



LINWOOD TOWNSHIP

ANOKA COUNTY

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2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Attendance: There were 74 people attending the Annual Meeting in person. The following people signed the attendance sheet: Robert Millerbernd, Jonn Olson, Lamar Campbell, Cindy Trubrolli (?), Steve Trubrolli (?), Lloyd S. Horton, Debbie Parker, Merrie Glowaski, Harvey Glowaski, Kris Millerbernd, Carrie Luedtke, Andy Luedtke, JD, Sarah Wilke, Zach Carlson, Concha Brown, Mike Zacher, Laura Hermann, Jo & Curt Stainbrook, Jim & Cindy Gervais, Mark Sullivan, Jeff Reinert-County Commissioner, Tom & Carol Searing, Pam Matti, Andy Dahlstrom, Chris Rolstad, James Garrison, Rebecca Frego, Jason Baggenstoss, Phil Osterhus, Mark E. Marleau, Dan Babineau, Drew Hall, Darryl Ballman-Linwood Fire Chief, Lorie Keister, Alice Pickering, Jeff & Carol Ladd, Hank Senger, Dan & Diane Bielejeski, Ed & Karen Kramer, Joe Dolphy Jr, Charles Scriptor, Deb Thayer, Mike Halliday, Amanda Anderson, Corey Williams, Mark Boyum, RA Pasquarell (?), Craig & Jane Rylander, William Gabbard, Mark Cawley, Lisa Slepica, Gordy Dalbol, Jo Dalbol, Ted Engen, Dan Jackle, Sandra Lee, Ron & JoAnn Schally, Lisa Henrickson, Aaron Brooten, Rory Pagen, Mike Parker. There were 18 log-ins to the live-stream of the Annual Meeting.

Call to order and approval of the agenda: Clerk Pam Olson called the 2023 Annual Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A prayer was read.

Moderator & Introduction of the Town Board: Mike Zacher and Harvey Glowaski were nominated for moderator, but both declined to serve. Jim Garrison was nominated and accepted the position of moderator. Mr. Garrison introduced the town board supervisors who were present - Chairman Bob Millerbernd, Vice Chairman Mike Parker, Supervisor Carol Searing, and Supervisor Jonn Olson. Seat E is open and letters of interest should be sent to the clerk.

Approval of the agenda: Ed Kramer moved to approve the agenda and Tom Searing seconded. By a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Approval of the annual meeting minutes: Mike Parker moved to dispense with the reading of and approve the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes as presented; Tom Searing seconded. The motion carried with a majority verbal vote.

Financial report with budget & levy discussion: Treasurer Alyssa Dehn informed the public that the Township received \$535,212 more than was budgeted for 2022, mainly due to ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act), Park Dedication fees from developers, and escrow money from land use permits.

The total 2022 capital disbursements went over budget by approximately \$867,000 due to the South Linwood Drive project coming in higher than expected and replacing 17 SCBAs for the firefighters.

Treasurer Dehn cited the rising costs of everyday general operations - an 44% increase in gas utilities, electric costs increased 10%, and motor fuel expenditures increased 48% as a combination of higher fuel prices, more snowfall than normal, and the fire department responding to more calls.

The Annual Road Report showed the 2022 operating budget ending balance at \$243,103, with \$116,853 in revenue and \$323,578 in disbursements. The Road & Bridge Capital Fund received \$404,765 and spent \$889,725, leaving a negative balance of \$15,755, which will be carried by the other funds until the July tax settlement is received. the South Linwood Drive resurfacing project came in higher than budgeted. The road projects scheduled for 2023 are to pave 205th Avenue at a cost of just over \$400,000, with the construction costs to be covered entirely by a DNR grant, and replacement of a storm sewer pipe and repaving a section of Martin Lake Road at approximately \$87,000. The 2024 road improvement plan is to resurface Martin Lake Road, from East Martin Lake Drive to Viking Blvd.

The treasurer answered many resident questions regarding the financial report, and then moved on to discuss the budget history from 2021 through the proposed 2024 budget. The proposed annual budget for 2024 shows a marked increase due to additional capital planning for upcoming road repair projects, fix the current parking lot issues, building repairs, as well as vehicle replacements. Treasurer Dehn explained that when the original budgets from each department came in at \$3,100,000 the Town Board held three public budget meetings to make cuts and develop a proposal to bring to the Annual Meeting. The budget increase from the 2023 budget was approximately \$297,000. In order to cover the proposed budget, the Board is proposing an increase to the levy of \$175,000 for 2024, bringing the levy to \$1,950,000, a 9.9% increase over the 2023 levy. The treasurer explained the financial impact of the proposed increase for the various taxable home values. The proposed increase was estimated to increase property taxes for a home valued at \$450,000 by approximately \$124 per year.

