

## WEST LAKELAND TOWNSHIP

March 14, 2017

8:00 p.m.

Oak-Land Jr. High

Jennifer Samec, Deputy Clerk; Ms. Marsha Olson, Treasurer; Mr. Dave Dupay, Planning Commission Chair; Duane Stensland, Building Inspector; Mr. Scott McDonald, Attorney

### **Call to Order**

The township annual meeting was called to order by Clerk Carrie Seifert at 8:10 PM.

### **Selection of the Moderator**

Clerk Seifert requested nominations for the moderator of the town meeting from the floor. Mr. Gary Horning nominated Mr. John McPherson. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Matt Schmitt. With no other nominations, Mr. Tom Vierling moved to appoint Mr. John McPherson as moderator for the town meeting. Seconded by Mr. Al Eisinger, and carried by a voice vote.

### **Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the 2016 Town Meeting were presented. Mr. Al Eisinger moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Ms. Lori Belz, the motion carried.

### **Reading of the Board of Audit**

The board of audit was posted by the clerk. Ms. Seifert presented the results of the board of audit. The results found the random selection of the disbursements and receipts to be accurate and true. Mr. Loren Kalal moved to accept the results of the board of audit. Seconded Mr. Tom Beebe, the motion carried.

### **Comments of Senator Karin Housley, District 39**

Senator Housley, serving her second term in the State Senate, looking forward to a productive year. Will be serving as Long Term and Aging Committee chairman. That will be her focus over this next year. The main goal of the committee is to keep elder adults in their home as long as possible. She is also focusing on issues of abuse of elderly, and making the Department of Health more effective in managing this issue. Senator Housley also serving on the Veteran's Committee and two commerce committees.

With regard to the budget surplus, this is not as large as published because the bonding bills not passed last year and health care assistance recently passed are to consume the bulk of those funds. Real ID requirements have passed through the House of Representatives, but failed in the Senate. The reason it failed in the Senate, was because the licensing of undocumented inclusion of immigrants in that bill.

Noted that Representative Kathy Lohmer cannot attend because of work with the Health and Human Services committee, but appreciates the invitation.

### **Comments of Washington County Commissioner Gary Kriesel**

This is the twelfth consecutive year attending the West Lakeland Town meeting. Commissioner Kriesel noted the work pending on Manning Avenue. This is part of the backbone of the County Highway system. Phase 1 is complete, and that has been a major improvement. Phase 2 is the realignment of Manning Avenue and old Highway 5, scheduled for construction in 2018. Left turn lanes at 30<sup>th</sup> and Manning Avenue will be part of that project. Phase 3 is to widen Manning Avenue to a 4 lane divided highway between 10<sup>th</sup> street and the airport. This phase is not yet programmed, with the County looking to 2030 timeframe for construction.

## WEST LAKELAND TOWNSHIP

March 14, 2017

8:00 p.m.

Oak-Land Jr. High

Oakgreen Avenue was given a short term overlay to address the condition of the road. This roadway needs to be reconstructed with a long term solution which addresses the poor soils under the roadway. Reconstruction is programmed for 2018. Repaving of 10<sup>th</sup> Street from Manning Avenue to Stagecoach trail is planned for 2018. Washington County is open to discussion of assuming control of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, but would require a change in the Comprehensive Plan. This will be addressed as part of a jurisdictional study in 2018 after the St Croix River Crossing opens. The bridge will change traffic patterns.

### **Comments of Sheriff Bill Hutton**

Brought along Chief Deputy Dan Starry. Sheriff Hutton noted he will be retiring April 30<sup>th</sup>, and Washington County appointed Dan Starry as the Sheriff effective May 1<sup>st</sup>. Thanked the township for the opportunity to attend the town meeting.

Washington County does have issues, as a metropolitan county. First is the opioid issues. Washington County averages sixteen death a year from opioid overdose. It would be higher if it included those that are transported to a medical facility outside the county. The county has a significant program regarding opioids. Last year, the sheriff's office collected and destroyed 10,000 pounds of unused medications. Also have participation on a DEA task force, with the responsibility to investigate those who order opioids over the internet or investigate doctors that may overprescribe. The County also has a NarCan program, an antidote to opioids. That is being used regularly.

