

# *New Haven Township*

OLMSTED COUNTY, MINNESOTA – EST. 1858

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## **Annual Town Meeting Minutes March 12, 2024**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the 2024 Annual Town Meeting of New Haven Township was called to order by Clerk Donna Beyer at 3:05 PM. Approximately 29 township members attended the meeting, including all current Town Board members.

After welcoming comments, Clerk Beyer called for nominations for a meeting moderator. Brian Hervey, 10945 County Road 3 NW, Pine Island, nominated Dale Thomforde. No other nominations were made, and nominations were closed. The motion carried on a voice vote.

Clerk Beyer turned the meeting over to Dale Thomforde as moderator of the meeting.

**Voters set the agenda** – Mary Andrist, 11233 County Road 3 NW, Pine Island, made a motion to set the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by David Andrist, 11233 County Road 3 NW, Pine Island, and carried with a voice vote.

**Review and approve 2023 Annual Town Meeting minutes** – Brian Hervey made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve the minutes as written. Motion was seconded by Chris Hawkins, 13024 105<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Pine Island, and carried on a voice vote.

**Reading of Board of Audit Report** – Clerk Beyer read the February 13 Board of Audit meeting minutes, which a copy was included in the handout packet. A minimum of 2 items per month were selected at random for audit and review. A financial summary for the year 2023 was also reviewed and signed by the Board during the audit. No discrepancies were noted during the audit and all records were found to be in order. No one offered questions or concerns regarding the Board of Audit report.

**Rural Fire Association Report** – Supervisor Ann Fahy-Gust reported on the Rural Fire Association which is made up of five townships with costs shared with Pine Island. Total costs are \$256,344. New Haven's share is \$67,349. Calls have increased about 25% over the past year and overall costs have increased. The Sick and Safe Act is increasing costs for all employers since employees receive one hour of sick/safe time for every 30 hours worked. Thus, the costs to the township have increased. In the past year, two older trucks were sold for \$8,500. Brian Hervey had questions regarding reimbursements, asking for accountability. Dave O'Brien, 12702 County Road 3 NW, Pine Island, pointed out that most of the calls are first responder calls with no reimbursement. Fahy-Gust said approximately 40% of calls are fire related and 60% are medical calls.

**TCPA (Township Cooperative Planning Association) Report** – Supervisor Fahy-Gust gave a report of the planning and zoning activities of 2023 performed by TCPA for the Township. Permits were obtained for seven new homes, 4 accessory buildings, 2 additions, 2 remodels, 29 replacements of windows, roofs, siding, or furnaces, and 2 pools. There was one reactivation

MODERATOR APPROVED MINUTES

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of an old permit and one conditional use permit. The total valuation for remodels and new structures was \$2,962,500.

**Cemetery Reports** – Center Grove Cemetery provided a written report. They were able to pay back funds borrowed in 2021 from the Perpetual Care fund. They feel that their website has been helpful and continue to appreciate the funds from the Township. Chris Hawkins reported for St. Michaels Cemetery. They have had some changes in their Cemetery Board and appreciate the funds from the Township which they used for general maintenance. Mike Frost, 10101 85<sup>th</sup> St NW Pine Island, reported for the Othello Cemetery. They also appreciate the funds and used the funds for a new fence and flagpole and general maintenance.

**Road Report** – Mike Wood, road maintenance contractor, was unable to attend the meeting but provided a written report. The Township currently has 31.68 miles of township roads. Approximately 1/3 of the roads were rocked last spring. Ditch cleaning occurred in Genoa on Pearl Ave., Mechanic St, and Main Street. A culvert was installed on Pearl Ave, and brush clearing done on 69<sup>th</sup> Ave. Road rock has been contracted for 2024 with Roberson Lime and Rock of Zumbro Falls for \$9 per ton. Ditch spraying was done in 2023 with a plan to repeat the spraying in 2024 to control wild parsnip and brush. Jim Hedlund, 9451 105th St NW, Pine Island, questioned the possibility of chloride application earlier in the year. It was discussed that nothing can be done until road restrictions are lifted, after which rocking and chloride applications are done. Chloride is usually done around the beginning of June. Brian Hervey questioned whether the Township was considering tarring Main Street in Genoa. This past year, patching was done on Main St and there is no plan for tarring of the road at this time.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Town Treasurer Robert Figy gave a detailed report of the financial standing of the Township at the end of December 2023. This information was also included in the handout for the Annual Meeting. The following were the account balances as of December 31, 2023.

**Frandsen Bank**

• Checking Account (Road and Bridge General Fund)	\$ 5,328.39
• Money Market Fund	\$ 143,405.21
• CD 9 MO 1/15/2024 (3.85%)	\$ 100,000.00

**LPL Investments (through Frandsen Financial Services)**

• Bank of the Ozarks 2/23/2024 (4.55%)	\$ 100,000.00
• JP Morgan Chase 1/6/2025 (5.02%)	\$ 100,000.00

Less Outstanding Checks	\$ 1,220.67
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**Total Deposits** **\$ 447,512.93**

Figy stated that the Township was in excellent financial condition at the end of the year.

