

Canosia Township
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Town Leadership: Chair Kevin L. Comnick, Supervisor Jeff Erikson, Supervisor Penny Dieryck, Clerk Amber Madoll, Treasurer Neil Sample

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 7, 2024

ATTENDING: Chair Kevin Comnick, Supervisor Penny Dieryck, Supervisor Jeff Erikson, Clerk Amber Madoll, Former Treasurer Cheryl Borndal, Treasurer Neil Sample, Fire Chief Gene Stevens, Asst Fire Chief Clyde Mortinsen, Road Foreman Gary Oswell, and 24 guests. The meeting was held in person and virtually at the Canosia Town Hall.

Chair Comnick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

AGENDA, MINUTES, TREASURER'S REPORT & BILLS

- A. **SUPERVISOR ROLL CALL:** Chair Kevin Comnick, Supervisor Penny Dieryck, and Supervisor Jeff Erikson were present. Supervisor Dieryck attended the meeting virtually.
- B. **AGENDA: Motion** made by Jeff Erikson, seconded by Penny Dieryck to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously, 3-0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Comnick voted in favor.
- C. **MINUTES: Motion** made by Penny Dieryck, seconded by Jeff Erikson to approve the July 1, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Comnick voted in favor.
- D. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**
 - a. Treasurer Sample stated that the ARPA funds have \$154.73 left. He also stated that the 1st ½ of the apportionment arrived, as well as, the WLSSD recycling grant.
 - b. **Motion** made by Kevin Comnick, seconded by Jeff Erikson to approve the treasurer's report as written. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Comnick voted in favor.
- E. **PAY BILLS: Motion** made by Jeff Erikson, seconded by Penny Dieryck to pay bills # 22777–22838 and EFT2024-9 and EFT2024-10. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Comnick voted in favor.
- F. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
 - a. Proctor Baseball Club: Chairman Comnick stated that the board would hear from residents, however, no board decisions would be made during the meeting. He then turned the meeting over to Supervisor Erikson. Supervisor Erikson shared a brief history of the recreation area and his family's role in donating the land and cultivating the recreation area. He expressed disappointment that the Proctor Baseball Club chose to share misinformation on their social media platform and wondered how they had the funding to purchase ads yet still seeking funds from townships. Chairman Comnick stated that he would call on residents to speak in the order of which they signed in to the sign in sheet, that each resident would receive 3 minutes to speak and that the Clerk would let the speaker know once their time was up.
 - i. Chris Stevens: Stevens stated that he didn't know much of the history between the club and the township, however, he understands that it has extreme value. He also stated that he was interested in having conversations with the township and wanted to know what the township's plans were for the recreation area and how the club could help support

- those plans. He stated that the club is transitioning leadership and that he wants to be partners with the township for the sake of the children who live in the area. He continued by stating that he has the manpower to help, but more communication is needed from all sides.
- ii. Jered Parmeter: J. Parmeter stated that he was there to show his support of the Proctor Baseball Club.
 - iii. Kasha Parmeter: K. Parmeter stated that she was there to show her support of the Proctor Baseball Club.
 - iv. Blaine and Bree Johnson: The Johnsons stated that they were there to show their support of the Proctor Baseball Club.
 - v. Ryan Mathiew: Mathiew stated that he was there to show his support of the Proctor Baseball Club.
 - vi. Dave Reyelts: Reyelts stated that he supported what Stevens stated. He stated that he was glad that the township had no plans to get rid of the little league field but was concerned about the back field being lost. He stated that there were water drainage issues on the back field and that the club wanted the township to resolve the issues, but that they didn't so the club chose to stop investing in the field. Instead, they turned it into a practice field. He stated that the club was a great organization and is always in need of additional fields. Chairman Connick stated that he heard the rumor concerning the potential loss of the little league field. He explained that there were no plans to remove youth baseball from the recreation area and the rumor of such was an example of those spreading misinformation on social media. Supervisor Erikson stated that those who chose to spread rumors and misinformation concerning the recreation area, the township, and the township leadership should be ashamed of themselves. Chairman Connick stated that he, like Supervisor Erikson, are closely tied to little league and its disappointing to see the comments made that the board such as, "You all should contact the news/media on this. Make them look like fools that need to be replaced." He said that he was disappointed that indeed they had brought out the media to the meeting. Supervisor Erikson stated that there were three special meetings held concerning the recreation area and the back baseball field. No residents attended. The notices were posted online and at the legal posting locations. He also stated that one could see the continued investment in the front field as the dugouts were just leveled and painted. Supervisor Dieryck stated that it is important to note that the recreation area is for all residents, not just little league. This includes the front field when it is not in use by the club.
 - vii. Sean Holmgren: Holmgren stated that he came to show support for the Proctor Baseball Club and that he'd like to see communication improved so that a batting cage can be placed within the recreation area.
 - viii. Cory Johnson: Johnson stated that he wanted to attend the meeting to see both sides of the concerns. He stated that he is concerned about students leaving the district to play for other districts. He stated that they have a lot of manpower and are willing to help maintain the baseball field.
 - ix. Kyle Wojtysiak: Wojtysiak stated that he knows the supervisors well and believes that communication can improve. He stated that both club and township staff were onsite during the tournament trying to control the significant rainfall that washed out the field.

