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March
2020



Quarterly Newsletter of the Town of Silver Creek

SILVER CREEK SOURCE

Meet the Candidates

Candidates facing off against each other for a seat on the Board of Supervisors were asked to submit a statement. **These are their own words** and do not reflect the opinions of the Town of Silver Creek current Board or employees.

Larry Guentzel for Supervisor

My name is Larry Guentzel. I have lived in Silver Creek Township since 2007 and served the township previously as Supervisor (2 years), and an employee (ending in 2017). I would like to resume the position of Supervisor. Having spoken with other residents, there are several issues of concern, and I would be a good representative to address these issues. One of my concerns is the proposed sponsorship of Silver Bay Airport and how long-term financing would impact residents. Prior to moving to Two Harbors, I was previously Supervisor in Nicollet County, and Supervisor of Oshawa Township for 6 years, as well as a small business owner. Currently, I am semi-retired, working as a school bus driver, allowing me more time to devote to serving in this position.

Township Election

Vote for Supervisor and Clerk

Come to 1924 Town Road, on March 10 between noon and 8:00 p.m. to cast your vote in the Township Election and stay for the Annual Meeting.

Annual Meeting

Hope to see you March 10 at 8:15 p.m.

Provide your input on the proposed Levy, learn election results, and hear from your elected Board of Supervisors.

Welcome to the *SILVER CREEK SOURCE* If you have ideas or would like to contribute a story, please reach out to Alison Oftedahl, Clerk at silvercreek@frontiernet.net or 834-5255.

Chris Jaeger for Supervisor

Hello, my name is Christopher Jaeger. I'm running for the position of Silver Creek Township Supervisor. My wife Julia and I, and our four kids moved to the north shore two years ago. We purchased Gooseberry Cabins from Tim and Karen Erickson. It truly is a dream come true for our family and we love it here. Before our move, we lived in southern Minnesota near Mapleton where we crop and livestock farmed with my family. Living rural most of my life, I have a real appreciation for township government and all the services it provides year round. Our cabins are also in the sewer district within the township and I believe I could represent this unique region of our township well, with current and accurate information. Another opportunity and challenge for the township is the Silver Bay Airport. As a business owner, the opportunity for improved business both existing and future is exciting. However the fellow taxpayer in me does not want the burdens both from financial and day-to-day operations to be more than our township can bear. We are blessed with a township that has solid leadership, great facilities and wonderful employees. Thanks for your consideration and vote.

Alison Oftedahl for Clerk My focus is keeping the public informed and minding the budget.

Thank You Election Judges

We appreciate your service!

Thank you to Sue Hilliard, Laura Kleive, Jennifer Havlick, Val Johnson, Brenda Melquist, John Bathke and Joan Rheineck for agreeing to help with four elections this year. Serving from 6:30 a.m. until 9 p.m., judges put in long days to ensure a fair election. An equal number of judges from both major political parties prevents bias. Paper ballots ensure that a recount is always possible.

Silver Creek Town Hall Events

International Cub Run

The Beargrease Cub Run is designed to give novice mushers up to age 14 an opportunity to learn about the sport while competing in a scaled down event, complete with vet checks, official times and an awards ceremony. The historic Silver Creek Town Hall was again the start and end of this race. An extremely snowy weekend did not deter the 26 teams who came from as far away as Canada! Winner of the longer distance race, Sawyer Morrow of Duluth, is pictured right. Eve Redington of Ashland, Wisconsin won the shorter distance race. Silver Creek residents Liz Busa, Terry Hukriede, and Ryan Sipper made the event possible.



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A young competitor heading for the homestretch
Thank you to Root River Photography.



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Silver Creek Cemetery

Covering the Cost of Perpetual Care

Due to factors including increased mobility, smaller family size, and use of cremation, fewer families are purchasing blocks of four or eight cemetery plots. In the past, the family blocks required a \$500 "Perpetual Maintenance Fee". There was no corresponding fee on the purchase of individual plots. There has not been any income from the Perpetual Maintenance fee in the past three years. To keep up with mowing and groundskeeping costs, Supervisors decided to get rid of the Perpetual Maintenance Fee and instead raise the rate on the sale of individual plots. A portion of each plot sale will be placed into the Perpetual Maintenance fund. Interment rates were also reviewed and found to be collecting less than what is spent to open and close graves. A mini excavator must be rented for casket burials. To cover actual costs incurred, the rates have been raised for the first time in more than ten years, but are still lower than many other cemeteries.

New 2020 Rates:

A lot for the interment of one casket or two cremains - \$250.

Grave opening and closing for traditional casket burial

- \$750 for Monday through Thursday

- \$800 on Fridays, weekends or holidays

Grave opening and closing for cremated remains

- \$350 on Monday through Thursday

- \$500 on Fridays, weekends or holidays

The historic Town Hall makes a nice setting for funerals or memorial services. Contact the Clerk for assistance if you would like to use it.

