.

**MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to pursue necessary steps to apply for LRIP funding to improve/blacktop the Jeffrey Road between the entrance to Sathers Pit and Hwy. #2.**

**MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously that the township contact St. Louis County to obtain project sponsorship and assistance in obtaining a resolution**

## **Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023**

**for submission to the St. Louis County Board of Commissions by  
November 1, 2023.**

**MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to contact LHB Engineering to conduct an engineer's project cost estimate in an amount approved up to \$6,000.**

- K. St. Louis County Railroad Crossing Safety Plan (Potential Crossing Closings) – The purpose of the SLC RR Crossing Safety Plan is to identify and prioritize railroad crossing safety projects that focus on removing conflicts between vehicles and trains, while also providing SLC an advantage for securing state and federal funding to implement the projects. Prior to finalizing their plan, SLC is looking for input from townships and is requesting participation in a township workshop meeting scheduled for October 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Cotton Town Hall.

Crossings in Solway identified for closing are the crossing on Hermantown Road between Munger Shaw and Jeffrey Roads, or the crossing on the Jeffrey Road between Hwy. #2 and Hermantown Road, and the Seville Road crossing.

Supervisor Gajewski and Clerk McGregor discussed some of the pros and cons of the potential closings with Vic Lund, SLC Traffic Engineer, during a meeting on September 7, 2023. Closure of the Seville Road crossing could also possibly result in the county widening and paving the Bergquist Road and making turn lane improvements at the intersection of Hwy. #194.

- L. Hanson Road (South) – Tree Trimming – Willow trees have started growing up again and maintenance staff will be trimming about a 200-foot area near the Rose Road where limbs are overhanging the road.

### **VIII. FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- A. Department Report – Chief Brandon Porter reported there were 12 calls for service in August, with one home requiring 6 repeat calls. There are currently 17 or 18 members, and the annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser will be held on October 14, 2023, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.
- B. Building Signage Backlighting – At the August meeting, Chief Porter reported that Benson Electric will be taking care of the backlighting on the new signage. At the time of the September meeting, this project is still pending.
- C. DNR Grant Funds – Wildland Fire Gear – The final project invoice was submitted by Chief Porter on May 24, 2023. Grant funds will be automatically processed and distributed. At the September meeting, Chief Porter indicated they are still waiting to receive the balance of the wildland gear, and that turnout gear was received a couple of weeks ago. Chief Porter will also be looking into the timeline for receipt of the grant funds.



## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

- D. Insurance (Engine #1-2005 Pierce Enforcer Equipment Coverage, Liability and Work Comp) – Based upon previous recommendations by Chief Porter to increase coverage on Engine #1 by \$100,000, due to the amount of equipment it houses, the township insurance policy was reviewed. At the August meeting, Clerk McGregor reported that according to our current policy, Engine #1 is insured at a value of \$99,000, with a \$250 deductible. The policy also includes a \$56,356 limit, with a \$250 deductible, for “Misc. Ff Tools & Apparatus.” Chief Porter recommended the “Misc. Ff Tools & Apparatus” coverage be increased to \$100,000, as a per occurrence maximum. Clerk McGregor will obtain premium information for the increased coverage and this matter will be further discussed at the September meeting.

According to a September 6, 2023, email from Lisa Utley of MN Association of Townships Insurance Trust (MATIT), an increase in coverage from \$56,356 to \$100,000, with a \$250 deductible, would be \$340.00. This results in a \$110 premium increase. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to increase “Misc Ff Tools & Apparatus” coverage to a \$100,000 per occurrence maximum.** Clerk McGregor will submit this request to MATIT.

At the September meeting there was also discussion regarding a phone call from Bill Owens of Young & Associates on August 31, 2023, regarding clarification of coverage for the fire department. Chief Porter confirmed that the fire department is carrying work comp and general liability coverage and will confirm this with Mr. Owens.

- E. Damage to Tanker #3 on 02/18/23 Fire Call – Repairs to Tanker #3 were completed by Jeff Foster Collision. Clerk McGregor reported at the September meeting, that a check from MATIT dated August 14, 2023, in the amount of \$2,758.04 was received, representing complete payment of this claim.
- F. Damage to Unit #5 (2015 Ford F550) on 05/31/23 – Carstar’s invoice dated June 27, 2023, in the amount of \$2,445.22, reimbursed to Chief Porter on July 11, 2023, by the township, was submitted to MATIT on July 13, 2023. At the September meeting, Chief Porter indicated that decals are printed and cut and just need to be adhered to the truck. Upon receipt and payment of the decal invoice, it will be submitted to MATIT for reimbursement of this claim in its entirety.
- G. Fire Vehicle Camera Systems – At the September meeting, Chief Porter indicated that back-up cameras, rather than the Furrion camera systems previously approved at the July meeting for Rescue Unit #5 and Engine #1, will be installed. This will result in a project cost reduction.