**Financial Summary** – Thomforde presented the Township Financial Summary which showed the year end summary for the past 3 years. As reported by Figy, the total cash reserves at the end of December 2023 were \$447,512.93. The change from yearend 2022 was a decrease of

\$53,057.21, which seems high, but the budgeted change was an anticipated decrease of \$52,720.00, so actually only over budget by a total of \$337.21.

**2023 Auditor's Filing and 2024 Budget** – Thomforde presented the 2023 Auditor's Filing which shows the revenues and expenses for the past year. Property taxes received in 2023 were \$190,236.98. Expenses for street maintenance was \$145,940.30 and includes the cost of rock, chloride, ditch spraying and grading. Snow and ice removal was \$32,367.50 and includes the cost of rock and salt for deicing of the roads. With no questions from the voters regarding the revenues and expenditures from 2023, Thomforde discussed the budget for 2024. Revenues from property taxes are expected to be \$193,692 with total revenues at \$265,434. Total expenditures are expected to be \$315,929, with the expected change in cash reserves a negative \$50,494. This should bring the reserves down to the higher end of the cash reserve target of between \$300,000 to \$400,000.

**Property Tax Mill Rates** – Thomforde presented information on how property taxes are calculated. All non-property tax revenues are subtracted from the total proposed local budget. This leaves the property tax revenue needed, which is known as the levy. The levy is spread among all taxable properties and calculate by multiplying the taxable market value by the State mandated classification rate to determine the tax capacity. The property tax revenue needed is then divided by the total capacity to determine the local tax rate. Any homestead credits, referendum levies and State general tax are applied to determine the amount each individual property tax amount. He continued with information related to tax mill rates paid in the different townships and cities within Olmsted County. The mill rate does not consider increases of property values. In most townships mill rates dropped in 2024 due to the increased property valuation. A chart comparing New Haven Township, Oronoco Township and Kalmar Township was presented. This showed that New Haven Township has the lowest mill rate for 2024.

**Voters set the 2025 levy** – Thomforde presented the Board's recommendation for a total 2025 levy of \$213,061, an increase of \$19,369. This includes continuing the general fund levy of \$30,000, increasing Road and Bridge levy to \$107,539 (an increase of \$9,369), increasing Fire and First Responder levy to \$66,522 (an increase of \$10,000) and continuing the Cemetery levy of \$9,000. This should help to balance revenues and expenditures. This is a 10% increase from the 2024 levy. Ginger Roberts Carson, 6715 100th St NW, Pine Island, questioned whether the Board would have increased the recommendation for the levy if they knew about the increased cost for fire protection and was assured that Board members were comfortable with the recommended levy. Mary Andrist made a motion that the levy be set as recommended by the Board. Dave O'Brien seconded the motion and the motion carried on a voice vote.

**Voters set the time and location for the 2025 Annual Town Meeting** – By law, the meeting must be held on March 11, 2025, with a bad weather date of March 18, 2025. By resolution, the Town Board set the hours for the Annual Town Election from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. The Town Board recommends that the 2025 Annual Town Meeting begin at 3:00 PM. Mary Andrist made a motion to begin the 2025 Annual Meeting at 3:00 PM at the New Haven Town Hall. The motion was seconded by Chris Hawkins and carried by a voice vote.

**Special Events** – Voters set a maximum that the Town Board can spend to commemorate an event, recognize volunteers, service efforts or town officers or to host a community celebration, under Minn. Stat §365.10, subd. 12. In 2023, \$500 was spent for 4H clean-up in the township cemeteries. The Town Board recommended an authorization of a total of \$2500 for 2024 for the above items. Mary Andrist made a motion to set the limit as recommended. Cole Nielsen, 10341 County Road 3 NW, Pine Island, seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote.

**Other items of Township Business for discussion and possible action:**

**Gopher bounties** – Input was sought from township members regarding fees paid for gopher bounties, which currently is \$2.50 for pocket gophers and \$1.00 for streakie gophers. Dave O’Brien asked what other townships were paying. The Board will investigate.

**Burning Permits** – This has changed since last year. Thomforde and Beyer are now fire wardens and can issue 1 or 3-day fire permits. The other option is to obtain a permit from the DNR website. While free, there is a \$5.00 handling fee, but the permit is good from January 1 through December 31 each year.

**Guest** – Nicci Lehto, a member of the Prairie Island Indian Community and a Federal Government Specialist working for the Community introduced herself. She is visiting the communities surrounding Elk Run to meet the community leaders to help integrate with the communities. She was welcomed warmly to the New Haven Township community.

**Motion to adjourn** – With no further business before the electors and no further comments or questions, Mary Andrist made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Dave O’Brien. The motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned by Moderator Dale Thomforde at 4:20 PM.

Approved by the Moderator,

Attest:

Date:

Date:

/Signed copy on file/

Dale Thomforde – Moderator

Donna Beyer – Town Clerk