

March 12, 2024

West Lakeland Town Hall

Call to Order: Clerk Carrie Seifert called the Annual Township Meeting to order at 8:34 PM on March 12, 2024 at the West Lakeland Town Hall.

Election of the Moderator: Mr. Matt Schmitt, 1607 Nolan Ave, nominated Mr. Steve Ebner as moderator for the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Ed Marchon, 13633 Greenwood Trail, the motion carried.

Reading of the Board of Audit (as Posted): Clerk Carrie Seifert reported the results of the Board of Audit conducted on February 5, 2024 reflecting a random sampling of receipts and disbursements. The randomly selected transactions were found to be accurate and true. Mr. Tom Vierling, 2825 Neal Ave N, moved to accept the Board of Audit. Seconded by Ms. Marian Appelt, 2655 Neal Ave N, the motion carried.

Mark Votava, Planning Commission Chairman

Mr. Mark Votava presented a review of the planning commission role and activities. Mr. Votava introduced the members of the planning commission and detailed some of the projects undertaken by the commission over the past year.

Marsha Olson, Treasurer

Treasurer Olson reported the receipts of the Township as \$1,695,540 for 2023. Expenditures for 2023 totaled \$1,476,023. Ending balances were \$1,098,352 for General Fund, \$421,565 for Road and Bridge, \$442,661 for Covid Funds, and \$853,088 for Capital Projects, with the total assets at \$2,815,667.

David Schultz, Town Board Chairman

Chairman Schultz commented on the remodeling of the town hall, noting that the building needs work to become fully ADA compliant and there is a shortage of secure storage space. The heating and air conditioning also need to be addressed as they are ageing.

Chairman Schultz also noted that the township government is one of the few municipalities where residents can actually vote on the tax levy and major expenditures. In 2019, the board noted that the need to add funds for major road projects would become more necessary and began increasing the levy for the Capital Improvement Fund. Chairman Schultz discussed future improvements including the transfer of 22nd Street to Washington County and improvements along Manning Trail that will have some amount of cost share with Washington County.

The township engineer and Chairman Schultz did a road inventory, to classify the township into 5 categories from good to failed, and estimated costs to repair the approximately 8 miles of failed roads. Options to fund the repairs are to continue levy, issue bonds or assess the landowners.

Philip Moosbrugger, Supervisor

Supervisor Moosbrugger presented the bonding proposal to fund up to \$8,000,000 with a 15-year repayment term. The board would like to put the proposal before the town residents for a vote. The proposal is to issue bonds in 2025 to repair the 8 miles of failed roads. Although the township has had low taxes, there has been little invested over time in the repair of these roads

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which are now reaching end of life. The timeline proposed is the technical work in 2024 and start construction in 2025. The financing of the engineering work would come from the Capital Improvement Account. The annual debt service is estimated at \$667,000. The initial year of debt service would need to be added to the 2025 levy.

Supervisor Moosbrugger noted that the two items put up for vote are to issue the bonds and the levy. There is no legal requirement to put the bonds up for a town vote but the supervisors wanted to have town residents participate in the decision. The levy proposal is for \$487,391 for the general fund, \$630,750 for the road and bridge fund, \$750,000 for the capital improvement fund, \$677,000 for bond debt services level for a total of \$2,545,141 million.

A question was asked if the bond service is on for next year, when does the bond repayment start? An initial principal payment and interest payment will be in 2025 out of the funds levied in 2025.

John Buelow, Supervisor

Supervisor Buelow noted that the funds are needed to repair the failed roads and get ahead of the more expensive repairs. There are alternatives, such as returning the roads to gravel, but that is most likely not what the residents want.

NEW BUSINESS

Vote on Support of Issuance of General Obligation Certificates of Indebtedness (Bond) and not to exceed \$8,000,000:

Supervisor Moosbrugger moved to authorize the town to issue General Obligation Certificates of Indebtedness (Bond) not to exceed \$8,000,00 for road repair, with a repayment period of 15 years. A second was offered by Ms. Vivian Votava, 1150 Nordic Ave N.

Mr. Steve Cook, 1680 Morgan Ave, expressed his opinion that all the township roads are failed. He asked when the remainder of the roads would be addressed. Supervisor Moosbrugger noted those roads that are failed are the worse, and some are safety issues. Moving forward, the capital improvement fund will be used to address ongoing maintenance. He suggests that the township engineer conduct a pavement management study and plan to address a 5 year and 10-year assessment of maintenance moving forward to maximize road life.

Ms. Lisa Ranum, 13565 4th St N, suggested that the town board size be increased from 3 to 5 and the balloting for board supervisor to November and a method for added communication from the Township, including a longer-term maintenance plan.

