



LINWOOD TOWNSHIP

ANOKA COUNTY

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2024 Annual Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Attendance: There were 106 people attending the Annual Meeting in person. The following people signed the attendance sheet: Rebecca Frego, Concha Brown, Darryl Ballman, Nick Lesch, Jeff & Carol Ladd, Mike Taylor, Laura Hermann, Cynthia Gruett, Joe Dolphy, Jr., Margaret Edblom, Mimi Derry, Maynard Hoffman, Barb Zempel, Jim Garrison, Sandy Lathrop, Michael S. Raml, Ruth McAllister, Tyler Beck, June Cole, Tom Searing, Carol Searing, Brian Langlois, Robert Millerbernd, Mark Sullivan, Darrell Debele, Jo & Curt Stainbrook, Pam & Duane Matti, Mark Boyum, Ted Zempel, Ed Kramer, Karen Kramer, Mark Dalske, Charles Scriptor, Michelle Brown, Joan DelRio, Jeff Reinert, Julia & Blake Burbach, Randa Morgan, Lisa Henrickson, John Genser, Jim Stockinger, Jason Baggenstoss, Kris Millerbernd, Randy Krebs, Ron & JoAnn Schally, Mike Zacher, Nicole Beck, Rodney Williams, Rubin Brown, Brandon & Jess Anderson, Laura Lou, Jason Theis, Angie Burkhalter, Nick Burkhalter, Craig Percy. There were 37 log-ins to the YouTube live-stream of the Annual Meeting.

Call to order and approval of the agenda: Clerk Pam Olson called the 2024 Annual Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2024. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A prayer was read.

Moderator & Introduction of the Town Board: Sandy Lathrop nominated Jim Garrison as moderator; Ed Kramer seconded the nomination. No other nominations were heard. Mr. Garrison accepted the position of moderator. Mr. Garrison introduced the town board supervisors who were present - Chairman Michael Parker, Vice Chairman Jonn Olson, Supervisor Carol Searing, Supervisor Robert Millerbernd, and Supervisor Andrew Luedtke.

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

Approval of the annual meeting minutes: Tom Searing moved to dispense with the reading of and approve the Annual Meeting minutes from March 14, 2023; Mike Parker seconded. The motion carried with no one voting against the motion.

Anoka County Sheriff's Office: Commander Paul Lenzmeier spoke about the contracted services for police protection, with Linwood receiving eight hours per day of deputy services. Deputy Megan Sullivan introduced herself as one of two deputies that serve Linwood Township. Megan was assigned to the Township in January 2024. The township's other deputy is Bill Jacobson.

County Commissioner: Jeff Reinert, District 6 County Commissioner, informed the public that a process is in place for the Township to receive a percentage of the violation tickets that are written in the Township. The County Board approved \$40,000 to offset the 2024 police contract because the Town levy had already been set when the increase occurred. The commissioner reported his election

concerns and his support for duplicating election check ins on the Poll Pads in addition to using paper books. Anoka County does more post-election audits than required by statute and will allow more precincts to perform audits on request. Commissioner Reinert reported that within two years, the County will be replacing the boardwalk between Camp Salie and Island Lake. Anoka County increased property taxes by 10% for 2024.

Fire Department: Fire Chief Darryl Ballman reported the Linwood Fire Department currently has 25 firefighters and brought five new firefighters on board this year. In 2023, William Marholtz and Anna Amann were hired, and Shawn McLane and Scott Smith retired from the department. The department responded to 310 calls in 2023, which was a 12% increase from the number of calls in 2022. Drafting feet and a strainer were purchased through a Compeer grant, and thirteen sets of wildland firefighting gear was purchase through a VFA matching grant. The 1995 Rescue 5 was replaced by a 2023 Tahoe, equipped with response equipment. Rescue 5 goes out on a majority of the responses.

Planning & Zoning: Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman Joe Dolphy, Jr. informed residents that the commission is charged with reviewing plats, ordinances, and plans for future development. Topics the commission may be considering are reducing the 2 ½ acre minimum lot size to plan for possible senior housing or planned unit development. They will also be discussing tiered development to allow for business zoning adjacent to multi-unit dwellings, and then the larger acreage. The commission has been directed by the Town Board to make recommendations for amending the ordinances dealing with chickens, roosters, and animals. The commission is looking for an alternate member.

