

**Solway Town Board Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 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. Also present were Supervisors Clare Stromlund, Ron Gajewski, Clerk Tami McGregor, Treasurer Cindy Moe, Regena Merritt and seven concerned citizens.

**II. MINUTES:**

**MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the Town Board Meeting of August 16, 2022, as presented.**

**III. TREASURERS REPORT: AUGUST 31, 2022**

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

**Checking:18994-19043**

Beginning Balance	\$459,621.71	
Receipts	955.00	
Disbursements	<u>-71,734.42</u>	
Ending Balance	\$388,842.29	<b>\$388,842.29</b>

**Money Market**

Beginning Balance	\$109,357.08	
Interest/Deposits	0.00	
Withdrawals	<u>0.00</u>	
Ending Balance	\$109,357.08	<b><u>\$109,357.08</u></b>

**Total Accounts** **\$498,199.37**

**IV. CORRESPONDENCE:**

**(Incoming Correspondence)**

- 8/22 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission – Not applicable to us; no board action required.
- 8/22 Pipeline Awareness Newsletter – Informational material; no board action required.
- 8/22 Minnesota Association of Townships (via internet) - MAT Annual Conference registration needs to be completed. Reservations have been made for lodging by Treasurer Moe. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously to allow Town Board Members wishing to attend, to do so at Township expense.**
- 8/22 Heather Nylund (Request for re-zoning) – Topic discussed under “Citizens Requests/Concerns”
- 8/24 American Red Cross – A Facility Use Agreement was submitted to Solway Township enabling the Red Cross to use our facility to provide services during a disaster. Solway Township has provided this service to the Red Cross in the past. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously that the American Red Cross Agreement be signed.**

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**(Incoming Correspondence - Continued)**

- 9/9 Securitas – The previous vendor utilized by Solway Township for security at events serving alcohol is no longer providing this type of service. Securitas Securities offers this service at a rate of \$60.00 per hour. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously to enter into a contract with Securitas Securities to provide security at events serving alcohol at a rate of \$60.00 per hour.** Township rental agreement forms will be updated to reflect the new hourly rate.
- 9/12 ThinkSIGN (Electric Sign Information) - Topic discussed under “Park”

**(Outgoing Correspondence)**

- 8/17 to 10/6 WLSSD - Recycling tracking forms sent to WLSSD.
- 8/18 St. Louis County Planning - Email sent indicating Town Board is not opposed to Nylund variance.
- 8/22 Minnesota Association of Townships Insurance Trust (MATIT) - Estimate sent regarding Fire Truck #6 repair.
- 9/1 St. Louis County Auditor's Office - Town Levy Certification submitted.
- 9/2 Jon's Fire Apparatus - Submitted sales tax Certificate of Exemption.
- 9/12 St. Louis County Public Works Department – 2022/23 Snowplow Application electronically submitted.

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

- Menards in the amount of \$24.44 for Town Hall kitchen sink repair.
- Amber Porter in the amount of \$1,215.98 for fuel reimbursement to pick up new fire truck in Missouri.
- Dusty's Body Shop in the amount of \$3,521.65 for Fire Truck #6 repair. This amount will be reimbursed by Township insurance.

**MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund 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 \$257,310.42.**

**VI. CITIZEN REQUESTS AND CONCERNS:**

- a. Heather Nylund – Ms. Nylund is proposing to subdivide an existing 36.44-acre parcel into a 10-acre parcel that contains existing development, and an undeveloped 26.28-acre parcel, to be retained for access to an adjoining 40-acre parcel to the north under common ownership. The parcels are in a FAM-1 zone district that requires 35 acres and 600' lot widths. Ms. Nylund's variance was granted by St. Louis County to split the parcel and sell 10 acres.

Ms. Nylund believes that the zoning along the Maple Grove Road is inconsistent, with one zone requiring 9-acre parcels, and the other 35-acre parcels. Ms. Nylund was informed by St. Louis County that the Township can make a request for re-zoning. Chairperson Welsh indicated that the Solway Town Board would not oppose re-zoning; however, will not move forward on this without a written request by the other Maple Grove Road residents. If such a request is submitted, it will be reviewed by the Town Board at that time. It was noted that this issue had not been raised at the time of Solway Township's Comprehensive Land Use Plan which was updated in 2011.

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- b. Livestock Concern - A Township resident who has a neighbor slaughtering pigs raised the question as to whether this is allowed by the Township. The Town Board referred this citizen to St. Louis County Planning and Community Development since they administer planning matters on behalf of Solway Township.