Silver Creek Future

Supervisors Consider Airport Sponsorship

Before committing to sponsorship of Silver Bay Airport, Supervisors are taking a deeper dive on the finances. Long term, the Airport would pay for itself based upon hangar rentals, fuel sales and maintenance reimbursements from MNDOT Aviation. However, the first three to five years are of concern and are the focus of a plan being developed by Chairman Hull. The Board would like to see hangar replacement added to the initial runway deal. FAA, MNDOT and IRRRB have agreed to finance the runway, and if hangar refurbishment could be part of the deal, it would increase revenue. Eighteen pilots have written letters of interest in renting hangars if the Airport is re-opened. Two individuals have expressed interest in basing a business at the airport, one is a flight-seeing business and the other is an airplane maintenance and repair shop. Discussions are ongoing with Silver Bay, FAA, MNDOT and IRRRB. **No decisions have been made.** Public Hearings will not be scheduled until an acceptable financial plan has been designed. Read more on Silver Creek's website www.ttosc.org at the **News** page.



Silver Creek Sled Dogs

Top Finisher Wallin supported by Reineccius

Town Operations Manager Jody Reineccius spent his vacation serving on the support crew for Silver Creek's own top finishing competitor Colleen Wallin at this year's John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon.

Congratulations Colleen and team!

Reineccius explained that the support crew travels ahead to each checkpoint where they feed and bed down the dogs, including tucking them into blankets. The sled and gear are checked over and everything is handled so that the musher can grab food and a nap. This routine is repeated at each checkpoint, making for several sleepless nights. Reineccius has also helped with training and will be entrusted to compete as musher for the first time in Ely's 50-mile Wolf Track Classic race.

Congratulations to Ero Wallin, son of Colleen and Ward who came in 2nd in the Junior division of the Beargrease.

Draft Budget & Levy

Levy held to prior year's level

BUDGET	2021	2020
General	\$77,434	\$77,150
Road & Bridge	\$314,000	\$279,000
Road Enhancement	\$20,000	\$20,000
Building	\$31,750	\$32,500
Fire	\$50,000	\$50,000
Cemetery	\$10,500	\$5,000
General Debt Service	\$56,000	\$56,000
TOTAL BUDGET	\$559,684	\$519,650

LEVY	2021	2020
General	\$42,500	\$45,000
Road & Bridge	\$206,500	\$205,000
Road Enhancement	\$20,000	\$20,000
Building	\$25,000	\$25,000
Fire	\$55,000	\$55,000
Cemetery	\$2,500	\$1,500
General Debt Service	\$58,500	\$58,500
TOTAL LEVY	\$410,000	\$410,000

Other Income including Taconite and Gas Tax	\$116,150	\$109,200
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TOTAL INCOME	\$526,150	\$519,200
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CASTLE DANGER WASTEWATER BUDGET

Sewer Enterprise	\$98,100	\$98,100
Sewer Replacement	\$50,000	\$50,000
TOTAL BUDGET	\$148,100	\$148,100

TOTAL INCOME from USER FEES	\$148,100	\$148,100
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Stewart River Sewer News

New Partners bring Hope for Project

Supervisor Chuck Voss has been working to gain traction on the long-stalled Stewart River Wastewater project. This project has been in conception for more than ten years, but legislators have not been willing to pass funding for it. The Town was approached by Bollig, Inc Engineering firm who heard about the project and thought they could help. Their firm is different than most Engineering firms because they provide lobbying and advocacy work to secure project funding. There is no cost to the Township unless and until the funding for the project is secured. Bollig Engineer Nathan Feist is a local – his wife Dr. Libby Feist is working at Lakeview Clinic.

Castle Danger Sewer News

Debt Free and Looking Forward

Last year the Castle Danger Sewer System hooked up two new customers and paid off a twenty-year loan. The utility runs as an "enterprise" which means that its funding is kept separately and is paid for by users of the sewer. A developer has expressed interest in an RV park that may result in a new commercial account connected to the system in the next few years. Come to the Rate Hearing April 14 at 6:30 for more information. As of press time, no increase in the rates paid by customers is planned for this year.



Silver Creek Recreation

Sunday Ride and Potluck

Fat bikes are mountain style bikes with wide “fat” tires made for stability on snow and ice. On Sunday February 9th, SpokenGear Bike Shop brought their sponsored Sunday ride to Town Road to ride trails groomed by Kevin Oftedahl. Neighbor Bob Skogen and others generously allowed the event on their private trails. Dan Cruikshank brought the bike shop’s rental fleet for free use and six riders tried the sport for the first time. About twenty-five total riders attended the event. Friends and neighbors provided potluck food for afterwards.

New Winter Trails

Update on Silver Creek’s Recreational Trail Plan

As reported in our last issue, new winter trails are being developed on Township land that borders the Fairgrounds. Leon Pitzen of the Two Harbors Recreational Trail Club is shepherding the plan through the Lake County Conditional Use permit process. The trails will be able to be used for cross country skiing, fat biking and “urban snowshoeing” opportunities. The trails will connect to existing trails in the area and parking will be at the Fairgrounds. This information is based on the current plan and could change slightly – trails should be ready for next winter.