

# Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes

## October 8, 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, Deputy Clerk Regena Merritt, Treasurer Cindy Moe, and five concerned citizens.

### II. CITIZEN REQUESTS/CONCERNS

- A. Goodwill Services – Ian Vincent, Director of Business Services, and Jared Nelson, Business Services Manager, from Goodwill attended the October meeting to give a presentation regarding residential and commercial services they provide. The Business Services Department of Goodwill was founded in September 2023 and is housed on Highway #2, within the township. Insured services offered include maintenance and janitorial/groundskeeping services, with flexible hours and competitive rates.

Following the presentation, there was discussion regarding park bench refinishing. Mr. Nelson indicated this is a task they could provide, with the work being done at their warehouse, and he will submit a proposal.

The Goodwill representatives expressed an interest in their information being shared with township residents via our website and newsletter, and with other area groups, such as the Duluth Area Townships group.

### III. MINUTES – TOWN BOARD MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

**MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to accept the minutes from the town board meeting of September 10, 2024, as presented.**

### IV. TREASURER’S REPORT – SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

**MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to accept the monthly Treasurer’s Report dated September 30, 2024, as presented.**

#### **Checking: 20160-20192**

Beginning Balance	\$102,264.88	
Receipts	1,503.27	
Disbursements	<u>-32,771.05</u>	
Ending Balance	\$70,997.10	<b>\$70,997.10</b>

#### **Money Market**

Beginning Balance	\$91,235.05
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Interest/Deposits	76.92	
Withdrawals	<u>0.00</u>	
Ending Balance	\$91,311.97	<b><u>\$91,311.97</u></b>
<b>Total Accounts</b>		<b>\$162,309.07</b>

**V. CORRESPONDENCE (Requiring Board Action/Discussion)**

- A. Bray & Reed/John Bray – Election of Legal Representation – Attorney John Bray has relocated his practice to join the Law Office of Yvonne Michaud Novak and will no longer be practicing with Bray & Reed. On September 11, 2024, an email was received giving Solway the option to continue to work with John Bray at the Michaud Novak firm, keep our files with Bray & Reed, or choose to select another attorney. Files currently handled by Attorney Bray are “Town of Solway: One North LLC Aggregate Tax Matter,” and “Town of Solway: Franchise Agreement Review.”

**MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to select John Bray to continue as legal counsel for Solway Township.** Clerk McGregor will relay this information to Bray & Reed and Attorney John Bray via email.

- B. MN Power – Intro to New Point of Contact & Invite to HVDC Project Supporter Recognition Program on October 9, 2024 – Kate Van Daele will be Solway’s new point of contact for the MN Power HVDC project. The board is invited to a short program and lunch on October 9, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. to recognize project supporters. Supervisors Gajewski and Welsh and Clerk McGregor will attend.
- C. Mary Beth Caruso, FEMA – FEMA is updating its process for analyzing flood risk and introducing a new 2D Rain-on-Mesh Modeling for MN Watersheds. Additional information will be sent by FEMA in the upcoming months.

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

- Matt Conito - \$50.00 (Reimbursement of driveway culvert permit; not paid in September)
- Rick Flesvig - \$50.00 (Reimbursement of driveway culvert permit; not paid in September)

**MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, 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 \$21,166.00.**

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### VII. ROAD

- A. Roadside Mowing – At the October meeting, Butch Lund reported that the second round of mowing has been completed and that he will now be completing some maintenance on the mowing tractor.
- B. Gravel Hauling – Supervisor Gajewski reported at the October meeting that gravel application is complete on the north Hanson Road, and about halfway completed on the south Hanson Road. Work on the Wargin Road will also soon be completed.
- C. Snow Removal Services – Keith Anderson 2024-25 Rates – 2024-25 winter season snowplowing and snow removal rates were received from Keith Anderson in a letter dated September 21, 2024. **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to accept Keith Anderson’s September 21, 2024, quote for 2024-25 snowplowing and snow removal services.** Clerk McGregor will notify Mr. Anderson of the quote acceptance.
- D. Munger Shaw Road/Hwy. #2 Intersection & Hwy. #2 Hall Entrance – The Munger Shaw Road/Hwy. #2 project was completed on September 27, 2024, on schedule.

At the October meeting, Supervisor Gajewski reported there is no right-turn lane serving Hwy. #2 westbound traffic turning into the township driveway into the hall parking lot, and this was discussed with Vic Lund at St. Louis County. According to Mr. Lund, MnDOT’s standard practice for right turns is a 12-foot lane only, with no arrows.