Another program is addressing human trafficking. The number of persons brought into human trafficking as runaways is staggering. The County Attorney Peter Orput has done a phenomenal job in this area. Washington County is leading the state in combating human trafficking.

The numbers in the jail are creeping up. With the economic recovery, the jail population is growing. Working with partners in community health, community services and community corrections to get people on the right track.

The reality is that in Washington County, we are pretty lucky. We have low crime rates and great partnerships with other services and local municipalities.

The question was raised on the number of deputies, and how many patrol in West Lakeland. Washington County has a staff of 112 licensed peace officers. Average between 12 and 18 persons patrolling in the county. Seeing growth in the 15 contract cities that do not have their own police department. For example, in Lake Elmo, have 24 hour presence in that contract city. Townships are treated differently for coverage than cities. The department has added an additional patrol car to address growth in the townships.

### **Comments of Chief Allen Eisinger**

The Fire Chief of Bayport for the past two years, and a resident of West Lakeland Township. In 2016, the Bayport fire department responded to 1,280 calls in 2016, a 3.7% growth. In West Lakeland, there were 175 calls, for a 44% increase of which 78% of the calls were medical. 13 calls were fire related. There was not a confirmed structure fire.

The move to the new fire station is complete. This new fire station is closer to West Lakeland, so more homes are within the 5 mile radius which will impact insurance rates. Looking at working with mutual aid companies and Washington County staff on auto aid, to reduce time to a structural fire. This will also improve insurance rates. The station has 5 doors, and easily holds all the equipment safely and better space for offices and training. This is staffed by 24 members of the all volunteer force. This is the busiest all volunteer force in the state of Minnesota.

## WEST LAKELAND TOWNSHIP

March 14, 2017

8:00 p.m.

Oak-Land Jr. High

### **Comments from Chairman Dan Kylo**

Chairman Kylo thanked Senator Housley, Representative Lohmer, Commissioner Kriesel, Sheriff Hutton and Chief Eisinger for their service and support of the Township. Chairman Kylo also thanked the township staff and planning commission volunteers for their hard work over the past year.

Chairman Kylo presented a chart of township revenues and expenses over the past years. Expenses have remained relatively consistent throughout that period. Likewise, revenue and disbursements have remained very close. A deliberate decision was made in 2011 to increase the levy to begin to accrue money for foreseen major road projects, such as the repair or reconstruction of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and 30<sup>th</sup> Street. The Minnesota Association of Townships recommends that a municipality maintain reserves equivalent of to 2.5 times of expenses. West Lakeland has about two times in the cash reserves.

Chairman Kylo noted the largest growing expense categories are snow removal, plowing, fire and emergency, and road repair and maintenance. The Township's roads are aging, averaging 20-25 years old, and need increasing repair.

Chairman Kylo presented a comparison of property taxes with neighboring municipalities. West Lakeland has the lowest property tax rate of Washington County.

### **Comments from Supervisor Dave Schultz**

Supervisor Schultz thanked the residents for attending the meeting and staying involved in township affairs. He also thanked the local officials for attending and recognized the township staff and planning commission for their effort.

As the supervisor responsible for transportation, Supervisor Schultz summarized the major projects pending in the County. Ongoing projects include the planned work for the Manning Avenue Corridor. Added this year is to begin planning for work along Stagecoach Trail. Within the township, the county is considering turning lanes on 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and 30<sup>th</sup> Street as they connect to Stagecoach Trail.

Supervisor Schultz noted he serves on the Gateway Corridor commission. This project has taken a direction to move into Woodbury and move south.

Supervisor Schultz also represents the township on the Metropolitan Airport Commission's community engagement panel concerning the upgrade of the Lake Elmo Airport. This is a new effort of community involvement on the part of MAC. Supervisor Schultz noted that the R & B Report was posted.

### **Comments from Supervisor Steve Ebner**

Supervisor Ebner thanked the public officials for their support of the township over the past year. Supervisor Ebner noted his major project over the past year has been the updating of the West Lakeland Township Ordinance Code. Over the past three years since the last full codification, there have been a number of amendments. The current update brings those amendments into the body of the text. At the same time, grammatical errors have been corrected. Recommendations by the township's legal council for language clarifying criminal penalties were included. The final area of changes resulted from the assumption of land planning responsibilities from Washington County effective in 2017. The intent is to present the updated code for public hearing in May.

