

# Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes

## November 15, 2022

### 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 which was led by visiting Boy Scout Troop #84 from the Proctor area. Also present were Supervisors Clare Stromlund, Ron Gajewski, Clerk Tami McGregor, Treasurer Cindy Moe, Regena Merritt and 18 concerned citizens.

### II. MINUTES:

**MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the Town Board Meeting of October 11, 2022, as presented.**

### III. TREASURERS REPORT: OCTOBER 31, 2022

**MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund, and carried unanimously to accept the Treasurer's report dated October 31, 2022.**

#### Checking:19083-19125

Beginning Balance	\$374,217.66	
Receipts	45,107.91	
Disbursements	<u>-37,719.39</u>	
Ending Balance	\$381,606.18	<b>\$381,606.18</b>

#### Money Market

Beginning Balance	\$109,370.85	
Interest/Deposits	0.00	
Withdrawals	<u>0.00</u>	
Ending Balance	\$109,370.85	<b><u>\$109,370.85</u></b>

**Total Accounts** **\$490,977.03**

### IV. CORRESPONDENCE:

- 10/11 One North, LLC – Second and third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.
- 10/12 Northland Constructors of Duluth Inc. – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.
- 10/13 Bradley Gustafson, SLC Planning & Community Development – Jeffrey Road project not eligible for CDBG grant. No board action necessary or taken.
- 10/15 Jim Lindquist – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.
- 10/15 KTM Paving – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.

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- 10/21 Industrial By Products, LLC – Eddie Busch application to apply wood ash and/or lime to land accepted. No board action necessary or taken.
- 10/22 Coon's Aggregate Supply – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.
- 10/25 St. Louis County Board of Adjustment – Findings of Fact, Conclusions & Decision unanimously approving Heather Nylund variance. No board action necessary or taken.
- 11/01 Sathers Construction & Excavating – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.
- 11/01 Kristin Fogard, SLC Ag Inspector, SLC Land & Minerals – 2022 Local Weed Inspector Annual Township and City Report due by 12/16/22. Butch Lund will be completing this report.
- 11/02 MN DNR News Release – Burning restrictions issued for Southern St. Louis County. No board action necessary or taken.
- 11/08 Shelton Excavating – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.
- 11/09 MN Power – Notice of HVDC Terminal Modernization Project open house on 11/22/22 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Midway Town Hall.
- 11/12 DeCaigny Excavating – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form received and no payment due. No board action necessary or taken.
- 11/14 Pit 56, Inc. – Third quarter Aggregate Material Tax Reporting Form and payment received. No board action necessary or taken.

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

- Carlson Duluth – RPZ valve inspections - \$310 for Fire Hall and Town Hall.
- Accurate Auto Repair - \$1,297.32 – Maintenance on Fire Unit #7 (2004 Chevrolet Silverado).

**MOTION by Stromlund, seconded by Welsh 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 \$72,233.07.**

**VI. CITIZEN REQUESTS AND CONCERNS:**

- A. Minnesota Power HVDC Terminal Modernization Project – Dan McCourtney, Environmental and Land Manager with Allete, presented information and a map regarding a potential High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) Terminal Modernization Project in Solway Township. The proposed substation project would replace the existing Morris Thomas Road substation near Adolph. The Initial substation was built with a 30-year life expectancy and has been in use for 45 years and is beginning to fail.

According to Mr. McCourtney, the new site will be about the same size as the existing site. MN Power will continue to work on land agreements with landowners within the study area, which is near the current site. Existing transmission lines will

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not change. The project must be approved by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, and an application has not yet been submitted.

MN Power will be hosting an Open House at the Midway Town Hall on November 22, 2022, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., to provide additional information and input.

Questions and concerns were raised by residents at the meeting and responded to by Mr. McCourtney. There was concern that although the proposed substation will reside within Solway Township, only residents within one quarter mile of the proposed site were sent notification of the upcoming Open House.

Mr. McCourtney indicated that MN Power would be open to the Board's request for an informational meeting at the Solway Town Hall during the first part of January, with notifications being sent to all Solway residents. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Welsh, and carried unanimously to schedule an informational public meeting during the week of January 9<sup>th</sup>.** Mr. McCourtney will coordinate this meeting with Clerk McGregor, who will provide him with a Solway resident mailing list.

