

TOWN OF SILVER CREEK
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
FEBRUARY 12, 2019

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Silver Creek was held on Tuesday February 12, 2019 in the Board Meeting Room for the purpose of discussing all issues before the Board.

Present: Supervisors Greg Hull, Mike Hoops and Dennis Moen; Clerk Alison Oftedahl; and Town Operations and Facilities Manager Jody Reineccius, and Chuck Voss.

Chairman Hull called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

1. Constituent Concerns: None.
2. Road and Safety – Town Operations and Facilities Manager Reineccius reported on road status, describing it as snow, snow, and more snow. Recent plowing had to be done with the sewer truck because the Dodge is currently being repaired by Sonju. The electronics were not working, and it needs a fuel pump and some related parts. Reineccius believes repairs will total around \$2000. Reineccius reported that Summit Mechanical Services provided a walk-through of the shop and office to explain the maintenance of the air exchange system they had installed and to provide a quote for a new furnace in the shop. The shop in-floor heat does not keep up well in periods of below zero because about one third of the wiring embedded in the concrete floor is no longer functioning. It cannot be repaired without tearing up the entire shop floor which would be cost prohibitive. The in-floor heat only runs at night during off peak hours which also contributes to problems during extended periods of extreme cold. Summit suggested adding a Sterling propane furnace that costs approximately \$4000. Reineccius will seek some additional estimates from other vendors for comparison.
3. Road and Bridge Finances – The Board considered a current balance of approximately \$20,000 in the Road and Bridge fund. This is much lower than the six-month balance that is desired. All agreed that the Auditor's recommended transfer from the Debt Service Fund to Road and Bridge to pay back loan payments that were incorrectly keyed out of Road and Bridge was a good idea. This amounts to about \$31,000. Then the Board considered a proposal to transfer \$50,000 from the Building fund to Road and Bridge. After back and forth, everyone agreed to think about this before the Regular meeting. Points made included: FEMA funds may be arriving in the next couple months to add about \$20,000. A suggestion was made to leave it alone and let the fund run "in the red" as a visual reminder to focus on reducing spending. On the other hand, it was suggested that a transfer might appear more responsible and perhaps less alarming when viewing the overall report. This topic will be revisited next week.
4. FEMA – The Clerk reported that FEMA didn't want to pay for the Town Road bridge repairs based upon their contention that it was not a mitigation. The Clerk spoke to Chris Nordeng with the State of Minnesota who is intervening with FEMA on our behalf and suggested some different wording. An itemized invoice is needed from Nordic Group that splits out the excavation portion from the sheet metal that represents the mitigation itself. The Clerk reached Steve Foster, our Project Manager at Nordic who said he could get the invoice that Silver Creek needs for FEMA. The \$20,000 of damage reimbursement has been approved by FEMA for their 75% which is about \$15,000 and the State of Minnesota should pay 20 of the remaining 25%.
5. Budget and Levy – The Board discussed at length the small portion of levy that goes to the PFA loan repayment. Per the auditor we are required to levy that \$5,714 for all the years through 2020 until the loan is repaid in full. For that reason, it will be added to the proposed Budget/Levy. If, as has been suggested, the proceeds from the Gooseberry Village Tax Forfeit Land Sale enable the PFA loan to be paid in full this year (early), the levy could be adjusted in August. No other necessary changes were identified to the figures that came out of last week's Budget and Levy Working Meeting.
6. Board of Audit – It was noted that last week's Budget and Levy Working Meeting meets the Board of Audit requirement which calls for "careful review of the town's account for the past year and development of the following year's budget." A motion to accept the books from last year will be needed in the Regular Meeting next week.

7. Sewer Operations – Sewer Operator Hoops discussed the Annual Wastewater Report. The full report text will be included in next week’s regular meeting minutes. Repairs at Gooseberry Cabins were discussed in an attempt to determine what portion should be paid by the owners. It is not yet known if the pumps that were pulled from their system are actually damaged or if they were just frozen and will be able to be added to the inventory of good working pumps and used in the future. The Clerk was asked to pull payroll numbers for the overtime worked on the date of the service call.
8. CDSSD Land Use Transition – Hoops agreed to take minutes for the April 27th CDSSD Land Use Transition Hearing in the absence of the Clerk who has a conflict with that Saturday date. Because Hoops will no longer be a Board member in April, this was seen by all as a good solution.
9. Gooseberry Village Tax Forfeit Land – We received notice from Huck Andresen that it was his legal opinion that a Quit Claim deed from Ed Joesting, the previous owner of the Gooseberry Village acres, is needed. Hull spoke to buyer Hammes, and it turned out that each side was waiting on the other side to get the Quit Claim deed. Hull reported that Hammes and Oliver will pressure their attorneys to speed things up with regard to the title search and that Hammes will reach out to Joesting. A closing by mail is planned and attorneys are hoping to have it done by the end of the month.
10. Correspondence – The items below were discussed:
 - Lake County notifications of vacation rental applications were reviewed.
 - Minnesota Benefit Association Life Insurance Level for Board Members – The Clerk was asked to verify the current level of insurance as they offer Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels with differing prices.
11. Backup for the Clerk – The Board discussed the Clerk’s difficulty with being out for vacation or other absence. Many tasks including claims, payroll, sewer billing, minutes, and postings are on deadlines and cannot be done at other times of the month. Our current Deputy Clerk is not able to commit to coming in on a regular basis to reduce some of the hours and provide some flexibility. A Town Administrative Assistant was suggested, however in discussion, the Deputy position seemed favorable because it has a clear chain of command and a clear role as backup. If an Administrative position were created, it may cause confusion on the Clerk’s role, who reports to whom, etc.
12. Potential Ban of Firearms – While the Supervisors do not like the idea of firearms at elections, there was less desire to ban them from our premises every day. Hull suggested perhaps a sign “we respectfully request you leave firearms in the car when voting.”
13. Newsletter – The Board compared two qualities of paper and looked at the final copy of the newsletter for approval. The Clerk requested that each member read the entire document and provide feedback within twenty-four hours. The Board decided upon the lower cost paper. The Board also agreed to try an ivory instead of white paper if price is comparable to make the document stand out from other items in the mailbox. The mailing list was reviewed and it was agreed to have it sent only to voters i.e. permanent residents of the Township and not cabin or vacant landowners. This is necessary to control costs. Some extra copies can be left at the library and the full newsletter will be available on the TOSC website. The Clerk estimated the cost at \$550 to \$600 for 500 copies.
14. Cemetery – Reineccius spoke to Vince Sando of Veteran’s Affairs and he will supply free flags for our cemetery. Reineccius confirmed that he and Sando are both confident that the current flagpole in the cemetery will be fine for the two new flags. Reineccius brought results of his research and suggested a set of 3 commercial solar flagpole lights from PolePal Extreme, retailing for \$375 for the set.
15. Road Signs and Cemetery Kiosk Sign – Moen plans to check in with Silver Creek Signworks to see how our signs are coming along.
16. Seasonal Mowing Bids – The Clerk sent to North Shore Tree and Stump Removal a request for proof of liability Insurance, W-9 and IC-134 Minnesota’s Contractors Withholding Affidavit.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. upon motion by Hoops, second Moen. The next regular meeting of the Town Board will be held on Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Oftedahl, Clerk