

**Princeton Township  
Mille Lacs County, Minnesota**

**Township Board Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 18, 2022**

**Minutes**

The January 18 monthly meeting of the Princeton Township Board was called to order by Chairman Gene Stoeckel at 7:30 p.m. Supervisors attended the meeting in person at Township Hall. The meeting was open to in-person attendance, plus remote participation via GoToMeeting.

**Supervisors present:** Thomas Duden, Dan Hiller, Gene Stoeckel, Bill Whitcomb

**Supervisor absent:** John Wilhelm

**Staff present:** Clerk-Treasurer Doug Dahl, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Andrea Gerrard, Ken Henchen

**Via GoToMeeting:** Township Attorney Jason Hill, Township Engineer Todd McLouth, Township Zoning Administrator Scott Richards.

**Public attendees:** Joel Minks, Nancy Moan, Jeremy Wood

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approve Meeting Agenda**

Mr. Stoeckel added a review of the Township's AWAIR compliance to the agenda, to be taken up during Ken Henchen's employee review.

**Approve December Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve the December 21 meeting minutes. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried.

**Open Forum**

No activity in Open Forum.

**Clerk-Treasurer Report**

**Cash control statement:**

General Fund beginning balance for December:	\$ 71,758.46*
Receipts	\$ 82,409.98
Disbursements	<u>\$ 40,032.82</u>
Ending balance	\$114,135.62

\*The beginning balance for December is \$.03 higher than the ending balance for November due to a clerical error. The clerk discovered a \$.03 discrepancy in the Loucks claim and corresponding disbursement when reconciling CTAS with the bank statement. He notified the claimant, then contacted CTAS support to seek a solution. CTAS support advised him to adjust the disbursement record in CTAS to the actual amount of the payment. The payee has not requested an adjustment.

Road & Bridge Fund beginning balance for December:	\$218,541.72
Receipts:	\$ 80,208.02
Disbursements	<u>\$ 3,749.42</u>
Ending balance	\$295,000.32

Mr. Hiller moved to approve the December cash control statement. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

Mr. Dahl reviewed December receipts and disbursements. Major receipts included the second-half levy tax settlement of \$149,892.00, plus delinquent taxes and payments in lieu of taxes of \$1,374.19 received from Mille Lacs County; also payment from Minnesota Management and Budget of \$3,430.87 for gas tax and local government aid.

Disbursements totaled \$43,782.24, including \$27,545 to the city of Princeton for fire coverage (2<sup>nd</sup> half).

**Payroll:**

December payroll:

Gross: \$4,760.00

Net: \$3,899.65

Mr. Duden moved to approve the December payroll. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried.

**Claims for Approval:**

Total claims through January 18, 2022: \$13,563.74, including \$1,122.96 to the Mille Lacs Association of Townships to cover this year's dues to the Minnesota Association of Townships.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve the claims list. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried.

**Distribute reports for Board of Audit**

Mr. Dahl gave each supervisor copies of the 2021 reports of receipts and disbursements in preparation for the Board of Audit. Each supervisor will review the reports to select three receipts and three disbursements for the audit. The clerk will assemble the supporting documents to present at the Board of Audit.

Mr. Dahl noted that the date chosen for the Board of Audit at the December meeting is unavailable because it is precinct caucus night in Minnesota. Mr. Stoeckel moved to set the Board of Audit for Thursday, February 3, 7:30 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

Mr. Whitcomb moved to hold the Road Plan special meeting in conjunction with the Board of Audit, Thursday, February 3, 7:30 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried.

**New Business**

**Resolution adopting the 2022 Township Pay Schedule**

Mr. Whitcomb moved to approve Resolution 2022-1 establishing the 2022 Township Pay Schedule as voted by the Board at the December 2021 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Mr. Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Yes, Mr. Hiller—Yes, Mr. Stoeckel—Yes, Mr. Whitcomb—Yes. Motion carried 4-0. Resolution 2022-1 is adopted.

Stoeckel called the roll: Mr. Duden—Yes, Mr. Hiller—Yes, Mr. Stoeckel—Yes, Mr. Whitcomb—Yes. Motion carried 4-0. Resolution 2022-1 is adopted.

### **Employee Reviews**

The board conducted reviews for maintenance workers and the clerk-treasurer. No employees requested closed-meeting reviews.