Supervisor Ebner also noted that the updated list of noxious weeds has been posted on the township website. The township has issues with the Canada Thistle. Because of the climate conditions, the Canada Thistle has been flourishing. The second weed of concern is the Wild Parsnip. This is a concern because the sap can cause significant blisters. This is spread primarily through mowing, as seeds are caught and spread in the ditches. Those areas will be treated in the spring.

## WEST LAKELAND TOWNSHIP

March 14, 2017

8:00 p.m.

Oak-Land Jr. High

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Marsha Olson presented the treasurer's report. In 2016, the town had receipts of \$901,589 and expenses of \$700,792. This left an ending balance of \$1,695,917.

### **Planning Commission**

Mr. Dave Dupay, chairman of the planning commission, presented a report of the planning commission activity. The primary activity currently facing the planning commission is the update of the Comprehensive Plan for 2030. This work will be done by the planning commission, as there is no significant change anticipated for this plan.

### **Old Business**

Mr. McPherson asked for any old business to present before the town. No new business was noted.

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### **Election Results**

Ms. Seifert reported that 111 ballots were cast today. 109 votes were for Mr. Steve Ebner. 2 write-in votes.

### **Tax Levy**

Chairman Kylo presented the proposed levy of 3.5% increase, for a total of \$581,310. This includes \$193,310 for the general fund and \$388,000 for road and bridge. Chairman Kylo moved to approve the levy. Seconded by Mr. Brad Cornell, the motion carried.

### **Designation of the Banks**

Ms. Olson presented the list of banking institutions currently approved for use by West Lakeland. This list includes Midwest One Bank, First State Bank of Bayport, Bremer Bank, Lake Elmo Bank, and Lake Area Bank. Also approved, but not currently holding township funds are Citizens Community Federal, City and County Credit Union, and Ideal Credit Union. When asked why the credit unions were included, Chairman Kylo responded that these were added a few years ago to ensure that the best interest rates could be leveraged. Mr. Chuck Newman moved to continue with the same slate of banks. Seconded by Mr. Dave Dupay, the motion carried.

### **Time and Place for the Next Annual Meeting**

Mr. Loren Kalal moved to hold the next town meeting at Oak-land Junior School in the Auditorium on Tuesday March 13, 2018 at 8 PM. Seconded by Ms. Denise Cornell, the motion carried.

### **General Discussion and Residents' Concerns**

The question was raised if the township would hold clean up days this year. Chairman Kylo responded that the township had contracted with a recycling expert to review practice of clean up days. In 2016, it was noted that the township paid \$12,000 for 4 hours of clean up, where 200 units (trips) brought in tons of garbage. A review of the materials being brought into clean up days, about 60% of what was brought in could be hauled away at the curb. There is also a segment of these materials from contracted work or remodeling work, where disposal should have been part of the project. There are

## WEST LAKELAND TOWNSHIP

March 14, 2017

8:00 p.m.

Oak-Land Jr. High

also safety concerns as residents line along the roadway to enter the pit. Options to clean up days are being considered, but have not been formalized. It was also noted that there are greater number of recycling options, and recycling locations can be found on the Washington County website.

A request was raised to get more information on the specifics of Phase 3 of the Manning Avenue corridor project. There was information on the County website, which has since been removed. Commission Kriesel will look into what is on the website, and will ask that County engineering staff come to a town meeting to provide specifics of the plan. It was noted that it is not yet programmed, and looking to approximately 2023 for construction, so significant engineering has not yet been done.

It was noted that an article in the Stillwater Gazette indicated that an Environmental Impact Statement was not needed for this project. The question was raised on the difference between an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). The EAW is a lower level of assessment. Commission Kriesel offered to have County engineering staff to attend a town board meeting to address the issue.

The question of the impact of the development in Lake Elmo at the Tartan Park golf course was raised, because of the anticipated access to this development from Manning Trail. It was asked if the speed limit could be reduced on this road. The project is at the preliminary plat stage, where the specifics of the road design are not complete. At this time, there has not been a request for West Lakeland to allow an access point on this road. Supervisor Schultz noted that the speed limits are set by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and not within township jurisdiction.

Adjourn

Having no further business, Mr. Loren Kalal moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Allen Eisinger, the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 PM

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth Vance  
Recording Secretary



John McPherson  
Moderator



Carrie Seifert  
Town Clerk