A resident questioned why the Township police car is being used outside of the Township and why the Township doesn't get money for the tickets that are issued within the Township. County Commissioner Jeff Reinert vowed to follow up on the getting a portion of ticket fines for the Township.

Treasurer Dehn explained that the Building Department Fund is a non-levy fund. It gets its revenue from building permit fees and the expenses are restricted to building department expenses. The 2024 budget for the Building Department was increased due to the increased costs for building inspections.

A resident requested to know the ending balances for each of the funds. The Board of Audit Report was available in the main hallway, but will be put on the website for viewing. Next year, the report will be printed for the Annual Meeting.

A resident questioned whether the Board was budgeting enough to cover inflation. The treasurer stated that wages, utilities, and fuel costs were increased in anticipation of rising costs. Due to many years of no levy increases, the Board is attempting to catch up with costs that have increased beyond past budgets. A resident stated that the levy increases were inevitable because over the last fifteen years the Township hasn't kept up with inflation.

A resident stated that other cities post their meeting packets on their websites, as well as retaining their meeting recordings. The resident requested that the Township post the meeting packets and budget to retain the recordings of their meetings.

The budget presentation will be put on the website, but the treasurer strongly encouraged residents to attend the budget meetings, where the Board goes through the worksheets line by line. No one attends the budget workshops.

Year in Review: A slideshow showcasing 2022 activities and improvements was presented to inform the public. Attendees were also informed of the 2024 elections and encouraged to consider becoming an election worker.

Request for funds: Phil Osterhus moved to authorize \$25,000 be spent for community celebrations and \$1,000 for recognition of service for retirees, volunteers and special service efforts; Jo Stainbrook seconded. A resident shared their opinion that the cost of Linwood Family Fun Day is too high and is an area that could be cut to reduce the budget. A resident encouraged everyone to attend the various community activities and events to see how it brings the community together. The motion carried to authorize up to \$25,000 be spent for community celebrations and up to \$1,000 be spent for recognition of services. The motion carried by a majority vote.

Phil Osterhus moved to spend up to \$1,000 for health, social, and recreational services. The motion was seconded by Theodore Engen. In the past, the Board has donated for services from Alexandra House, to serve battered women, and to the Forest Lake Music Boosters for working at Family Fun Days. The motion carried with no votes opposing.

2024 levy: Phil Osterhus moved to set the levy at \$1,875,000. Alice Pickering seconded. A resident questioned Mr. Osterhus where he was proposing the \$75,000 cut would be made, Mr. Osterhus stated that it was up to the Board to decide where to make cuts. Ms. Pickering rescinded her second, stating that she thought the motion had been for \$1,950,000. Diane Kroll then seconded the motion. The moderator called for a show of hands to vote on the motion. There were 16 people in favor of the motion and 44 opposed to the motion. The motion failed.

Mike Halliday moved to set the 2024 levy at \$1,950,000. Tom Searing seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried with 43 residents voting in favor and 16 residents voting against.

Supervisor Bob Millerbernd stated that the supervisors realized that it was a bad year because of the housing market and increased costs. People should contact the county assessors if they are concerned with their property values. The supervisors care about the residents and work for the good of Linwood Township. Supervisor Millerbernd expressed his appreciation for the long hours the plow drivers have put into the roads this winter and for the staff who works year-round for the public.

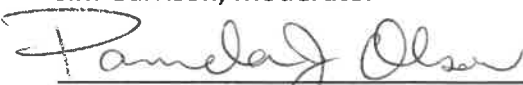
Next Annual Meeting: Mike Parker moved, and several unidentified residents seconded the motion, to hold the next Annual Meeting at 7:00 p.m. on March 12, 2024 at the Linwood Town Hall. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

Motion to adjourn: Mike Parker moved, and Ron Schally seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with all residents who voted, voting aye.

Approved on: March 12, 2024



Jim Garrison, Moderator



Pamela Olson, Clerk