

TOWN OF SILVER CREEK
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
MARCH 05, 2019

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Silver Creek was held on Tuesday March 5, 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; Town Operations and Facilities Assistant Paul Thompson, and Chuck Voss.

Absent: Town Operations and Facilities Manager Jody Reineccius

Chairman Hull called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

1. Constituent Concerns – None.
2. Road and Safety – Town Operations and Facilities Assistant Thompson reported on snow plowing which is ongoing. Benching has been done in the past couple days and another snow storm is expected this weekend. Snow was shoveled from the top of the salt/sand shed. It appears that there are no tears on the fabric, but it is sagging just a bit and needs to be tightened. He reported that Action Fire came and inspected all fire extinguishers. With regard to a new furnace for the shop, Thompson reported that they are waiting for a quote from Cavallin Plumbing and Heating to compare to the one received from Summit.
3. Road and Bridge Finances – The Board reviewed a Cash Control report showing the current Road and Bridge fund balance at approximately \$46,000.
4. FEMA – The Clerk reported spending four hours this week on documentation of the Town Road Bridge repair. Because FEMA pays to restore structures or roads to their pre-disaster state, it does not necessarily pay for improvements, even when those are designed to prevent future damage. We are still hoping that a portion of the Bridge might be covered. All other damage repairs costs have been approved.
5. General Sewer Operations – The group wrestled to determine what portion of the Gooseberry Cabins sewer repair costs should be charged to Jaegers, the owners. Hoops noted that a freeze up had never occurred at that location in the past. The site had brand new pumps and their insulated box was in place and verified earlier in the winter by Reineccius and Thompson. Jaegers had gone out of town for two weeks, so nothing was flowing through the system and at the same time, sub-zero weather set in. The system was frozen when Jaegers returned. Hoops responded to the service call request first and found that the insulated box was shifted off. The two pumps had to be replaced and it is not known whether they are permanently damaged or if they can be reused. More extensive testing by Bob Miller is required. Hull encouraged Hoops and Thompson to move forward with fully testing the pumps so that a total cost can be determined. The Board then briefly heard a summary of a sewer repair call to Ringolds. Their pump also froze, but the alarm resulted in a quick service call and it was easily resolved with hot water and replacement of missing insulation rings.
6. Stewart River and WIFIA – An email was received from Lake County Commissioner Sve suggesting an EPA financing program called WIFIA that provides long-term low-cost loans for up to 49% of the cost of projects related to wastewater treatment, drinking water or recycling projects. The discussion surrounded the fact that the Stewart River project faces two hurdles: one being the actual cost is unknown and keeps going up and the other being how to obtain the other 51% of the funding. Hull stated that it could easily cost \$25,000 to have engineers recalculate building costs for the system. Hoops volunteered to check with Wenck and other contacts to see if WIFIA is worthy of pursuit.
7. Land Use Applications – Both the Clerk and Supervisor Hoops had received calls from the Jaegers regarding expansion of their Gooseberry Cabins resort. As they asked a number of questions and have not yet submitted application or drawings, an appointment was made to go onsite to better understand their proposal. They do not have a conditional use permit, and likely should apply for one at the same time as they apply for a building permit. Lively discussion was held regarding previous variances granted to the prior owners of this resort. Per Lake County's ordinance a five-acre minimum is required for a resort but they have only four, however, the prior variance states that the lot is a "lot of record prior to June 1, 1973 and is therefore "Grandfathered"."

8. CDSSD Land Use Transition – Hull reported an amiable meeting with Environmental Services Director Christine McCarthy and County Administrator Matt Huddleston regarding the transition of land use administration to Lake County. Huddleston and McCarthy plan to attend our hearing and will bring a map with the new proposed zones and the names of the owners. Then afterwards, Silver Creek’s Board can make a motion to vacate the ordinance effective on the desired date set by Lake County. The decision to vacate the ordinance would like be made at the May Regular Meeting.
9. Annual Meeting Prep – The Board viewed the proposed Budget and Levy and the Financial Report prepared for the Annual Meeting. Everyone liked the new format of the Budget and Levy that separates the wastewater treatment finances from general township finances. All agreed to change one budget number that was inadvertently overstated. Hull explained that the Budget/Levy document included two options. He planned to explain to voters that one option provides for funding of renovation and restoration of the historic Town Hall and Chapel. The idea breaks the full amount up across five years, adding \$25,000 to the Building fund each year. The other levy option does not include this amount. Attendees of the Annual meeting will have paper ballots and will choose an option at the meeting.
10. Old Town Hall Rental Rates – Because the propane tank at the old Town Hall was empty after only two events, the Clerk had introduced the topic of potentially charging a higher rental rate for events in winter. The heat is normally turned up on Thursday before a weekend event to allow a couple days for the building to warm up and is not turned off until Monday. After discussion on rentals in general and comparison to the prices of Two Harbors hall rental, Hull suggested we consider \$125 per event in winter (double the summer cost). He also suggested a discounted rate for groups that wanted to rent for a series of days. Nothing was decided on the issue at this time, but there was general support for these ideas.
11. Backup for the Clerk – No status change.
12. Election Judge Swap – Jon Norine, one of the approved Election judges, has had to cancel at the last minute. Joan Rheineck, who judged for our fall midterm election has agreed to replace him. The Clerk asked for any objections and received none.
13. Gooseberry Village Tax Forfeit Land – Ed Joesting, former owner, has signed the Quit Claim Deed, completing the title work and paving the way for closing on the sale of the Gooseberry Village tax forfeit acres. The closing will be conducted by mail and should be concluded soon.
14. Old Town Hall Maintenance – Thompson informed the Board of a failure of the electric heater in one of the restrooms of the old Town Hall. He purchased an inexpensive space heater with a low “no freeze” setting on the thermostat as a temporary solution because they wanted to check in with the Board. At next week’s Annual meeting voters will be asked on their disposition towards fixing up the historic buildings and if approved, heating will be part of the plan that is developed.
15. Cemetery – The Township is verifying whether our current practice of selling a “Right of Interment” is legal or whether plots sold must be deeded property and who owns the cemetery monuments. Attorney Scott Witty is in the process of researching this for the town. In other cemetery issues, Thompson was asked whether the solar lights for the flagpole were ordered yet and he didn’t think so. The Clerk asked if the planned flag pole and repairs to the gate could be done in time for photos for the next newsletter and before Memorial Day. The group also discussed the need to purchase the aisle markers that were agreed upon in the Cemetery meeting held in January.
16. Road Signs – No status change.
17. Seasonal Mowing Bids – The Town is waiting for the selected vendor to provide proof of liability insurance, a W-9 and the Minnesota’s Contractors Withholding Affidavit.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m. upon motion by Hoops, second Moen. The next regular meeting of the Town Board will be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Oftedahl, Clerk