

New Haven Township

OLMSTED COUNTY, MINNESOTA – EST. 1858

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9024 COUNTY ROAD 3 NW, OROCOCO, MN 55960

Annual Town Meeting Minutes March 14, 2023

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the 2023 Annual Town Meeting of New Haven Township was called to order by Clerk Donna Beyer at 3:05 PM. A total of about 34 attendees/voters were present, including all current Town Board officers.

After welcoming comments, Clerk Beyer requested nominations for a meeting moderator. Ann Fahy-Gust (12851 Co Rd 5 NW, Pine Island) nominated David Andrist as the moderator. Chris Hawkins (10234 105th St NW, Pine Island) seconded the motion. No other nominations were made, and the nominations were closed. The motion carried on a voice vote.

Clerk Beyer turned the gavel over to David Andrist as moderator of the meeting.

Voters set the agenda – Mary Andrist (11233 Co Rd 3 NW, Pine Island) made a motion to approve the agenda as written in the handout. Motion seconded by Dennis Beyer (7537 Co Rd 3 NW, Oronoco) and carried on a voice vote.

Review and approve the 2022 Annual Town Meeting Minutes – Mary Andrist made a motion to dispense with the reading of the 2022 minutes and approve as written. Motion seconded by Ann Fahy-Gust and carried on a voice vote.

Board of Audit Report – Clerk Beyer read the February 14, 2023, Board of Audit meeting minutes, of which a copy was included in the handout packet. A minimum of two items per month were selected at random for audit and review. A financial summary for the year 2022 was also reviewed and approved during the audit. No anomalies were noted during the audit and all records were found to be in order. Donald Weis (11918 Co Rd 3 NW, Pine Island) made a motion to approve the Board of Audit report, motion seconded by Mary Andrist and carried on a voice vote.

Rural Fire Association Report – Supervisor Brian Hervey reported on the Rural Fire Association, which is made up of five townships. Hervey is the New Haven Township representative and has been serving as the Chair of the Rural Fire Association. The fire department had 441 calls in 2022, approximately 20% highway, 40% medical and 40% fire. They are having some difficulties collecting from insurances on the highway calls. Workers' compensation also increased for the city of Pine Island, which will impact expenses in the next year. Costs for shop and medical supplies are also increasing. A couple of radios need to be purchased each year to keep ahead of aging loss at about \$750 per radio. Building repairs of about \$1000 are also needed. The five townships split the costs with the City of Pine Island. The city pays the bills for the year and bill the townships at the end of the year. A sum of

MODERATOR APPROVED MINUTES

\$46,000 is placed in a fund each year for purchasing of capital equipment. A new tanker truck was purchased last year, costing about \$280,000. The old truck will likely be sold this year. The township’s share of doing business this year was \$167,735.25. This is split out between the townships based on the valuation of the township and the percentage of township covered by the fire department. The bill for New Haven Township is \$55,683.50, which is slightly down from last year. The Rural Fire Association has about \$600,000 in funds currently for future equipment purchases, so is doing well. The city bought a pumper trunk last year, which helped the townships out.

Cemetery Reports – Gaylen Figy (7643 Exchange Ave NW, Byron) spoke for the Center Grove Cemetery. A financial report was included in the packet for the Annual Meeting. Mr. Figy stated that they completed the planned work for 2022. They are doing well and plan to resurface the paved road in the cemetery in 2023. He stated that the \$3000 contribution from the Township is very helpful. Mike Frost (10101 85th St NW, Pine Island) spoke for the Othello Cemetery Board. He stated that it costs over \$3000 just to maintain the lawns in the cemetery so money from the Township is very helpful. He thanked the township for the donation to the cemetery. Chris Hawkins spoke for the St. Michael’s Cemetery Board. He also thanked the Township for the \$3000 contribution which will be used for maintenance of the cemetery.