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

### IX. RECYCLING

- A. Recycling Parking Area Potholes – At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that blacktopping near the recycling shed has been completed, except for striping of the four parking spots, which should be completed by next week. There was a \$400 add-on charge on the final invoice for this project due to extra trucking and material. Horst Blumerich also reported that Sinnott Contracting did a good job of channeling water away from the building as part of the repaving project.

### X. HALL

- A. Video Conferencing System & Security Camera Repair – Tim Aldrich of Audio Systems is in the process of installing an audio/visual system, including video conferencing capabilities.

Supervisor Gajewski met with Mr. Aldrich and Rick Flesvig on August 23, 2023, to go over project details prior to the installation.

Mr. Aldrich attended the September meeting and reported that the best location option for the upstairs equipment rack is the kitchen, mounted on the wall, with the ability to swing out. All equipment, except for the upstairs television, has been received. Work upstairs will be completed first, followed by the basement, and lastly, the conferencing portion of the project. After discussion, it was determined that Zoom will most likely be utilized for conferencing as it is used for most workshops and by the Minnesota Association of Townships and the SLC Association of Townships for their conference calls and meetings.

Mr. Aldrich and Rick Flesvig are scheduled to install the new security camera on September 20, 2023.

- B. Replacement Windows & Roof Vent Over Stage – At the June meeting, Morin's Siding & Window was approved to install thirteen upstairs and seven basement Minnkota high energy windows, and to assess/repair the roof vent above the stage area. On September 11, 2023, Brandon Morin indicated they are expecting to begin the project during the first week of October.
- C. Kitchen Exhaust/Ceiling Fans – At the August meeting, approval was given for the installation of an exhaust fan in the upstairs kitchen. On September 11, 2023, Red-D-Electric submitted a proposal in the amount of \$1,440 to supply and install a Delta Breez 200F, 200 cfm exhaust fan, with a timer wall switch. The fan will be installed in the northeast corner of the kitchen and vented out the north wall. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to approve Red-D-Electric's proposal to supply and install a kitchen exhaust fan, with a timer wall switch, in the amount of \$1,440.**

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

- D. Cleaning – At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that due to medical issues with our current provider, there may need to be a contingency plan for cleaning of the town hall and fire hall. After discussion, it was determined that should the time come, the opening could be posted to the Solway group Facebook page, or potentially interested people could be contacted.

### XI. PARK

- A. Safety Inspection Report Update – Supervisor Gajewski reported that there were no hazards included in the September 8, 2023, report.
- B. Sale of Old Message Center Sign Update – At the September meeting, Leon Forstrom reported there has been no interest in the sign as advertised on Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace. After discussion, it was determined that Mr. Forstrom will discontinue advertising the sign; however, an ad will be included in the October newsletter. If the sign has not been sold, this topic will be revisited next spring.
- C. Basketball/Tennis/Pickleball Courts – At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported that blacktopping of the recreational courts has been completed by Sinnott Contracting. Striping of the courts will be completed by sometime next week.
- D. Pickleball Systems/Nets - Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that quotes have been received from Summit Supply and Pickleball Central. The Douglas net system structure carried by both vendors is the same style as our existing tennis system. The proposal from Pickleball Central was significantly lower than that of Summit Supply, at a cost of \$4,598 for two portable pickleball systems, including nets. Shipping takes 14-16 weeks. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to approve the purchase of two portable pickleball systems, including nets, at a cost of \$4,598.**
- E. Pavilion Insurance Update – At the August meeting it was determined that a valuation and insurance quote for the pavilion and contents would be obtained.

Prior coverage included \$6,000, with a \$2,500 deductible, and \$4,000 coverage on the contents, with a \$2,500 deductible. Premiums for existing coverage is \$15 on the building and \$10 on the contents.

Clerk McGregor reported at the September meeting that photos and dimensions were submitted to Minnesota Association of Townships Insurance Trust (MATIT), along with a request for a valuation and insurance quote.

On August 17, 2023, MATIT returned a valuation report for the pavilion of \$51,018, plus \$9,680 for the contents, for a total valuation of \$60,698. On

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

September 12, 2023, Clerk McGregor requested premium costs based upon the August 17, 2023, valuations from MATIT.