Mr. Lund provided a link to a Local Partnership Program should the township consider the addition of a right-turn lane. After discussion, it was determined that no further action will be taken regarding a right-turn lane as it would involve additional cost to the township.

Butch Lund expressed concern regarding the placement of the “right turn only” driveway sign when exiting the hall lot onto Hwy. #2. The current sign is placed near the edge of the highway and is obstructed by a small grove of birch trees. Supervisor Welsh suggested the township purchase a sign that could be placed at the end of the parking lot prior to the traffic island indicating “right turn only.” **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously that a “right turn only” sign be placed at the end of the parking lot, prior to the traffic island, at the Hwy. #2 hall driveway.**

There was also discussion regarding the reflectors that were previously placed at the Hwy. #2 driveway. It was determined that the reflectors will not be re-installed at this time as the current signage appears to be adequate.

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- E. Jeffrey Road Grading/Dust Control – There was discussion regarding the need for grading and dust control on Jeffrey Road, between Hwy. #2 and Maple Grove Road, following its use during the Hwy. #2/Munger Shaw Road intersection project. Supervisor Gajewski will discuss this matter with Vic Lund at St. Louis County to see whether maintenance can be provided as part of the intersection project.

### **VIII. FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- A. Department Report – Chief Brandon Porter was not present at the October meeting and no department report was available.
- B. Insurance (Engine #1-2005 Pierce Enforcer) Equipment Coverage – Completion of a cost inventory as requested by the MN Association of Townships Insurance Trust (MATIT) in October 2023 to support a requested additional \$100,000 in coverage on equipment carried on Engine #1 will need to be completed now that Young & Associates has indicated they are unable to provide a competitive market alternative. Clerk McGregor will follow up with Chief Porter to request the inventory.
- C. DNR Wildland Matching Grant – The department has been approved for a 2025 DNR Wildland \$10,000 matching grant. Once received, these funds will be used to outfit the recently purchased 2017 Ford F550 (Unit #6).
- D. 2004 Chevy Silverado (Unit #7) Sale - The 2004 Chevy Silverado (Unit #7) has been taken to Wisconsin Surplus for auction, and once received, proceeds will be used to outfit the 2017 Ford F550 (Unit #6). There was no update at the October meeting.
- E. 2017 Ford F550 (Unit #6) – A 2017 Ford F550 was purchased on August 26, 2024, and will be equipped as funds become available. There was no update at the October meeting.
- F. Fire Hall Exterior Lighting – Discussion regarding the replacement of burnt-out lights on the exterior of the fire hall was tabled until the November meeting.

### **IX. RECYCLING**

- A. Dumpster Padlocks – On September 19, 2024, three new style recycling locks were requested. There was no update at the October meeting and Clerk McGregor will follow up with Ms. Blais.
- B. WLSSD District-wide Allocations – According to WLSSD's October 1, 2024 correspondence, the 2025 WLSSD budget was approved on September 23, 2024. The 2025 District-wide allocation is \$378,000. The 2025 District-wide allocation for Solway Township is \$1,499.00. This amount will be paid in two equal installments. The first due on or before July 1, 2025, and the second on or before December 1, 2025. According to Treasurer Moe, the allocation will be paid in its entirety and approved at the November meeting.

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### X. HALL

- A. Video Conferencing & Audio-Visual System – Supervisor Gajewski reported that an outdoor television antenna has been installed for the upstairs. Mr. Aldrich is hoping to split this antenna to connect to the downstairs television sometime this week.

Mr. Aldrich continues to explore the best camera options for on-line meetings.

- B. Lighting Conversion to LED – The conversion of all hall lighting to LED was discussed and whether this task can be completed by in-house maintenance staff. After discussion, it was determined that the lighting conversion will likely be a winter project. If our staff are unable to perform the task, a quote may be requested from Goodwill for consideration.
- C. Ricoh Printer – The lease on our Ricoh MP C307 Printer/Scanner expires on October 21, 2024. This model was discontinued in 2019; however, parts will be stocked for a seven-year period.

