



Special Meeting: Roads and Right-of-Way Projects

June 18, 2024; 7:00 pm

Town Hall - 959 Paris Avenue Circle N

In attendance: Chairman Phil Moosbrugger, Supervisor Rachel Dana, Supervisor John Buelow, Clerk Carrie Siefert, Deputy Clerk Jennifer Samec, Treasurer Marsha Olson, M & S Tree Removal Contractor Matt Schmidt

Call to Order/Meeting Purpose

Chairman Moosbrugger called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to look more closely at the road budget, specifically road maintenance and tree trimming/ditch mowing.

Current Road Budget

Treasurer Olson gave an update on the 2024 road budget to date. The budget was referenced several times throughout the meeting.

Road Maintenance

Former Road Supervisor Dave Schultz was one of several residents in attendance. He was asked by Chairman Moosbrugger to give a summary of how/when the township road budget is historically created.

Mr. Schultz reminded the board members the budget is always written for the following year. A budget meeting is held in January or February but preparation begins months in advance as there are many different variables affecting a road budget from year to year.

Chairman Moosbrugger also asked Mr. Schultz to comment on how road work is prioritized and order of operations.

Mr. Schultz would survey the roads at least 1-2 times per year with the former township engineer to assess road conditions and create or modify a road maintenance plan. Mr. Schultz reported timelines are often weather dependent, but spring road work always begins with street sweeping.

Mr. Schultz reported pothole patching usually begins in May. The township has used RCM Specialties for 14 years. RCM would drive the roads and then give a quote. A contract was signed in the spring. RCM uses a method called spray injection patching.

Mr. Schultz used the technique of crack sealing the year prior to a planned seal coat. In 2023, there was no seal coating completed due to the unexpected plowing costs of back-to-back snowstorms.

Mr. Schultz reported there was no seal coating planned for 2024. However, Gopher State was contracted to do some crack sealing this year in anticipation of seal coating next year.

The seal coat contract was shared with Lake Elmo, who would obtain the bids, and usually signed in Jan/Feb. West Lakeland Township would provide some engineering services.

Road striping was done in collaboration with Washington County. The annual deadline for submitting work requests has been March or April. Mr. Schultz made the requests for 2024 prior to the end of his term on the town board.

Chairman Moosbrugger asked Supervisor Buelow if he has a current road maintenance plan. Supervisor Buelow had nothing concrete to share. Given the time of the year, the chairman voiced an urgency to get this process started.

Supervisor Buelow has been in contact with Fahrner Asphalt, who gave the board a presentation of services and treatment technologies at the May board meeting. After Fahrner finishes driving our roads, Supervisor Buelow expects an assessment.

Supervisor Dana suggested we could repair test areas with new technology from Fahrner. Chairman Moosbrugger suggested we ask the advice of the township engineer first.

Supervisor Buelow stated he has prices on crack sealing, but he didn't bring the information to the meeting.

MS4 obligations will be contracted with the engineering firm, WSB. The Treasurer reported some expenditures have yet to be billed this year.

Right of Way Projects

Board members took a road tour with Matt Schmidt from M & S Tree Removal last night to observe our township mowing and tree service needs. Mr. Schmidt was asked to give a verbal update on the situation.

Ditch mowing

Mr. Schmidt explained mowing may occur up to 5 times per year--twice for sightline and snowplow needs plus 1-3 times for weed control.

The primary invasive species in West Lakeland Township is Wild Parsnip. Other offenders to watch for include Canadian Thistle and Spotted Knapp Weed.

In addition to mowing, Mr. Schmidt recommended selective spot spraying, at the same hourly rate, would also be helpful for weed control.

Mr. Schmidt emphasized the importance of teamwork with Supervisor Buelow who is the board member tasked with invasive species control. Public education and direct communication with affected residents are two important matters. He asked Mr. Buelow to expect to collaborate with him a few hours per week on tree and/or mowing issues.

Dan McSwain at Washington County is our contact for invasive species related questions.

Tree Trimming/Removal

Emerald ash bore continues to be problematic in our community. On last night's road tour, over 40 neighborhood ash trees were identified for removal in the Right-of-Way. Several others must also be removed in the ROW on more rural roads.

Mr. Schmidt brought a priority list of projects and estimated costs. Due to the excessive rain lately, there is much mowing and tree trimming work to be done this year.

M & S Tree Removal has composed an informational letter for ash tree removal. The town board and clerk have seen it and had a chance to comment. Mr. Schmidt would like to add prescriptive ROW language to the letter and perhaps get advice from the town attorney.

Action Items:

The board gave guidance to M & S Tree Removal to do immediate mowing and trimming needs first (sightline and safety issues) then full cut back work followed by the ash trees. All rates are under contract.

Chairman Moosbrugger requested Supervisor Buelow create a current pothole and crack sealing inventory. In addition, Chairman Moosbrugger directed Supervisor Buelow get

pothole patching and crack sealing estimates by the July 8th board meeting. It was suggested he contact RCM and a few other contractors.

Deputy Clerk Samec will resurrect a previous newsletter article about identification and treatment of local noxious weeds. She will consult with Mr. Schmidt before publishing.

Mr. Schmidt will make some informational posters on the topic of local invasive species for our Township Night Out event on August 6th.

The township attorney may be consulted about the best language for a resident letter on the topic of Emerald Ash Borer and ROW ash tree removal.

Closing

Supervisor Dana made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 pm. Supervisor Buelow seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Samec". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "S".

Jennifer Samec, Town Deputy Clerk