Road Report – Mike Wood, Road Maintenance Contractor, was not able to attend the meeting but prepared a written report. This included rocking of approximately 1/3 of the township roads in 2022. Brush cutting was done on several roads with ditch cleaning done at the intersection of 65th Ave. NW and Center Street and along 100th St. NW. Supervisor Dale Thomforde spoke regarding the annexation of the north 1.5 miles of New Haven Road (from County Road 5 north) by Pine Island. Pine Island wanted to take over and pave the south ½ mile of the road. It was mutually determined that it would be best if Pine Island annexed the north 1.5 miles of the road and maintained it, with those living along the road remaining as New Haven Township residents.

Treasurer’s Report – Town Treasurer Robert Figy gave a detailed report of the financial standing of the Township at the end of December 2022. This information was also included in the handout for the Annual Meeting. The following were the account balances as of December 31, 2022.

• Checking account (Road & Bridge General Fund)	\$ 7,691.76
• Money Market Fund	\$ 192,852.56
• CD 12 month 4-15-2022 (0.49%)	\$ 100,245.82
• Purchase of CD’s x2 in process	\$ 200,000.00
• Less outstanding check #4497	\$ 220.00
Total Deposits	\$ 500,570.14

He stated that he felt the Township was in excellent condition financially at this time.

Financial Summary – Supervisor Thomforde reviewed the New Haven Township Financial Summary which gives a report of the past 3 years. It showed that total cash reserves for the end of 2022 were as shown above, with a change in total cash reserves increased by \$64,534.05. The budgeted change in cash reserves was for a decrease of \$50, 945 as the Board would like to

decrease cash reserves to between \$300,000 and \$400,000. This put the township under budget by \$115,479.05 which was largely due to funding received from the Federal government due to COVID, called the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA), of \$67,263.22. This funding was also received in 2021 and while initially it was not clear what the Township would be able to spend it on, the Federal Government determined that town boards could spend the money as appropriate for the township. Last year the money was spent on rock for the township roads. Plans are to again use the money for rock. The Township also received annexation money of \$44,000 for annexation by Pine Island of about 100 acres of Elmer Stock's land. Adjusted for these receipts, the Township came under budget by \$3,812.50.

2022 Auditor Filing and 2023 Budget – Thomforde also discussed the MN State Auditors Cash Basis Report form (included in packet) which splits out total revenues and expenditures by categories. Most of the revenue comes from property taxes which increased significantly in 2022 due to the increased levy for 2022. Overall, total revenues increased by 36.3%, Part of this was due to the ARPA money, part due to the annexation as mentioned above and cropland rental.

Section II shows the expenditures, which were up by 18.5% with total expenditures of \$304,900.81. The biggest increase was street maintenance which went up 31.9%. This includes the cost of road rock with less than half of the expenses being for grading and other road maintenance. Costs for fire protection remained stable. The change in cash reserves was \$64,543.05 above last year.

He also presented a table showing the mill rate for 2022 for townships and some cities in Olmsted County. This showed that New Haven Township had the lowest mill rate in the County. Ann Fahy-Gust questioned the 22.5% increase in the Township in 2022. Thomforde explained that it was the mill rate that went up the 22.5% which is due to the 28% increase in the levy for 2022 that was passed at the Annual Meeting in 2021.

Mark Stenberg (7445 100th St NW, Pine Island) questioned the difference between mill rate, levy, and tax rate. Thomforde explained that at the annual meeting the town voters set the levy which is a dollar amount that is expected to be needed to do business. The levy is set for different categories. The county takes that number and, based on property valuation, sets the mill rate. This is then used to determine the property tax you need to pay.

A graph was presented that showed historical property tax mill rates since 2007 for New Haven Township and adjoining townships of Oronoco and Kalmar. It shows that in 2014 New Haven Township had reserves of near \$1,000,000 so the levy was dropped. It also showed the recent increase in the levy at the 2021 Annual Meeting for 2022.

