



Forest Township
Rice County
3625 Millersburg Boulevard
Faribault, Minnesota

Tuesday, March 8, 2022
1:00 PM
Annual Meeting minutes

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Ashley Anderson called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Members Present: Ron Gernandt, Charlie Peters, Elaine Trnka, Ashley Anderson

7 residents present and 0 present on Zoom.

2. ELECT MODERATOR

Bob Duban made a motion to elect Steve Trnka as the 2022 Forest Township Annual Meeting Moderator. Ron Gernandt seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

3. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 9, 2021

Ashley read the minutes from the 2021 annual meeting.

Bob Duban made a motion to approve the minutes. Jan Gillen seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

4. 2021 FINANCIAL REPORT

Elaine presented the 2021 Forest Township financial report and discussed each fund including receipts, disbursements, and fund balances.

The board received ARPA funds from the federal government. The township will receive an additional amount in August 2022. The township has until December 31, 2024 to allocate the funds. The Freightliner truck was paid off in June and the township is carrying no debt.

Ron Gernandt made a motion to accept the financial report. Charlie Peters seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

5. SELECT OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

Bob Duban made a motion to select Northfield News and Faribault Daily News as the official publications for Forest Township. Ron Gerndant seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

6. SELECT NOTICE POSTING PLACES

Bob Duban made a motion to select the Forest Town Hall as the official posting place. Ron Gerndant seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

7. SET TIME FOR THE 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

Bob Duban made a motion to hold the 2023 Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 1:00 PM. Elaine Trnka seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. FIRE DISTRICT 1: LONSDALE – There were 26 total calls in Forest Township; 23 were rescue calls and 3 were fire calls. It made up 7% of Lonsdale’s total calls. They ordered a new tanker. There were 2 retirements, and they will be hiring 2 additional people. The 2023 budget was raised just over \$1,000. There is an excess in the Fire District 1 account. The township does not recommend a levy increase for 2023.
- b. FIRE DISTRICT 2: NORTHFIELD –Forest Township accounts for 13.38% of the Townships in the Northfield Rural Fire Protection District. Gerry Franek retired in early 2022. 1st Assistant Chief, Tom Nelson, will serve as Interim Chief for up to 12 months. They have a new tanker on order and plan to buy a new pumper and tanker in 2024 & 2025. There was no township fee increase in 2022. There is a \$10,000 increase (split among the townships) planned for 2023 along with an additional \$20,000 increase planned for 2024. The board proposes a \$2,000 dollar levy increase.

9. FOREST TOWNSHIP ROAD REPORT

Last year the Township started the Culver Ave Hill project. They cut the hill down, did some ditch work, moved a lot of dirt, and put in new culverts. The Township just approved a bid for guardrails, and the project is on the contractor’s schedule. The project caused some disruption to the Gigas and the Gigas were incredibly accommodating. The project has cost around \$40,000 and guardrails will be around \$45,000.

The Township also completed brush clearing and spot spraying in an effort to control wild parsnip. The right of way was mowed two times. The grader and the truck are running well. The road grader recently received new tires. The truck got a new tailgate.

10. 2023 TAX LEVY

- a. **PROPOSED REVENUE FUND: \$60,000, same as 2022**

Ron Germandt made a motion to keep the revenue fund at \$60,000, same as 2022. Elaine Trnka seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

b. PROPOSED ROAD AND BRIDGE: \$175,000, same as 2022

Charlie Peters made a motion to keep the road and bridge fund at \$175,000, same as 2022. Jan Gillen seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

c. PROPOSED FIRE DISTRICT 1: \$32,000, same as 2022

Ron Germandt made a motion to keep the Fire District 1 fund at \$32,000. Elaine Trnka seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

d. PROPOSED FIRE DISTRICT 2: \$20,000, an increase of \$2,000 from 2022

Jan Gillen made a motion to raise the Fire District 2 fund to \$20,000. Ashley Anderson seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

11. OLD BUSINESS

a. APPOINTED VS ELECTED CLERK & TREASURER

There is a question on the ballot today regarding moving from an elected clerk and treasurer to an appointed clerk and treasurer. This allows the town board to hire the position based on experience due to the technical nature of the positions.

b. GRADER

The township priced out a new grader in 2021. At that time, a new grader would cost approximately \$280,000. The Township also received a quote to add a plow for an additional \$42,000. It would have cost the Township \$212,000 to trade up their old grader for a new one. Due to supply chain shortages, the price will now be 5-15% higher. The existing grader is a 2009. It is starting to show wear. It is mechanically sound and has new tires. It has no warranty left on it. The group discussed pursuing a new grader while the existing one still has trade in value. There was consensus among the group to price it out and purchase a new grader if the board finds the quote a good value.

12. NEW BUSINESS

a. ARPA FUNDS

The township can use the APRA funds on government services.

b. TOWNHALL RENTAL

The township currently charges \$20 for townhall rental. The township is losing money on the rental due to the cost of maintaining the rentals. The group discussed a lower fee for non-profits and government groups. Forest Township will host NTU on the first Tuesday in August 2023 at the Forest Town Hall.

Charlie made a motion to raise the town hall rental fee to \$75, with a lower fee to be determined for government and non-profit organizations. Ron seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

c. FOREST BRIDGEWATER JOINT POWERS DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The Forest and Bridgewater Town Boards created a Joint Powers Board in an effort to work together to have more control over development, sewer, and water along the I35 corridor. There is no sewer or water currently, which will hinder significant industrial development along 35. Each township put \$20,000 into the Joint Powers. They had some engineering regarding sewer and water drawn up. The goal is to have a water and sewer plan if an attractive development was interested in property in the development district. The initial engineering plan does not involve mixing residential and commercial water and sewer, but would be considered in the future.

- i. Planned Unit Developments** – If there were a planned unit development around 35W – and a sound wall were required, it would be up to the state to pay for the sound wall.
- ii. Accessory Dwelling Units:** The County is discussing accessory dwelling units.

13. ADJOURN

Bob Duban made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:13 p.m. Jan Gillen seconded the motion. All in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Ashley Anderson, Clerk, Forest Township.