**VII. ROAD:**

- a. Grading - Some Township roads were graded on September 10th, and it is Bob Rodda's intent to finish all roads by October.
- b. Culvert Replacement - The Birchway Road culvert needs replacing. Bob Rodda has an arched culvert that he removed from another site that he is willing to donate to the Township. As a result, it will only be necessary for the Township to purchase an extension for the donated culvert.
- c. Canosia Road Railroad Crossing - After the Canadian National Railroad completed work on the Canosia Road crossing, they resurfaced the road, which resulted in a very steep approach on each side of the track. After inspecting the crossing, Supervisor Gajewski contacted the Canadian National Railroad on September 12, 2022, and was informed that they will be correcting this issue.
- d. Roadside Mowing - Butch Lund reported that there is still some mowing to complete but stated that things are going well.
- e. Jeffrey Road Options (Gordy Halvorson, Bob Rodda, Steve Kraseway, Ulland Brothers) – Supervisor Gajewski spoke to Gordy Halvorson with St. Louis County, and he did not recommend going back to gravel due to maintenance concerns.

If the Township chooses to go back to gravel, Bob Rodda suggested that the existing blacktop be recycled and mixed with gravel for the resurfacing material. Mr. Rodda can provide this type of service and estimates the project would take about 20 hours at \$150.00 per hour. Mr. Rodda also recommended that a roller with spikes to break up the blacktop be used for this type of job; however, he does not have this piece of equipment and is unsure as to the rental cost.

Gordy Halvorson informed Supervisor Gajewski that St. Louis County will be grinding the Maple Grove Road and relaying it in approximately 2024. He believes the Township may be able to get in on that contract and have the same group perform the work on the Jeffrey Road. Steve Kraseway from the County agrees that this is a possibility but estimates the cost at about \$200,000.

Supervisor Gajewski spoke to Ulland Brothers and they indicated they could assist with this project at a cost of about \$80,000. Supervisor Gajewski informed Ulland that the road would also need to be leveled. Supervisor Gajewski and Ulland will meet sometime this week to look at the project to get a more accurate proposal.

Grading would cost about \$450.00 per week if left at dirt, and Supervisor Gajewski estimates this cost at about \$12,000 per year due to the truck traffic this road handles. Chairperson Welsh spoke to Sathers, who operate a pit on the Jeffrey Road. They do not handle road projects themselves and have no preference as to how the Township proceeds on this matter.

**VIII. FIRE:**

- a. Department Report - Chief Brandon Porter reported that calls have been slow. He has been notified that they will receive the DNR matching grant for \$10,000 (\$5,000 & \$5,000). Chief Porter wrote the grant back in April and funds will be used for wild land firefighting gear and helmets. Costs will likely exceed the grant by about \$3,000, but the Fire Department will pick

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- up the extra cost. Chief Porter has written 14 grants that are pending. Chief Porter also sent correspondence to area small engine companies and as a result, a gas operated leaf blower and two mixed gas containers were donated by Northern Power in Cloquet. Chief Porter hopes to fund or match at least 50% of what the Township contributes. It is also his goal that Solway Volunteer Fire Department becomes the standard for area fire departments. A Spaghetti Dinner will be put on by the Flamettes and Fire Department on October 15<sup>th</sup> and a donation will be made to Breast Cancer Awareness. Sysco will be donating the food. Supervisor Gajewski requested that Chief Porter submit an article for the newsletter regarding the dinner.
- b. Recruiting - Since May, membership has been increased by 50%, with three new members. One of the new recruits is a former member of the Fire Department. The Department has also taken on a firefighter and paramedic who is a fulltime firefighter for Cloquet. This recruit will be able to handle many of the daytime calls. Chief Porter is striving to make Solway a training hub for the area. Solway will be hosting an Emergency Medical Response course for Northern Carlton County, Grand Lake, Esko and Barnum fire departments. Solway will also be hosting Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 training in subsequent months. Chief Porter will provide an updated list of firefighters for the Town Board.
  - c. Stryker LUCAS 3 - The device has arrived and has been put into service on Rescue 5 and is self-contained on that truck.
  - d. Status of New Fire Truck - Financing on the new 2012 Freightliner truck is complete, it is here, and has been placed in service. Chief Porter put everything together and all members will be required to go through a two-hour training on the truck before driving it. Chief Porter will be conducting the training sessions.
  - e. Damage Report on Fire Truck #6 - Chief Porter delivered Truck #6 to Dusty's Body Shop in Blaine, MN and will follow-up with them to see when repairs will be completed. It is estimated that the repairs will take one to two weeks.
  - f. Fire Hall Signs - Chief Porter has not recently spoken to Dave Grannis at Todd Signs. He reported that the signage will be more cohesive with what is on the Town Hall and will be designed as more traditional, rather than trendy. Chief Porter has submitted a design idea to Todd Signs, but to date, has not received any drawings. Supervisor Gajewski indicated that we are looking at about a \$6,500 cost for Fire Hall signage on three sides of the building and asked whether the Board is willing to consider this amount before Chief Porter proceeds further. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously that the Township allows up to \$6,500 for the Fire Hall signage.**
  - g. New Tires on Fire Truck #7 - Tire cost was approximately \$800. Chief Porter moved ahead with new tires, as well as full "front to back" maintenance. Truck #7 is now up to date.
  - h. Hose Pressure Testing – The Fire Department will be conducting hose pressure testing on September 16, 2022, from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.
  - i. Butch Lund inquired as to what type of back-up is available at a fire. Chief Porter indicated that the highest-ranking officer first on a scene assumes command until the chief from the affected jurisdiction arrives. That officer is then responsible to request additional support as needed.
  - j. Fuel Smell in Fire Hall Ditch – There was discussion regarding this matter and after researching remediation solutions, Chief Porter suggested shoveling out any contaminated soil. Chief Porter and Leon Forstrom inspected the area near the mailboxes, and it appears to cover about a 40-foot area. Chief Porter indicated it is unlikely this is the result of the Fire Department itself cleaning out their trucks. The contaminated soil is in the County right-of-way; therefore, Chairperson Welsh will contact Gordy Halverson with St. Louis County to report this situation.
  - k. Pumper Truck #4 – This unit sold on "Do-Bid" Auctions on September 6<sup>th</sup> for \$9,726.84. Treasurer Moe informed the Board that the money for the fire truck will be wired into the Township's checking account. The Board needs to make authorization for payment of the remaining balance on the new 2012 Freightliner truck so Chief Porter can deliver the check