The budget for 2023 is an estimate of what money will be needed. Thomforde explained that we no longer receive funding from planning and zoning since going to Township Cooperative Planning Association for planning and zoning issues. But the township does have a couple of commissions that meet as needed as well as having a township representative attend the TCPA monthly meetings so there are some expenses. This is estimated to be \$2,500 for the year. Road and bridge fund shows a breakdown of what costs are expected. The levy was set at \$98,170 at the 2022 Annual Meeting with expected income from the state road allotment, chloride payments from patrons, the State Town Aid and Payment in lieu of taxes (moneys received for land from which property taxes are not received). These account for \$36,321 in revenues. The ARPA funds, \$67,263.21, will be used to purchase road rock to meet the needs for road and bridge. The

estimate for fire and first responders was \$57,000 with actual cost being about \$1,300 less than anticipated. The levy was set last year for \$9000 for cemeteries which was recently approved by the Board. This money is well spent to assist the cemeteries in maintaining themselves. If the cemeteries go under the Township would need to care for the cemeteries as they cannot be abandoned. The township encourages the cemetery boards to maintain themselves. The general fund is expected to need \$53,000 for expenses which includes election costs, salaries, costs of hall maintenance etc. The levy accounts for \$30,000 with income from bank interest, cropland rental, hall rental, right-of-way permits and the State Ag Market Value credit providing additional income. The township has no debt. To balance the budget, a decrease in cash reserves of \$52,720 is anticipated.

Voters set the 2024 Township Levy - The Town Board recommended a total 2024 levy of \$193,692 including:

- General Fund levy of \$30,000
- Road and Bridge levy of \$98,170
- Fire and First Responder levy of \$56,522
- Cemetery levy of \$9000

This is a 0% increase from the 2023 township levy. Vince Fangman (11724 110th Ave NW, Pine Island) made a motion to approve the levy as recommended by the Town Board. Dennis Beyer seconded the motion. The motion carried by a voice vote.

Voters set the time and location for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting – By law it must be held on March 12, 2024, with a bad weather date of March 19, 2024. The Town Board by resolution set the hours for the next Annual Town Election from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. The Town Board recommended that the Annual Town Meeting begin at 3:00 PM. Mary Andrist made a motion to keep the Annual Meeting starting time at 3:00 PM at the Town Hall. Motion seconded by Dale Thomforde and passed with a voice vote.

Special events – Voters set a maximum that the Town Board may spend to commemorate an event of historical significance to the town, to recognize volunteers, service efforts, and to recognize town officers, or to host or support a community celebration, under Minn. Stat. §365.10, subd. 12. In 2022, \$500 was spent for 4H roadside/ditch cleanup. The Town Board recommended an authorization of a total maximum of \$2,500 for 2023 for all the above items. Mark Stenberg moved to set as recommended, motion seconded by Mary Andrist and carried on a voice vote.

Other items of Township business for discussion and possible action:

Thomforde commended Clerk Beyer for the work done this past year. He felt that she did a very good job in her first year as the clerk.

Mary Anderson (11747 110th Ave NW, Pine Island) questioned the road report which states that 110th St. NW was rocked last summer. She questioned if this should be 110th Ave. It was agreed that this was an error, as there is not a 110th St. in the township.

Chloride Stakes – David Andrist asked that residents not pound stakes for chloride so deep into the ground as they are hard to remove after the chloride has been applied. It was suggested that

3-4 inches into the ground is adequate and that it is better to place stakes into the dirt near the edge of the road.

Roads – Gary Anderson (11747 110th Ave NW, Pine Island) stated that the road he lives on is a mess. He stated that rock that was placed on the road several years ago by the County comes up through the road and makes it a snotty mess all the time, especially when wet. Hervey stated that he talked with Mike yesterday regarding roads and Mike felt that the rock we received last year looked good but did not hold up as well as expected. Hervey asked that residents contact the township supervisors with road concerns so that they are aware of these issues.

Burning Permits – Thomforde advised residents that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) does not feel that townships have the authority to issue burning permits. Burning permits are available from DNR online for \$5.00. The township will continue to issue burning permits until resolved. The Town Board will notify residents if they need to purchase fire permits through DNR, rather than use those issued by the Township.

Adjournment – With no further business before the electors and no further comments or questions, Dennis Beyer made a motion to adjourn. Mary Andrist seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at about 4:16 PM.

Approved by the Moderator,
Date:

Attest,
Date:

[Signed copy on file]

David Andrist – Moderator

Donna Beyer – Town Clerk