- B. Ivy Black Weddings & Events (Kevin Swanson) – Liquor License – Mr. Swanson submitted a "Report of Town Clerk Form" to support his liquor license application. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund, and carried unanimously that the Solway Town Board recommends approval of the liquor license application.** The "Report of Town Clerk Form" was signed and will be returned to St Louis County.

### VII. ROAD

- A. Highway #2 Driveway Access – Additional St. Louis County Concepts – Victor Lund, St. Louis County Traffic Engineer, submitted three additional proposals in follow-up to the October meeting. All proposals are based upon a full closure of the Town Hall's Highway #2 driveway. The three concepts are as follows:
1. Close the existing Munger Shaw Road driveway and construct a new two-way driveway on the Munger Shaw Road south of the fire hall and install crosswalk markings at the pedestrian crossing north of the fire hall. The recycling shed would be relocated to the southwest corner of the parking lot.
  2. Create a one-way pair driveway with the inbound driveway located south of the fire hall and the outbound driveway located north of the fire hall. Install crosswalk markings at the pedestrian crossing north of the fire hall. The recycling shed would be relocated to the southwest corner of the parking lot.
  3. Keep the parking lot configuration and existing Munger Shaw Road driveway. This concept would enhance the pedestrian crossing by installing crosswalk markings and signs that read "STOP FOR PEDESTRIAN IN CROSSWALK."

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Supervisor Gajewski raised concerns as to how the existing mound system would be affected, although costs for improvements would be the responsibility of St. Louis County. There were also hazard concerns raised regarding the proximity to Highway #2 of a driveway south of the fire hall. Supervisor Stromlund suggested the installation of lighting at the Highway #2 driveway to provide additional visibility.

After discussion, it was determined that Mr. Lund will be invited to return to the December meeting to further discuss the desire of the Township to retain the Highway #2 driveway, with an extended left turn lane, and additional lighting at the driveway.

- B. Grading Update – Grading for the 2022 season has been completed.
- C. Jeffrey Road Project Update – The Jeffrey Road reclamation project has been completed by Ulland Brothers. It was determined that this type of project is not eligible for funding through a CDBG Grant. Positive feedback from residents has been received. Wally Mattson, Proctor School bus driver, noted that the hill seems to ice up more easily and recommended sanding whenever the road is plowed. Supervisor Gajewski will contact St. Louis County regarding sanding.

### **VIII. FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- A. Department Report – Chief Brandon Porter was unable to attend the meeting and Captain Amber Porter reported on his behalf. There are currently 17 members in the department, one being a paramedic. Most of the firefighters are up to date with certifications and all trucks are currently in service. The Turkey/Ham Bingo was held on November 12, 2022, and was a big success, with a profit of \$2,600. The MN DNR Grant contract has still not been distributed by the state but should be within a few weeks. Funds from this grant will be used for wild land fire gear. Thanks were given to the Board and the community for their support.
- B. Building Signage Update – Graphic Image Update – Supervisor Gajewski requested that Chief Porter provide Todd Signs with a graphic image to be used for building signage, preferably before the next meeting.
- C. Road Right-of-Way Soil Contamination Update – Supervisor Gajewski reported that St. Louis County believes the contaminant is diesel fuel, although they have not yet received official results. If the results are returned soon, they may be able to take care of removal yet this year, or at the latest, by next Spring. Supervisor Gajewski will keep Chief Porter informed.
- D. Snow Removal - Captain Porter asked if the snowplow driver would be able to remove snow in front of the truck bay doors. The snowplow unit is unable to plow really close to the doors; therefore, snow removal near the doors will need to be a joint effort between the fire department and Hall maintenance staff. Leon Forstrom requested that the Fire Department move the trailer utilized for aluminum can donations, so it is out of the way for plowing.

The Fire Department utilizes a hydrant at Coons Pit as a water resource, but the pit does not take care of snow removal to access the hydrant. It will be the Fire Department's responsibility to make arrangements for plowing. Leon Forstrom spoke to Keith Anderson who plows the Township lots and he is willing to provide

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snow removal services. Clerk McGregor will forward Mr. Anderson's contact information to Chief Porter.

- D. Carlson Brothers completed the RPZ valve testing on November 9, 2022, and there were no concerns.