### XII. CEMETERY

- A. Burials – There have been two burials since the August meeting; Scott Taylor on August 12<sup>th</sup>, and Roger Bailey on September 5<sup>th</sup>.

### XIII. COMMITTEES

- A. Halloween Carnival – The Halloween Carnival will be held on Friday, October 27, 2023. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to schedule the initial Special Events Committee meeting for carnival planning on September 25, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., and the second meeting on October 23, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.** Clerk McGregor will send out notices to the committee by the end of this week.

### XIV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. BCA (Bureau of Criminal Apprehension) Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) – Fully executed copies of the JPA agreements were returned to Solway by the BCA on June 20, 2023. The current agreements are valid for five years.

Clerk McGregor will continue to follow up on why Solway's ORI (Originating Agency Identifier) number is not being utilized by law enforcement/court administration to generate revenue when an offense occurs within the township.

Clerk McGregor reported at the September meeting that she was informed by the SLC Sheriff's Office that they cannot use another agency's ORI when issuing citations. It appears that the breakdown may be at the State Court Administrator's level, and Clerk McGregor has talked to them and is waiting for a call back to see if Solway's ORI number is in their system.

- B. Aggregate Tax Audits – Amanda Nelson has been retained as an independent contractor to conduct aggregate tax audits on behalf of Solway Township.

Ms. Nelson attended the September meeting, and based upon her research, recommended the township conduct audits prior to the end of 2023 for the past six years. Going forward, she recommends that pits be randomly selected for audit each quarter.

There was discussion regarding compensation. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously**

## Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

**that Ms. Nelson be paid as an independent contractor at an hourly rate of \$40.00 per hour, with review at the end of 2023.**

In advance of third quarter material tax reporting requests, Clerk McGregor will send pit owners/operators a letter informing them of the township's intent to examine their records and introducing Ms. Nelson.

- C. Mediacom – Mediacom is blocking out a proposed design with anticipated completion within the next couple of years to provide Internet service for much of the township. Project design will occur in 2023, with work beginning in spring 2024.

Supervisor Gajewski reported at the September meeting that he has contacted Mediacom to schedule a community presentation and they will be getting back to him on this.

- D. Website Update – (Catalis & Town Web Design) - At the September meeting, it was determined that discussion regarding costs will be carried over to the October meeting.
- E. MN Power HVDC Modernization Project (State of MN Scoping Meeting) – The MN Public Utilities Commission hosted a Public Information and Environmental Assessment Scoping Meeting on August 29, 2023, at the Solway Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information to the public about the proposed project and provide members of the public an opportunity for comment.

At the September meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported there was good attendance at the Scoping Meeting and that many residents presented information and concerns. As discussed earlier in the meeting, the township will submit public comments prior to the September 23, 2023, deadline. Supervisor Welsh will prepare the township's comments for submission by Clerk McGregor.

- F. Command Central Electronic Poll Pad Demonstration Update – Clerk McGregor and Deputy Clerk Merritt attended the Poll Pad demonstration on July 27, 2023, hosted by the St. Louis County Auditor's Office. The Poll Pads provide a highly secure, mostly paperless solution to roster management and election day voter registration and verification. These electronic pads are currently used by a number of Minnesota counties who have recommended them to St. Louis County. Clerk McGregor reported that the demonstration of the devices was very impressive. According to the presenters, their recommendation is one device per every 500 voters, at a cost of about \$1,800 per unit. There may also be an additional cost for a VPN linking the township to the county. It was determined that no action will be taken at this time, pending a recommendation by the county.

**Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes  
September 12, 2023**

**XV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Purchase of Briefcase (Jeff Keppers) – **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously that a briefcase be purchased by the township for Jeff Keppers' use.**
- B. Recognition Dinner (November 2<sup>nd</sup>) – The Solway Electorate at the Annual Meeting in March 2023, authorized the board to host a recognition dinner for current and retired firefighters and their spouse/guest; current and retired Flamettes and their spouse/guest, and employees and their spouse/guest, to express thanks and recognition for a job well done in service to Solway Township. **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously to schedule the annual recognition dinner on Thursday, November 2, 2023, with social hour at 5:30 p.m., and dinner at 6:00 p.m.**
- C. Newsletter – Topics to be included in the October newsletter were discussed and noted by Clerk McGregor.
- D. Couri & Ruppe Township Legal Seminar (October 7th) – **MOTION by Supervisor Gajewski, seconded by Supervisor Welsh, and carried unanimously for anyone interested in attending the Couri & Ruppe Township Legal Seminar on October 7, 2023, to do so at township expense.**

**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 9:47 p.m.**