Mr. Steve Cook raised concern about trucks on the roads and if reimbursement could be increased for those vehicles. Chairman Schultz noted that traffic on public roads cannot be restricted other than by the weight restrictions on the road. Supervisor Moosbrugger noted the Township has no taxing authority over trucks. Supervisor Buelow noted that weight restrictions may be violated and suggested the township acquire mobile scales to monitor that traffic.

Ms. Lisa Ranum asked if the trucks could be kept off the roads being repaired. Supervisor Buelow noted that his trucks avoid scales, so a mobile scale could divert the traffic. Chairman Schultz noted that some roads are currently under road restriction, but state law defines road with default road restrictions. Additional signage could help enforce road weight limits.

Ms. Renee Rivers asked if the levy would be increased in future years. Supervisor Moosbrugger is not able to comment on future expenses. She also asked if the engineering and

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technical work should be done before the bond authorization was issued. Supervisor Moosbrugger noted that the cost estimate is a good estimate, and it does take time to get the bond issued. All funds from the bonding effort would be dedicated to road repair.

Ms. Kristie Williams, 1871 Margo Ave N, asked about the impact of delivery trucks on the roads and if the road weight standards should be re-evaluated. Chairman Schultz noted the current ordinance of township roads are 5 tons per axle, and corridor roads are designated as 9 tons per axle. Supervisor Buelow noted that maintenance will extend the life of the road. The comment will be taken into consideration as plans are developed.

Mr. Phil Sanders, 1590 Olene Ave N, asked for clarification on the number of township roads. Supervisor Moosbrugger noted there are 45 miles of roads, 8 of which are currently classified as failed roads with an additional 8 miles of poor roads.

Ms. Shirley Glas, 1455 Oakgreen Ave N, noted the state of Oakgreen Ave pending repair. She does not want to see the township roads have to deal with the issues experienced on Oakgreen. It is time to do the repair.

Mr. Bob LaBrosse 13150 22nd St, asked about the permitting of the gravel pits to pay for the road maintenance. Chairman Schultz noted that the gravel pits are permitted by Washington County. The township does get a permit fee and gravel tax.

Ms. Rachel Dana, 2235 Oakgreen Ave No, asked about the timeline for construction. Supervisor Moosbrugger noted it would be a two-year construction season.

Moderator Steve Ebner repeated the motion and called for a vote. A hand vote count noted 154 ayes and 52 nays and the motion passed.

Proposed 2025 Tax Levy:

The board presented a proposed levy for 2025 of \$2,545,141, with \$487,391 for the general fund, \$630,750 for the road and bridge fund, \$750,000 for the capital improvement fund, and \$677,000 for the bond debt service fund. A motion was offered to approve the levy as presented in the amount of \$2,545,141 by Mr. Jason Gorman, 13223 22nd St N. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dan O'Neill, 2323 Northridge Ave N. Moderator Steve Ebner opened for discussion.

Mr. Steve Campbell, 13670 Greenwood Trail, asked about legal reimbursement in the general fund. Treasurer Olson stated those are dollars received as a result of the township winning a lawsuit.

Having no more discussion, Moderator Ebner asked for a vote by show of hands. The motion was carried with 158 aye votes and 26 nay votes.

Washington County Commissioner Gary Kriesel

Commissioner Kriesel welcomed Mr. Andrew Giessen, project manager for Oakgreen Avenue reconstruction. The reconstruction is to be completed this summer. The Manning Avenue Improvement Project is set for a construction timeline of 2025. Washington County is preparing a long-range transportation plan to support decision making moving forward. Commission Kriesel is in his final year of serving as a commissioner and noted his appreciation of the West Lakeland officials.

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Bayport Fire Department Chief Allen Eisinger

1,219 calls were made in the last year, the busiest of all volunteer fire departments in Minnesota. Medical calls are 90% of the activity. West Lakeland had 220 calls in the past year. Chief Eisinger noted that burning is not recommended due to the dry conditions. The department is budgeting for a full-time fire chief in 2025.

Old Business: None

Election Results: Clerk Carrie Seifert presented the preliminary vote totals. Total 997 votes cast, Rachel Dana received 816 and Vince Anderson received 160.

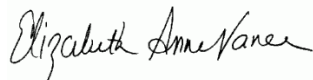
2025 Annual Meeting: Mr. Ed Marchan, 13633 Greenwood Trail moved to hold the 2025 annual meeting at the West Lakeland Town Hall at 8:30 PM on March 11, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Chuck Newman, 13434 Greenwood Trail, the motion carried.

General Discussion:

Mr. Brad Cornell, 2733 Neal Ave, suggested that the annual meeting be held at Oakland Middle School should there be concern about the size of the turnout.

Adjourn: Mr. Ed Marchan, 13633 Greenwood Trail, moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Steve Ruiz, 1810 Nolan Ave, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Elizabeth A. Vance
Recording Secretary



Steve Ebner
Moderator



Carrie Seifert
Clerk