### IX. **RECYCLING** – Everything is going well, with nothing new to report.

### X. **HALL**

- A. Office Chair, Phone and Flooring Update – A new office chair and phone have been purchased. An appointment will be made to obtain a flooring estimate.
- B. Video Conferencing Equipment – Supervisor Gajewski suggested exploring the purchase of video conferencing equipment. If purchased, the unit could be mounted on the north wall between the two windows nearest the stage. A protective cabinet could also be considered. Chairperson Welsh agreed that we should explore this. Additional information will be gathered. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.
- C. Basement Entrance Light Update – Work has been completed on the basement entrance light.
- D. Air Exchanger Update – Supervisor Gajewski reported that a new switch has been provided that will allow us to regulate the fan speed to high or low and turn the unit on and off. The switch will be installed by Red-D-Electric in the Hall on November 16, 2022, to the left of the north stage doorway.
- E. Security Camera Repair Update – Repairs by Red-D-Electric are pending Rick Flesvig's contact with the manufacturer.
- F. Re-covering Hall Chairs – Kim Kuehl who provides cleaning services for the Town Hall asked about re-covering upholstered chairs with vinyl for easier clean-up. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the chairs will not be re-covered at this time.
- G. RPZ Valve Inspection – Carlson Brothers completed the RPZ valve testing on November 9, 2022, and there were no concerns.
- H. AED Unit – Town Hall – An AED unit has been mounted near the south exit door of the Hall. Supervisor Stromlund recommended installing small signs on outside entrances to designate the AED unit inside. A notice regarding the AED unit will also be put in the next newsletter.

### XI. **PARK**

- A. Todd Signs Electronic Insert Update – Dave Grannis from Todd Signs informed Supervisor Gajewski that the sign was ordered on October 24, 2022, and they will receive it in about five to six weeks. Once received, the brackets are built in their shop. The electronic sign will be programmed using a computer.
- B. Safety Inspection Report Update – The November 7, 2022, Inspection Report contained no major issues. Per Supervisor Gajewski, everything is in good shape.
- C. Tennis/Volleyball Net – Per Supervisor Gajewski, it has been brought to his attention by Leon Forstrom that our tennis court and volleyball nets need replacing. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund, and carried unanimously to purchase new nets.**

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### XII. CEMETERY

- A. Tree Replacement Update – Supervisor Gajewski reported that Grussendorf's will plant the replacement tree in the Spring at no cost to the Township.

### XIII. COMMITTEES

- A. Winter Fun Day – A Special Events Committee meeting will be scheduled for the middle of February regarding Winter Fun Day which is typically held on the first Sunday in March. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund, and carried unanimously to schedule Winter Fun Day for Sunday, March 5, 2023, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.**

### XIV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Recognition Dinner Update – Supervisor Gajewski reported that the Recognition Dinner held on November 3, 2022, went very well. The food provided by Sarah Mae's Catering was excellent and leftovers were utilized by the Fire Department during their weekend firefighter training.
- B. Halloween Carnival Update – It was reported that the Halloween Carnival went very well, and people were happy to have it back again. There was a profit of about \$1,300 which will fund the Winter Fun Day.
- C. Aggregate Tax – Auditing – Treasurer Cindy Moe reported that the accounting firm she contacted is not able to conduct aggregate audits. Clerk McGregor will check for other contacts with the State Minerals Land Office.
- D. General Election Update – The General Election went very well, with all counts balancing. Out of 1400 registered voters, 931 people turned out to vote.
- E. St. Louis County Opioid Remediation Subcommittee – Clerk McGregor and Regena Merritt attended St. Louis County's WebEx informational meeting on October 18, 2022. In 2021, national settlements were reached with opioid distributors and one manufacturer. Settlement funds are now available to communities to set up programs with the intent to support positive long-term impacts in the areas of prevention and harm reduction. Interested parties must submit Requests for Proposals (RFPs) by November 22, 2022. Following those submissions, the Subcommittee will review them and provide funding recommendations to the County Board. A resident asked if these funds could be utilized by fire departments to equip their fire units with Narcan and provide training for their staff. Supervisor Stromlund suggested this be investigated further. Clerk McGregor and Regena Merritt will look into this and, if applicable, forward information to Fire Chief Porter for his review and consideration.

### XV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Recognition Dinner Invitees – There was discussion regarding the number of guests an invitee may bring to the Recognition Dinner. After discussion, it was determined that an invitee and guest (singular) will be invited due to limited seating space. Consideration may also be made for spouses of long-term deceased fire fighters or employees, and Special Events Committee members.

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**XVI. SIGN CHECKS/ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** by Stromlund, seconded by Welsh and carried unanimously to adjourn tonight's meeting with the signing of checks. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