On October 1, 2024, a proposal for a comparable replacement model was received from Metro Sales. A 60-month lease for a Ricoh IMC300F-RS model would be \$69.20 per month, with the cost of B/W images at .00890 per copy, and color images at .05900 per copy. Although the current lease amount is higher, it is anticipated that due to the lower cost per copy, the township will recognize a slightly lower over-all monthly cost. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously to upgrade the township's printer to a Ricoh IMC300F-RS Color Laser Multifunction printer.**

- D. American Flag Replacement – The American flag at the hall is typically replaced each year prior to Memorial Day; however, due to the mild winter last year, it was still in good condition at that time. **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to purchase a new American flag for the town hall at this time.**

### XI. PARK

- A. Safety Inspection Report – Supervisor Gajewski reported there were no safety hazards included in the October 2, 2024, report.
- B. Field Maintenance Report – Lime pellets and fertilizer were picked up from Moose Lake Federated Co-ops by Horst Blumerich on September 30, 2024. Mr. Blumerich reported at the October meeting that application to the fields will be made once we have an adequate amount of rain. If there is inadequate rainfall, the first application will be made next spring, and the second in the fall.

After this weekend all portable equipment will be removed from the soccer fields.

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- C. Portable John – Removal of Seasonal Units – Portable John was contacted on October 7, 2024, and informed that the two seasonal units can be removed after October 14, 2024.
- D. Soccer Field Flags – Leon Forstrom reported there are only two extra replacement flags on hand. **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski, and carried unanimously to order three sets of soccer field flags, pennant portion only.** Prior to ordering, Clerk McGregor will check with Proctor Futbol to see if they are willing or able to supply the pennants.

### XII. CEMETERY

- A. Summer Interments – Clerk McGregor reported there were four interments this summer. Nina Kolenda on May 5, 2024, Lyman and Mildred Thrasher on August 21, 2024, and Clare Stromlund on August 22, 2024.
- B. Cemetery Rules and Regulations Revisions – At the September meeting, it was determined that the Cemetery Rules and Regulations will be reviewed in their entirety to see if revisions other than what was discussed at the August meeting will be considered. Although there was some discussion at the October meeting, this matter will be discussed further at the November meeting.

### XIII. COMMITTEES

- A. Halloween Carnival – The first Special Events Committee planning meeting for the Halloween Carnival was held on September 30, 2024, and was well attended. Following discussion by the Special Events Committee at their meeting, it was determined there will be no security scheduled for this year's carnival. The committee's second meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

### XIV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Aggregate Tax Audits – Amanda Nelson reported at the September meeting that she has reviewed 2017 records for Sathers, was about halfway through Northland's records, and would then be reviewing Shelton's records. Ms. Nelson was unable to attend the October meeting; therefore, no update was available.
- C. Minnesota Power Rebates – A check in the amount of \$1,394.17 was received from MN Power on October 7, 2024, representing a \$364.80 rebate on the LED parking lot lighting, and \$1,029.37 on the hall mini splits.
- D. Recognition Dinner – Invites will be sent out two weeks prior to the November 7, 2024, recognition dinner.
- E. Willow River Boot Camp – October 8<sup>th</sup> – At the October meeting, Butch Lund reported that the Willow River Boot Camp workday has been moved from October 8<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>.

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- F. Leon Forstrom Retirement – There was discussion at the October meeting regarding the assignment of duties following Leon Forstrom’s retirement on January 1, 2025.

Paul Dunaiski expressed an interest in assuming the lead worker role, and John McGregor is interested in working as his schedule permits. **MOTION by Welsh, seconded by Gajewski, and carried unanimously that John McGregor be hired as a maintenance worker.**

- G. Hipcamp – According to an October 2, 2024, email update from Ada Tse with SLC Planning, the property at PID 530-0010-05176 is zoned FAM-3 (Forest Agricultural Management). A FAM fact sheet was attached to Ms. Tse’s email detailing FAM-3 allowed uses. Ms. Tse indicated that campgrounds and RV parks are not allowed in the FAM-3 land use class, but certain commercial uses may be allowed if standards are met, and a Conditional Use Permit granted.

Ms. Tse did not have any additional information at this time and indicated that resolution of this matter may take some time. Clerk McGregor will follow up with Ms. Tse after the first of the year for another update.

### XV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. MAT Annual Conference (Registration & Lodging Reservations) – **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously that those interested in attending the MAT Annual Conference be allowed to do so at township expense.** Clerk McGregor will complete registrations.
- B. Couri & Ruppe Township Legal Seminar - Couri & Ruppe will be holding their 2024 Township Legal Seminar in Cotton on October 12, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Supervisors Gajewski and Welsh, Clerk McGregor, and Deputy Clerk Merritt will be attending the seminar.
- C. Employee Wages - Horst Blumerich requested a discussion at the next meeting regarding employee pay increases. After discussion, it was determined that this will be discussed at the January meeting.

### XVI. SIGN CHECKS/ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Keppers, and carried unanimously to adjourn tonight’s meeting with the signing of checks. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.**