- He stated that he is concerned that the playground, courts, etc. Are creating run off that is impacting the field and would like to see the township work to fix any drainage issues.
- x. Bill Voltzke: Voltzke stated that he was there to show his support of the Proctor Baseball Club.
 - xi. Gabe Jorgenson: G. Jorgenson stated that he supports the baseball club and that a batting cage would benefit everyone, which the club would put in at no cost. Supervisor Erikson stated that the club sent a letter asking the township make a significant financial investment for the batting cage. Chairman Connick stated that the board previously agreed to allow a temporary batting cage on the outfield of the little league field. He explained that conversations, such as the batting cage, need to happen at the board meetings. Due to public meeting laws, the board needs to handle business during the meetings and the board has been present at all board meetings. He stated that the club hasn't and that needs to change in order for communication to improve. Jorgenson stated that there were township surveys sent out but not completed by club members. Clerk Madoll stated that the survey is ongoing and that results are shared during board meetings periodically. It was and continues to be available on the Website. It was also presented at previous National Night Outs, posted on the school board, shared during board meetings, put in the newsletter, etc.
 - xii. Katie Jorgenson: K. Jorgenson stated that her children use the recreation area for baseball practice. She stated that the batting cage was a huge loss and that now she has to travel to use one. She stated that the front field has drainage issues and that it is unfortunate. She went on to say that she thinks that the recreation area should reflect the local families and be updated. She also stated that she couldn't find May/June minutes on the website nor survey results.
 - xiii. Jeremiah Schubifike: Schubifike stated that he would like to give his three minutes to Chris Stevens so that he could continue to speak.
 - xiv. Chris Stevens: Stevens stated that everyone can do better with their communication and that their board is undergoing a transition. He stated that the tone of communications had not been great and that he could see how the town supervisors might feel attacked. He stated that he would like to mend relationships as he knows that the board is passionate about supporting community youth and sports. Chairman Connick stated that the comments made did deeply offend him as the board has shown personally, and through board action, multiple times over the years their commitment to youth sports.
 - xv. Lynn Canito: Canito stated that she was there to show support for the Proctor Baseball Club. She stated that it is nice having a local field to play on with her kids without having to travel. She stated that she would also like to see a batting cage. Supervisor Erikson stated that the original cage had outlasted its life and had become a safety hazard. He reiterated that the board had encouraged the club to put a temporary cage on the outfield for this season. Canito also stated that the field is a swamp and that the drainage issues should be resolved. Supervisor Erikson stated that the drainage for the field was completed in the mid-seventies. A lot has changed since then, including a significant increase in rainfall.
 - xvi. Andy Donahue: Donahue stated that he appreciated everyone listening to the residents' concerns. He stated that everything that the club does is for the children and that both entities just want to support the community youth. He stated that, unfortunately, the

communication broke down and now swings have replaced the back field. He stated that the there are not enough fields for youth baseball and it would have been great if that back baseball field was still in use.

Chairman Comnick stated that the township invested in the playground to make it ADA accessible, add swings, etc. because the recreation area is not just for little league players, it is for all children and residents. He stated that there are 2,200 residents in the township that all have a right to use the recreation area. In addition, he stated that there is only \$297,000 each year available for everything- building maintenance, cemetery, recreation area, staffing, roads, etc. He went on to state that there have been no raised taxes in decades. He stated that the money to make improvements has to come from somewhere and if the township doesn't have the funds, then it has to either come from an entity, like the club, fundraising, or raised taxes. He gave the example that one club member had brought up previously concerning the volleyball court asking why it existed. He stated that the township invested 1/2 of the cost years ago and the other 1/2 was raised by a boy scout. He stated that this was an example of how improvements are made. The township cannot afford to do everything that everyone wants without raising taxes or receiving donations. He finished the conversation by stating that the recreation area possesses a wide range of activities for all residents- young and old- and that's do to those type of partnerships.

- b. **Munger Election Campaign:** Munger stated that he was running for office and visiting local townships to hear about their concerns. He stated that he's a retired judge, former lawyer, previously a member of the army reserve, etc who lives in Fredenberg and sits on multiple boards. He stated that he is running to bring some common sense to St. Paul.

OLD BUSINESS

A. PLANNING AND ZONING: Chairman Comnick briefly explained that planning and zoning is handled by the county but that sometimes the board still discusses CUP and variance requests.