- Road-maintenance workers Dale Henchen, Ken Henchen, and Tony Trunk were present for the review. Steve Pflughhaar was unable to attend. All were commended for their punctuality and professionalism.
- Ken Henchen was also commended for his maintenance work for the town hall. His interview included a review of efforts to bring the Township into AWAIR compliance. Mr. Stoeckel queried Mr. Henchen on each point in the AWAIR compliance checklist from 2021. Most of the items had been accomplished. New recommendations include boots and hard hats for road workers, plus additional ladders, jack stands, and safety tape for the town hall shop. Each road worker will have a locker at the shop for safety clothing to wear while on the job.
- Clerk-Treasurer Doug Dahl received a positive review. Mr. Hiller moved to increase Mr. Dahl's wage to \$25/hour in accordance with the 2022 Township Pay Schedule. Seconded by Mr. Duden. Motion carried.

### **Election**

The Princeton Township annual election is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2022. Seat #2, currently held by Mr. Whitcomb, is up for election.

- Mr. Whitcomb moved to publish the Election/Annual Meeting Notice in the Union-Times February 10 & 17. Seconded by Mr. Duden. Motion carried.
- Two seats on the Planning Commission are open for appointment after the Township election: seats currently held by Cynthia MacDonald and Cheryl Schimming. Candidates for appointment must submit letters of interest to the Town Board for consideration. Mr. Hiller moved to publish the notice soliciting letters of interest from candidates in the Union-Times on January 27 and February 10 with letters to be submitted between February 17 and March 17. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

**Annual Newsletter:** Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Andrea Gerrard presented a draft of the annual newsletter to the supervisors. The draft featured a revised format allowing space for the address label and postage stamp that will eliminate the need for an envelope.

**Clean-Up Day and Road Tour:** Mr. Duden moved to set the Saturday, April 16, as the date for Township Clean-Up Day and Road Tour. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

### **Silver Lake Oaks Plowing Agreement**

Silver Lake Oaks developer Jesse Jondahl had requested an agreement enabling the Township to plow snow from the roads in Silver Lake Oaks for a fee to be paid by the developer. The Township drafted an agreement and sent it to Mr. Jondahl. As of this meeting, Mr. Jondahl had not responded to the proposal. Through further discussion, the supervisors concluded that the

best course would be to require Mr. Jondahl to make his own arrangements for snowplowing in the development.

Mr. Hiller moved to discontinue the proposed agreement and require the developer to provide for snowplowing in Silver Lake Oaks at the developer's expense. Seconded by Mr. Whitcomb. Motion carried.

### **Supervisor Reports**

**Mr. Stoeckel** reported on a meeting he attended conducted by MAT to provide updates on requirements for using ARPA funds in the Township. Specifically, the provisions for covering loss of revenue due to COVID restrictions have been loosened, enabling townships to retain ARPA funds as compensation for lost tax revenue. Mr. Stoeckel will prepare a resolution for the February meeting to approve using \$100,000 from the first ARPA grant for the Road & Bridge Fund.

**Mr. Whitcomb** presented the road report including:

- Road work accomplished in 2021.
- Road work planned for 2022.

[A printed copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.]

The major issue confronting the Township in the next two-five years involves the deteriorating condition of 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, particularly the southern two miles. Responsibility for 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue is shared with Wyanett Township (Isanti County). Mr. Whitcomb has approached the Wyanett Township Board seeking to negotiate a new road-maintenance agreement. Mr. Whitcomb and Mr. Stoeckel have attended two Wyanett Town Board meetings. So far, Wyanett Township has declined to re-negotiate, preferring to retain the original agreement that was established in 1926. Wyanett's belief is that there is an agreement that provides for Wyanett Township to maintain the north two miles (gravel) and Princeton Township maintains the south three miles (paved). Mr. Stoeckel has received a copy of the 1926/1930 agreement from Wyanett Township. He will forward it to Township Attorney Jason Hill.

Mr. Hill stated that the Minnesota statute governing roads shared between adjacent jurisdictions requires that maintenance costs be shared equally between the jurisdictions. The statute gives Princeton Township options for requiring Wyanett Township to share maintenance costs for the entire length of the road equally. He mentioned mediation/arbitration and petitioning the County as possible actions. He advised that if the Township decides to proceed with the repairs on its own it must keep Wyanett Township informed because half of the road remains under Wyanett's jurisdiction.

Mr. Whitcomb offered three options for major projects:

- Option A: Portions of 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Engineer's estimate: \$176,000).
- Option B: Portions of 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, plus reclaim and pave middle section of the north end (Engineer's estimate: \$286,000).
- Option C: If no work approved for 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, reclaim, widen, and pave 40<sup>th</sup> Street east of County Road 102 (Engineer's estimate: \$207,000).