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at the time of pick-up to Jon's Mid America in Rogersville, MO. **MOTION by Stromlund, seconded by Welsh and carried unanimously to authorize payment for the new fire truck after the funds arrive in the Township account.**

- I. Recognition Dinner - The Town Board discussed holding a recognition dinner for active and retired Fire Department members, Flamettes and Township employees. Chief Porter indicated that his preference would be a Thursday night. This will be discussed further under New Business.

**IX. RECYCLING:**

Aside from his duties at the Recycling Center, Horst Blumerich will be assisting with maintenance projects as needed.

**X. HALL:**

- a. Hardwood Flooring Refinishing – The Town Hall flooring project has been completed. The installer, James Garasha, suggested he inspect the floor once a year. With regular maintenance and resealing, the cost would be \$2.00 per square foot, versus \$6.00 per square foot to refinish the floor completely. Total cost to refinish the floor completely would be \$12,000, whereas periodic maintenance would cost about \$3,000 each time. Mr. Garasha recommends that a maintenance program would be more beneficial and cost effective for the Township.
- b. Portable Dance Floor - Due to the cost of maintaining the hardwood floor, we are exploring a portable dance floor and Supervisor Gajewski provided information on this. The cost varies based upon the size and finish of the floor and Supervisor Gajewski suggested a 12x24' floor. According to Supervisor Gajewski, some of the portable dance floors come with a portable cart. After discussion, it was agreed that we will continue to explore this solution.

The Country Music Show has announced that boots and footwear with cleats should not be worn on the hardwood floor. This is something that we could also potentially require of renters.

- c. Red-D-Electric – Work has been completed on the air exchanger. It is the installer's recommendation that the exchanger be turned on when school starts and shut off at the end of the school year.
- d. Town Hall Kitchen Sink - The leak in the upstairs kitchen drain has been fixed.

**XI. PARK:**

- a. Electronic Yard Sign Insert – Supervisor Gajewski reported that Todd Signs estimates the ThinkSIGN cost would be about \$20,000, which is lower than the original estimate. The existing sign would remain, with only the message panel portion being replaced by the electronic sign. It was agreed that this matter will continue to be pursued.
- b. Safety Inspection Report - The Inspection report contained no major issues.

**XII. CEMETERY:**

Planting a new tree for replacement of the dead tree will be completed in September or October by Grussendorf Nursery.

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**XIII. COMMITTEES:**

Special Events – The Halloween Carnival will be held on Friday, October 28, 2022. The first Special Events Committee meeting for the Carnival will be on September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m., with the second meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

**XIV. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. Aggregate Tax Collection – Andy Omar, the new owner of the Maple Grove/Caribou Lake Road pit, has contacted us and indicated that he will stop by the office to pay his tax through the third quarter. An email will be sent to John Bray requesting a copy of correspondence sent to Mr. Omar if that has already been done, or to cancel our request now that Mr. Omar has contacted us.
- b. New Town Clerk – On August 23, 2022, Tami McGregor took her Oath of Office as Town Clerk following her appointment by the Board on August 16th.

**XV. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Recognition Dinner – The Solway Electorate at the Annual Meeting in March, 2021, authorized the Town Board to host a recognition dinner for our current and retired firefighters and their spouse/guest; current and retired Flamettes and their spouse/guest, and our employees and their spouse/guest to express thanks and recognition for a job well done in service to Solway Township. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously that the Township schedule a recognition dinner on Thursday, November 3, 2022, with social hour at 5:30 p.m., and dinner at 6:00 p.m.**
- b. New Office Hours – Office hours have been changed to Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and Thursdays from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **MOTION by Gajewski, seconded by Stromlund and carried unanimously that the new office hours become effective immediately.**
- c. Newsletter Items: There were no additional newsletter items that were discussed.
- d. Town Hall Basement Entrance Light – Butch Lund mentioned that he is having some difficulty replacing the basement ceiling light fixture outside the entrance. The problem is not electrical, but more with the mounting and he will continue to work on this.

**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 8:22 PM**