B. FIRE RELIEF: Chief Stevens stated that next month he'd have more numbers.

C. FIRE DEPARTMENT:

- a. Chief Stevens shared his monthly report where he stated the monthly responses, as well as, that they had NFSA do a side x side burn demo of a sprinklered room v a non-sprinklered room. They also did truck maintenance, rotated the hose on the trucks, and held a medical night.
- b. **Motion** made by Jeff Erikson, seconded by Kevin Comnick to approve Resolution 2024-18 that accepts a donation from Masterson for \$50.00 to the Canosia Township Volunteer Fire Department. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Comnick voted in favor.
- c. Chairman Comnick stated that there are lobbyists and legislators working to secure EMS funding for rural communities.
- d. Chief Stevens stated that a new side by side should be coming soon and that the current tracks will fit it.

2024 FIRE DEPT. RESPONSES			
Call Type	JULY #'s	Notes	Total for 2024
EMS	18		107
Medical MUA	1	Grand Lake FD	8
Twp Fire	4	Side by Side Demo, false alarm, gas spill, 911 down	15

MUA Fire	4	Hermantown FD, Rice Lake FD, and Gnesen FD	18
Service	0		0
TOTAL	27		148

- D. ROADS:** Chairman Connick stated that the dust control project is complete. He explained how the township partners with the county when they are doing projects in order to cut down cost. He stated that the striping should start soon.
- E. RECYCLE SHED:** Supervisor Dieryck stated that the grant for the program came in and that all is going well.
- F. RECREATION AREA: Motion** made by Kevin Connick, seconded by Jeff Erikson to approve Resolution 2024-16 that accepted the donation from Lake Country Power in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the Gerhart Erikson Recreation Area. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Connick voted in favor. Supervisor Dieryck stated that she had two bids for building a new pavilion. Chairman Connick stated that the pavilion is in disrepair and unsafe. The township intends on building a new one and the bricks from the original will be reset in an adjacent spot. Motion made by Kevin Connick, seconded by Penny Dieryck to approve the bid from Karppinen Construction for \$30,600 to build the new pavilion in the recreation area. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Connick voted in favor.
- G. CEMETERY:** Cemetery Supervisor Oswell stated that there are new doors on the columbarium. Supervisor Erikson stated that more plaques have been ordered for the veteran memorial.
- H. PLAWCS:** Chairman Connick explained the user fees for PLAWCS and how they were determined. He stated that the board works hard on keeping user costs down in partnership with the users. Supervisor Dieryck stated that there has been a VRBO concern on a property at North Pike Lake Road. She stated that the board was addressing the concern.
- I. BUILDING MAINTENANCE:** Supervisor Erikson stated that the building was pressure washed.
- J. ELECTIONS:** Clerk Madoll stated that everything is ready and is hopeful for a strong turnout. She stated that multiple elections have had record turn outs and is hoping that this will be the same.
- K. AIS:** Supervisor Connick explained how the AIS grant worked for those in attendance.
- L. NOXIOUS WEEDS:** Road Foreman Oswell stated that the weeds he finds are on private property.
- M. ARPA FUNDING:** Chairman Connick explained how some of the funds were spent and how the referendum is being spent for the recreation area.
- N. NATIONAL NIGHT OUT:** Chief Stevens stated that the event went well and that almost all of the food is gone. Chairman Connick explained that it's the volunteer firefighter's who host the event and put in all of the work. L. Erikson stated that he would like to see a couple of banners be added around to help notify residents of the upcoming event.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Resolution 2024-17: Motion** made by Jeff Erikson, seconded by Penny Dieryck to approve Resolution 2024-17 which supports St. Louis County seeking funds to move the railray crossings off of Midway Road. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Connick voted in favor.
- B. PIE Race:** Chief Erikson stated that he worked with the school PIE so that they can host a run along Martin Road in September.
- C. Credit Card Use:** Treasurer Sample stated that maintenance staff would like a credit card to use for township maintenance expenses. Currently, the clerk and fire chief possess cards. Clerk Madoll explained that each card is linked to the specific individual's identity, including social security number. Chairman Connick stated that they would have to look into the situation further. Borndal stated that a staff person

could charge their personal card and request reimbursement prior to any interest building. Supervisor Erikson stated that staff shouldn't need to put out personal funds, even if they are charging.

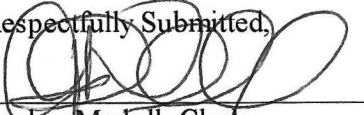
COORESPONDENCE

WLSSD Annual Budget Letter and Notice of Public Hearing, Town of Fredenberg Newsletter, Solway NNO Invite, letter from Commissioner Musolf, email from Kimberly Brezeninski

ADJOURNMENT

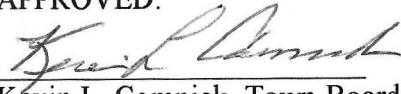
Motion by Kevin Connick, seconded by Penny Dieryck, to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0. Jeff Erikson, Penny Dieryck, and Kevin Connick voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amber Madoll, Clerk
September 4, 2024

APPROVED:



Kevin L. Connick, Town Board Chair
September 4, 2024