Supervisors agreed that the worsening condition of 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue presents the most urgent need due to safety concerns. In the absence of a new road-maintenance agreement with Wyanett

Township, Princeton Township must proceed with repair work on 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, while continuing to pursue an agreement with Wyanett.

Mr. Hiller moved to adopt Option A, plus crack-filling on the north section, as shown on the Option A map (attached). Seconded by Mr. Duden. Mr. Whitcomb moved to amend the motion to include applying chloride to the reclaimed and gravel portion. Seconded by Mr. Duden. Motion carried. Mr. Stoeckel called the question on the amended motion. Motion carried as amended.

Mr. Whitcomb continued to stress the importance of obtaining a new updated road-maintenance agreement with Wyanett Township. Todd McLouth also stated that there has never been a portion of 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue that was vacated by Wyanett township that he was aware of.

### Adjourn

Mr. Duden moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Hiller. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Dahl  
Clerk/Treasurer

# Princeton Township



## January Road Report for 2021 and Road Plan for 2022

Presented by - Bill Whitcomb, Supervisor

January 18, 2022

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**Townships are responsible for roads and this is a primary function**

§ 15-1. Town Road Authority  
Town boards are "road authorities" for township roads. Minn. Stat. § 160.02, subd. 25. ,

*This is one of the major tasks of town boards.*

§ 15-14. Towns are expected to maintain and improve their roads.

*Taken from 2019 Manual on Town Government  
Minnesota Association of Townships*

### Goals:

- Develop and approve a comprehensive road plan for all roads in the township and implement the plan.
- Determine priorities based on data and facts
- Address needs and assure due diligence and fiscal responsibility for the township residents

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**Princeton Township  
Comprehensive  
Road maintenance Plan**

**Primary Focus Areas:**

- **Gravel Road Maintenance**
- **Paved Road Maintenance**
- **Snow Removal**
- **Mowing & Brush Removal**
- **Safety and Signage**
- **Comprehensive Budget Plan**

**This presentation will focus on -**

- **What we have accomplished**
- **What we need to do moving forward**
- **Completed road work in 2021**
- **Proposed road work for 2022**

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**Princeton Township - Comprehensive Road Maintenance Plan**  
**The Goal Is to Prolong the Life of all Roads**

**Working to assure accurate information for all township roads:**

**Developed and Implemented:**

- **Data and fact based matrix to assist with decisions**
- **Ongoing graveling, grading and shaping plan**
- **Crack filling & chip sealing plan**
- **Facilitated moving to cost effective contracted snow removal, grading and mowing**
- **Supervisor role responsibilities with supporting documentation**
- **Specific detailed budgeting information to support township needs to meet required responsibilities and contain costs**

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## 2020-2021 Road Related Accomplishments

- Approved a comprehensive road plan for all township roads
- Improved township road map accuracy (old one missing approx. 3 miles of roads)
- 2020 & 2021 each year, more than 3,000 C.Y. of gravel was purchased and spread per plan
- Initiated dust control for high use gravel roads (~4 miles) facilitating cost effectiveness
- 2020 & 2021 completed 6.67 miles of crack filling & 5.42 miles of chip sealing for paved Township roads
- 2020 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave. & 33<sup>rd</sup> St. was paved. 2021 Brickton Rd. was overlaid (last overlay was 1998, 23 years ago.)
- Completed township mowing over 10 miles of brushing, spot brushing and tree trimming
- Improving planning, cost management, compiling and tracking of all work completed
- Developed, approved and implemented a Road Sign Policy with supporting documentation
- Adjusted Road and Bridge budget allocation to be greater than 65% to more closely align with the State Auditors guidelines (historically it had been vastly under budgeted)

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## Road Maintenance Recommendations - Enacted

- Enhanced communication to residents to help everyone understand the responsibilities and action plan to address.
- Posted information and shared information so residents are informed
- Established clear shared responsibility agreements with bordering city and townships governments (in the works)
- Developed a priority scale for both gravel and paved roads
- Prioritized and acted based on facts and data; follow best practices and updated methods
- Reduced/eliminated both over-maintenance and under-maintenance for each type of road surface
- Eliminated neglect for paved roads which adds to costs
- Assured a long-range budget is developed to address the townships responsibilities to maintain all roads in a regular program for maintenance as required by statutes

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**Question for the board.**

Should ANY work be done on 50<sup>th</sup> Ave. without an updated road agreement?

**§ Minnesota Statute. 164.12**

**Subd. 2. Division of responsibilities.**

The town boards shall divide the length of the road proposed to be established, altered, vacated, or maintained into two parts.

