

Franconia Township, Minnesota
Town Board of Supervisors Meeting – May 14, 2024
Franconia Town Hall, 25156 St. Croix Trail N, Shafer, MN 55074

Town Board Members Present

Owen Kuhnly – Chair
Sonny Sparby – Vice Chair
Doug Wallis – Supervisor
Cristina Mlejnek – Engineer
Lee Cartier – Maintenance
Karen Anderson – Treasurer
Chuck Fitzer – Clerk

Residents Present

Brandon Bigelbach
Ryann Bigelbach
Pat Collins
Carolyn Brue (Collins)
Roger Thomas
Francis Freiderich
Brandon Thyen (Sheriff)
Loralei Walker
Bridget Korman
David Whitney
Kenneth W. Novack
Beth Novack
Erika Huffman
Eric Elanun
Jason Dahms
Kathleen Dellwo
Mark Dellwo
Jennifer Burniskis
Rob Melaski
William Bielefeld
Rochelle Ganley
Jesse Ganley
Sarah Eagan
Don Eagan
Chris DuBose (Planning Commission)
Sharon Hattenberger
Steven Hattenberger
Allen Gieske
Sarah Buezis
Carol Houfer
Mike Houfer

Call to Order

Chairman Owen Kuhnly called the monthly Franconia Township board meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approve Agenda

The agenda was reviewed. Doug Wallis made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes from the April 9, 2024, Franconia Township Board of Supervisors monthly meeting were reviewed. Doug Wallis made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

New Business

CUP (Conditional Use Permit) – Korman-Walker Wedding Venue 15323 260th Street – 27 township residents showed up to comment on the CUP for the proposed wedding venue. Changes had been made to the proposed CUP since it was originally presented at the prior town board meeting. Owen Kuhnly explained that the township does not approve or disapprove the CUP. The township would make a recommendation for approval or disapproval to the Chisago County Planning Commission. The Chisago County Planning Commission would discuss it at a meeting and make a recommendation for approval or disapproval to the Chisago County Board. The Chisago County Board would discuss it at a county board meeting and approve or disapprove the CUP.

Residents who spoke were generally against approval of the CUP. The following residents spoke: Beth Novak, Jennifer Burniskis, Brandon Bigelbach, Erika Huffman, William Bielefeld, Rochelle Ganley, Ken Novack, Sarah Eagan, Carolyn Houfer, Francis Freiderich, Pat Collins, Carolyn Collins, Jason Downs, and Kathleen Dellwo. Each speaker brought up one or more of the following issues: increased noise, effect on adjacent cattle farm, increased traffic, future maintenance of 260th Street, danger to students getting on or off buses, police calls, liquor will be allowed at events, increase in crime related to events, and security not required.

Doing a traffic study was proposed. Owen Kuhnly responded that a traffic study could turn out to be quite expensive. Chris DuBose noted that the planning commission tabled this issue at their last meeting due to concerns about the potential CUP. The issue will be discussed at the upcoming Chisago County Planning Commission meeting on June 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Sheriff Brandon Thyen stated that there are many wedding venues in Chisago County and it is the sheriff's department's job to respond to issues at events. Sheriff Thyen said the sheriff's department can provide security, at the venue's expense. The venue can also hire private security.

Owen Kuhnly said he would not recommend approval of the CUP because of road safety issues. Sonny Sparby said he would not feel comfortable approving it. Doug Wallis said he had nothing against small business, but he was against it, too. All three supervisors signed the recommendation of denial.

Franconia Sculpture Park Liquor Licenses – Sarah Buezis from Franconia Sculpture Park submitted applications for four one-day liquor licenses for 2024 – August 11, August 31, September 21 and October 19. Doug Wallis made a motion to approve the licenses, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

Windstream Fiber – Franconia Trail Right of Way – Lee Cartier would recommend they do directional boring all the way down the hill. Chuck Fitzer reported they Windstream will not have the actual plan for this project until later this summer. Owen Kuhnly directed Chuck Fitzer to reply to Windstream to let them know that directional boring is the only option. The township board would also like to meet with the contractors before anything gets done.

Road Tour Report – Owen Kuhnly gave the report of the road tour. For Quinlan, north of Panola, we will check the depth of gravel and decide how to proceed with improving the road. Pheasant run – looking at double chipping that. It has been prepped, so there wouldn't be much to do other than the double chip. Looked at some culverts that may need replacing. 291st – looking to do a turnaround at the end of that because right now Lee has to plow in and then back out. We are also thinking of laying down some sodium chloride and will get together with residents to discuss, but we do have a limited budget for sodium chloride.

