

Town of Washington-Rusk County

Special Town Meeting/Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2023

Special meeting called to order by Marty Borer, Chairman, at 6:00PM. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present. 15 residents of township attended as well as town board and maintenance staff. Board Chairman explained purpose of meeting was to have a discussion with interested residents of township regarding road improvement plans for the township. There will be no vote, just a sense of how the community feels about this issue. He distributed handouts explaining the purpose, resources, cost estimates, and 4 options depending on which and how much repairs were considered for funding. The 4 roads being looked at for these projects are: Bailey, Sawdust, Ranch, and Pulaski. Town is also looking at purchasing and/or leasing a mower/tractor. Discussion of costs: Chippewa Valley Bank will work with town for interest rate of 3.95%, \$500,000 loan up to 5 years. Board shared they are recommending option #4.

Question and explanation as to why Bailey Rd was tore up in the first place.

Tom Curtis expressed his opinions. He feels concerned about the tax increase, feels no agendas were posted, people don't know what is going on, need to get information out to the people. Board responded they did due diligence with agenda and newspaper notices. Tom wanted to know how decisions were made about which roads to fix? Chuck Perry responded that it was the result of Annual Road Review and these were the top 4 roads which could no longer be taken care of with "Band-Aids". Town also did road traffic counts on certain roads, verified by past chairperson, Betsy Patterson. 5 year plan also done by engineers when applying for grants, and state pavement ratings taken under consideration.

Bill Wilde expressed he feels it needs to go to referendum. He feels this is trusting the residents. Countered by chairman that this was not needed as board will make formal decision, and they have been getting the opinions of residents.

Jaimie Wilk shared her opinions on finances of town, no debt. If work not completed soon it will cost more in the future.

Kurt Gorsegrner asked those present if they did not want town to obtain a loan, how did they propose to take care of the roads? He also explained how town had applied for state and federal help through grants with no luck so far, they will continue to work through LRIP funding for options 3 & 4. He explained how town did not spend proper amount of money over the last 20 years to keep roads maintained.

Ginny Fritz shared about the unhealthy road condition of people living on Bailey Rd, dirt all summer long. Mike Lehman agreed in support.

Jim Van Den Huevel expressed that nobody wants to spend money but if not done now it will need to be done all at once.

Penny Nelson expressed her opinions on Sawdust Road, doesn't feel it is that bad.

Chuck Perry brought up discussion of bids and costs of projects.

Chairman shared that board would make a decision by the end of the year. Nothing will be able to be done until spring.

Chuck Perry made a motion to adjourn the special meeting. Seconded by Kurt Gorsegner. All approved and motion passed at 6:50PM.

- 1.) Chuck Perry made a motion to open the Annual Budget meeting. Seconded by Kurt Gorsegner. All approved and motion passed. Monthly board meeting called to order at 6:50PM. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.
- 2.) The clerk distributed copy of budget for 2024. Discussion of line items. Kurt Gorsegner made motion to approve annual budget for 2024. Seconded by Chuck Perry. All approved and motion carried.
- 3.) Kurt Gorsegner made a motion to approve previous board minutes, seconded by Chuck Perry. All approved and motion carried.
- 4.) Clerk's report.
- 5.) Treasurer's report by Tori Hanson. Shared that the remaining Covid money is included in the town's saving account.
- 6.) Chairman's report. Equipment and road work. Truck is running good, ordered 2 more tires. In future go through Pomp's as it gives state rates.
- 7.) Discussion of Bailey Road dust control. Pickle juice is \$6200.00 for truckload but will not be available until mid August due to materials. Discussion of asphalt project. Clerk is directed to advertise for bids in newspaper 1.8 miles starting on E and going west. Culverts will also need to be addressed. Chuck made a motion to submit for bids and was seconded by Kurt. All approved and motion carried, Re-applying for grant and inquiring whether we can cancel order for picklejuice if it goes through.

Consideration of obtaining loan for roadwork. Comments from public from residents on Bailey Rd.

- 8.) Discussion of full time employee for maintenance position as town has been unable to get anyone for part time. Kurt reports probably need to factor in one person plus. All members are worried about this winter, possible contract with the county? Discussion of final \$ from revenue sharing. May be able to use this \$ for an employee.
- 9.) Mark Schmitt presented information on county board. Jail project and county hospital.
- 10.) Public Comment. Betsy Patterson brought up water wagon for Bailey Road as temporary fix. Jen Lehman prefers no pickle juice. Others commented on washboard road on Bailey, need to wait until it rains or would be waste. Comment from chairman that board is working on fixing Bailey, possibly looking for loan with increase in taxes.
- 11.) Review and pay invoices/bills. Motion made by Kurt and seconded by Chuck. All approved and motion passed.
- 12.) Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM. Motion made by Kurt and seconded by Chuck. All approved and motion carried.

Next meeting is August 1, 2023 at 6:30PM.

Sincerely,

Deb Klund, clerk