When it is proposed to establish or alter a road, the division shall be made so as to divide as nearly equal as possible the cost of right-of-way, construction, and maintenance of the entire road. If the proposal is to vacate a road, the division shall be made so as to divide as nearly equal as possible any damages that may be occasioned thereby.

*Excerpt from Manual On Town Government 2020 - Page 99.*

**§ 15-6. Town Line Roads**

Roads can be located on the line between two towns or on the line between a town and a city. To address the issues surrounding the establishment, maintenance, improvement, and vacation of line roads, the Legislature created Minn. Stat. §§ 164.12 to 164.14. Because line roads are located in different jurisdictions, their creation, alteration, or extinguishment must be done by joint action of both boards. Keep in mind, a town road may become a line road as a result of a city annexing up to the road. Minn. Stat. § 414.038.

When there is a line road, the boards should enter into an agreement to set out an equitable division of the costs and responsibilities for the maintenance of the road. Equitable does not mean equal; it means fair. Line road agreements should divide the road into two parts, with each town being responsible for the maintenance of one part. By not mixing the maintenance responsibility, potential liability claims are reduced because the responsible authority for each section of the road is distinct and identifiable. Refer to Document Number TR11000 for a sample line road resolution.

These agreements should describe the regular maintenance that each town must perform, which items of maintenance require prior approval from both boards, and the timing expected for maintenance. For instance, one town should not remove trees on a property in the adjacent town except as allowed by the agreement.

The agreement should set the cost-sharing expectations for each part. This is one of the more common areas of dispute between towns on line roads. If a bridge or culvert is needed or already exists on a line road, Minn. Stat.

§ 164.13 directs that the costs of installing and maintaining the bridge or culvert must be paid in equal shares by the two towns. If one board expects the other to pay some of the cost of a project, it should be agreed to before the project starts. Another area of dispute is the level of maintenance performed by each town. If an agreement cannot be reached, or if either town believes an agreement has become inequitable, a board can petition the county board to review the situation. The county then decides the division of responsibility between the towns.

Roads on the line between towns and cities must be handled in the same joint fashion as roads between towns.

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**Option A - 50<sup>th</sup> Ave.**  
 (North end ADT 258, South end ADT 122)  
 Estimated Total for both the North and South End = \$176,000

Back to the initial question...Should ANY work be done on 50<sup>th</sup> Ave. without an updated road agreement?

The south end will also need to have borings done to prepare for the following years road work and re-paving.

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**Option B - 50<sup>th</sup> Ave.**  
 (North end ADT 258, South end ADT 122)  
 Estimated Total for both the North and South End = \$286,000

Again...Should ANY work be done on 50<sup>th</sup> Ave. without an updated road agreement?

The south end will also need to have borings done to prepare for the following years road work and re-paving.

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**Option C**  
Est. \$207,000

**Option C - 40<sup>th</sup> St. (ADT 142.6)**  
Estimated total = \$207,000

I recommend Option C until/unless we get an updated road agreement with Wyanett Township, then Option A & B are on the table and the board can decide.

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<b>Road and Bridge fund monies available in 2022</b>		
Levy plus Additional revenues:		
Levy for 2022	~ \$265,000	
ARPA (TBD)	~ \$121,000	
Cash reserve from 2021*	~ <u>\$295,000</u>	
Total	~ \$681,000	
Planned Cash reserve to carry over to 2023	~ - <u>\$250,000</u>	
<b>Funds to work with in 2022</b>	<b>~ \$431,000</b>	
(* includes monies from the sale of under utilized equipment \$99,000)		
We have and additional ~ \$115,00 coming in 2022 from ARPA (TBD).		
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<b>Proposed 2022 Road and bridge funding splits:</b>		
Paved roads **	~ \$318,000	
Gravel roads	~ \$82,000	
Misc. (Both paved and gravel)	~ \$12,000	
Snow and Ice (Both paved and gravel)	~ <u>\$19,000</u>	
Total	~ \$431,000	
(**All proposed work is contingent on the outcome of the bid proposals.)		

**Option A - Portions of 50<sup>th</sup> Ave.**  
Engineer's Est. ~ \$ 180,500

**Option B - Portions of 50<sup>th</sup> Ave.**  
Engineer's Est. plus reclaim & pave middle section of the north end  
~ \$286,000

**Option C**  
Reclaim & pave and widen 40<sup>th</sup> St.  
(east of C.R. 102) ~ \$ 207,000

If either of the lower cost options is chosen, we should do more chip sealing (1 mile = approx. \$23,000, based off of last years work that was completed)

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Thank you for your attention.