Engineering Report - Cristina Mlejnek

Hazelden Land for Sale – Cristina Mlejnek directed Ben Drew of Cushman and Wakefield, who is working to sell the property, to talk to the county about planning and zoning.

Cost Estimate: 259th and Oakman – Cristina Mlejnek estimated the cost of double chip seal would be \$140,000; full pavement is estimated to be \$380,000. The cost would be split with Chisago Lake Township.

Cost Estimate: Quarry Road Mill and Overlay – Cristina Mlejnek said the total project cost would be about \$130,000, including \$20,000 for a recommended underseal so the new pavement would adhere better to the milled surface.

Close Out 2023 Gravel Maintenance Project – Sonny Sparby made a motion to close out the 2023 gravel maintenance project, seconded by Doug Wallis. Motion carried.

291st Street Title Search – Right of way information provided. Owen Kuhnly asked Cristina Mlejnek to get an estimate for this project.

285th Project Update – The contracts have been signed. Lee Cartier said we would like to have this wrapped up by mid-August.

Quiet Valley Road Project Update – Aztec would like to start this double chip seal project on May 29.

Maintenance Report – Lee Cartier

Maintenance Report – Lee reported that they were cutting trees and brush, cleaning out ditches, sweeping intersections. will do some weed whipping around guardrails, and will do some agreed upon chloriding.

Sheriff Thyen reported that the state will not enforce any kind of township ordinance related to jake breaking. Sheriff Thyen and the supervisors discussed enforcement issues, and Sheriff Thyen said he had applied for a grant that would allow the county to hire a deputy who would

focus on traffic enforcement. Sheriff Thyen recommend we discuss updating the related ordinances with our attorney.

Recycling Day – June 1 – the township has ordered a 20-yard dumpster for Recycling Day. Mark Nelson of AAA Recycling has a list of items that will be accepted. Owen Kuhnly will get the list from Mark and send it to Chuck Fitzer, who will have it posted on the township website.

Owen Kuhnly made a motion to increase the hourly pay of part-time maintenance worker Jim Vitalis from \$22.00 per hour to \$23.00 per hour as of May 14, 2024, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

Clerk Updates – Chuck Fitzer

Permits – Chuck Fitzer sent the monthly building permit report to the town board members after he received it.

Treasurer Updates – Karen Anderson

Reports and Claims - Karen Anderson reported that the checking account is balanced. Karen Anderson presented for approval to the board claims #2231 through #2256 for a total of \$25,269.60 and payroll checks #14062 through #14063, #14065 through #14066 and #14085 for a total of \$6,326.40. Karen Anderson went through the Treasurer's Report. Doug Wallis made a motion to approve all claims and payroll checks as presented and to approve this month's Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

ARPA CD – Karen Anderson said that the ARPA CD will automatically renew for six months on Friday, May 17.

SFFR Account - The township received a check for \$32,000.00 Shafer Franconia Volunteer Benefit Association. Doug Wallis made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-05-14 to accept the donation, seconded by Owen Kuhnly. Motion carried.

Doug Wallis made a motion to put the SFFR equipment fund in its own separate account and remove it from CTAS, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried. This means the SFFR equipment fund will no longer be shown on the front sheet of the Treasurer's Report.

Change for Recycling Day – Owen Kuhnly made a motion to take \$100 in cash out of the township checking account to use as change for Recycling Day, seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

Old Business

Township Ordinances Update – discussed in Maintenance Report section.

Culvert Letter Update – Owen Kuhnly said there isn't much we can do until the due date of June 15. Sonny Sparby made a motion to allow Owen Kuhnly to discuss the culvert letter issue and the township ordinances issue with Couri and Ruppe, seconded by Doug Wallis. Motion carried.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

CCATO – May 29, 2024 – 7:00 pm – Shafer Township

Franconia Township Recycling Day – June 1, 2024 – 8:00am – 12:00pm – Franconia Town Hall
Joint Powers Meeting – June 10, 2024 – 7:00pm – Shafer/Franconia Fire Hall
Franconia Township Board Meeting – June 11, 2024 – 7:00pm

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the April regular Board Meeting was made by Doug Wallis and seconded by Sonny Sparby. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chuck Fitzer, Clerk



Owen Kuhnly, Chairman