Parks: Park and Recreation Commission Chair Carrie Luedtke and Vice Chair Sara Nelson reported that the Township has 16 parks, five of which are undeveloped. In 2023, new playground equipment was installed in three of the parks. A new warming house was constructed using Park Dedication Funds. Volunteers flooded the ice rinks, but then winter ended before the warming house could be put to use. The Parks proposed budget of approximately \$90,000 was mainly for wages to maintain the parks. A crack in the tennis court needs to be repaired, the basketball court needs to be resealed, and lighting for Broadbent Park ballfields as well as the hockey rink needs to be replaced. The Town Board approved a part-time employee to keep up on park maintenance. The commission is looking for one member.

Recycling: Supervisor Andy Luedtke introduced himself as the liaison to recycling. Treasurer Alyssa Dehn listed the many items that recycling takes. The new reuse building is being built in stages as grant money becomes available. Anoka County's tonnage goal for Linwood in 2023 was 581 tons; Linwood residents recycled 906 tons.

Roads: Supervisor Jonn Olson reported that the Road and Bridge Committee plans for road projects and makes recommendations to the Town Board. The Township hired a backup plow driver to assist the regular drivers. The Annual Road Report showed the 2023 operating budget ending balance at \$195,343, with \$234,837 in revenue and \$282,541 in expenses. The Road and Bridge Capital Fund received \$797,121 and spent \$593,467, leaving a balance of \$194,206. In 2023, the major capital expenses were paving 205th Avenue NE, repairing the Martin Lake Road storm pipe, and the final payment for resurfacing South Linwood Drive.

Financial report with budget & levy discussion: Treasurer Dehn gave a thorough 2023 financial presentation showing the actual (\$2,809,233) and budgeted (\$2,758,606) revenue for each fund and

the amounts of the various grants and park dedication money received (\$547,550). Also provided were the actual (\$2,768,642) and budgeted (\$2,461,979) disbursements with the explanation that the Township would have come in under budget if the expenses associated with grants were not considered.

The Township is facing increased costs for insurance, fuel, police contract, and utilities. The treasurer strongly encouraged residents to attend the budget meetings, where the Board goes through worksheets to arrive at the proposed budget and levy numbers. The proposed levy was \$2,150,000, which would be 10.3% higher than the 2024 levy.

Year in Review: To inform the public, a slideshow showcasing 2023 township activities and improvements was presented.

Request for funds: The proposed amount for town celebrations was \$22,700 for Linwood Family Fun Days and \$3,300 for the Intergenerational Easter and Halloween events. Ted Engen moved to authorize up to \$26,000 for community celebrations; Tom Searing seconded. There was one dissenting vote. A verbal majority approved the amount to host the community celebrations.

Sandy Lathrop moved to approve up to \$1,000 for recognition of service; Ted Engen seconded. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The proposed amount for health, social, and recreational services was \$250.00 for 2025. It was explained that in the past, the Board has contracted for services from Alexandra House, to serve victims of domestic violence. There was no motion or second. When the moderator called for a vote, all verbal replies were in favor of authorizing up to \$250.00 for health, social, and recreational services.

2024 levy: Tom Searing moved to set the levy at \$2,150,000. Ed Kramer seconded. The motion failed with 39 voting in favor and 44 voting against. (8:50 p.m.)

Tony DeChaine moved to set the levy at \$2,000,000 even; Charles Scripser seconded. The motion failed with 33 voting in favor and 38 voting opposed. (8:53 p.m.)

Sandy Lathrop moved to set the levy at \$2,076,750, a 6.5% increase; Pam Matti seconded. It was explained that its up to the Town Board to determine where budget cuts would need to be made. The motion carried with 48 voting in favor and 17 voting against. (9:03 p.m.)

Next Annual Meeting: Charles Scripser moved, and Lloyd Horton seconded, to set the next Annual Meeting at 7:00 p.m. on March 11, 2025 at Linwood Town Hall. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

Motion to adjourn: Charles Scripser moved and several unidentified residents seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with all residents who voted, voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Approved on:

Jim Garrison, Moderator

Pamela Olson, Clerk