

Princeton Township Board Meeting Minutes

March 24, 2026

Opening and Agenda

Meeting called to order at 7 pm; Pledge of Allegiance; and agenda were reviewed adding a Gopher Bounty to the new business discussion. Motion by Supervisor Duden, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0.

Reorganization and Official Town Board Designations

Chair: Motion by Supervisor Duden to designate Supervisor Stoeckel for 2026, Second by Supervisor Knutson, Carried 5-0.

Vice Chair: Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to designate Supervisor Duden for 2026, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0.

Secretary: Motion by Supervisor Duden to designate Supervisor Knutson for 2026, Second by Supervisor Whitcomb, Carried 5-0.

Road Supervisor: Motion by Supervisor Duden to designate Supervisor Whitcomb for 2026, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0.

Weed Inspector: Motion by Supervisor Stoeckel to designate Supervisor Duden for 2026, Second by Supervisor Whitcomb, Carried 5-0.

Township Planning Commission Liaison: Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to designate Supervisor Patten for 2026, Second by Supervisor Knutson, Carried 5-0.

Airport Commission Liaison: Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to designate Supervisor Stoeckel for 2026, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0. Note: no official Liaison will be designated for the City of Princeton Planning Commission at this time. Supervisor Stoeckel will keep in touch with updates and report as needed.

Fire Advisory Board Liaison: Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to designate Supervisor Duden for 2026, Second by Supervisor Stoeckel, Carried 5-0. Note: Supervisor Knutson expressed interest in this for future.

Official Designations

Official Newspaper: Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to designate the Union Times for 2026, Second by Supervisor Knutson, Carried 5-0.

Official Depository: Motion by Supervisor Duden to designate Old National Bank for 2026, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0.

Approve the Minutes

February 17th Board of Audit: Motion by Supervisor Duden to approve, Second by Supervisor Whitcomb, Carried 3-0. Note: Supervisor Patten and Supervisor Knutson would abstain due to prior to being elected.

February 17th Town Board Meeting Motion by Supervisor Duden to approve, Second by Supervisor Whitcomb, Carried 3-0. Note: Supervisor Patten and Supervisor Knutson would abstain due to prior to being elected.

March 10th Board of Canvas: Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb, Second by Supervisor Duden, Carried 3-0. Note: Supervisor Patten and Supervisor Knutson would abstain due to prior to being elected

Open Forum:

Resident Jim Kusler raised concerns about past social media use, including a recent post by Supervisor Duden sharing snowplow updates on Facebook, which led to confusion and liability risks. Supervisor Duden confirmed he has not posted in several years. The Board is encouraged to review the social media policy drafted by attorney Jason Hill. Supervisor Whitcomb stated that town employees with admin access are considered town agents, which would lead to a risk of unequal information dissemination. Further, he stated that the Town Clerk would be the official account holder and ensure that public comments would be disabled. Collectively, a decision to finalize the policy tonight would not take place and discussion will continue in future meetings.

Clerk-Treasurer Report:

February 2026 Cash Control (Fund Balance) Statement - General Fund: \$3,753.67; Roads and Bridges (including CD): \$359,849.20; Park Dedication: \$62,997.04; Fire Services: \$27,472.29 = **Total Fund Balance:** \$454,072.20. 2026 Accounts and Escrows Receivable - Code Enforcement: \$4,400.78; Escrows Receivable: \$14,994.55; Road Share with Waynett Township \$40,405.48 = **Total Accounts and Escrows Receivable** \$59,800.81.

March 24, 2026 Gross Pay and Mileage Reimbursement - \$6,234.36 Note: Included are the election judges claims for hours worked and mileage.

March 24, 2026 Claims for Approval (Accounts Payable): General Fund: \$4,746.66; Roads and Bridges: \$5,000.00; **Total Claims:** \$9,746.66. Note: The correct subtotal on the document is \$9,746.66.

Revenue updates:

Received \$250 from the City of Princeton for fire truck storage; Annexation payments from the City are still pending; Anticipated County Levy payment will be coming as well.

Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to approve the Clerk-Treasurer Report, Second by Supervisor Knutson, Carried 5-0.

Old Business (Reminders):

Local Boards of Appeal and Equalization – April 22, 2026; 6 pm Note: A quorum of the Supervisors is required.

Clean Up Day - Rescheduled from April 25 to **May 2**, given the reservation from Jim's Mille Lacs Disposal. Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0. Note: Goal is to reduce costs and improve profitability; Partnerships planned with Alan Lindbaum for scrap metal, exploration of electronics recycling, and tire disposal options with John Huonder; Fire Department to provide support; Board participation encouraged.

New Business

2026 Newsletter: Draft ready; Finalization pending final decisions and review of 2025 accomplishments by Bill; Target release within one week.

Social Media Policy: Tabled.

Planning Commission Appointments

Supervisor Stoeckel explained the appointment process and voting

Motion by Supervisor Stoeckel to appoint Jim Kusler, Second by ? Paper ballots were cast, Carried 3-2.

Motion by Supervisor Patten to appoint Dave Persing, Second by Supervisor Knutson. Paper ballots were cast, Carried 4-1.

Motion by Supervisor Duden to appoint Amanda Hayford, Second by Supervisor Whitcomb. Paper ballots were cast, Carried 4-1.

Remaining applicants not selected: Sarah Rutten, Lucas Jirik, Brittany Jirik.

Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

A framework of assigned roles, emphasizing primary and backup responsibilities, was reviewed.

Here is a link to the document for review: [2026 Supervisor Roles](#)

Motion by Supervisor Patten to approve, Second by Supervisor Whitcomb, Carried 5-0.

Liquor Licenses

Five establishments expected to apply: Long Siding Station, Shooters, Moonshine, Old Log Liquor, and Princeton Lanes. Applications not yet submitted; review underway to ensure form accuracy. Process typically occurs in April; town does not proactively contact applicants.

2026 Spring Short Course – Minnesota Association of Townships

Supervisors Patten, Knutson, and Whitcomb plan David, Jessica, Bill) plan to attend on Friday, March 27, 2026 in Alexandria. Clerk/Treasurer Creasy as well. Registration fee (\$75) covered by Township. General Counsel Steve Fenske confirmed this is not a public meeting, but some members prefer to post notice for transparency.

Officer Contracts and Resolutions

Resolutions 2026-2 through 2026-6 approved unanimously, authorizing contracts with interested officers under Minnesota Statute 471.88, subdivision 5. Hourly rate corrected and approved at **\$26/hour** for all:

Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to pass Resolution 2026-2 Eugene Stoeckel, Second by Supervisor Knutson, Carried 4-0. Supervisor Stoeckel abstains.

Motion by Supervisor Patten to pass Resolution 2026-3 William Whitcomb, Second by Supervisor Duden, Carried 4-0. Supervisor Whitcomb abstains.

Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to pass Resolution 2026-4 Thomas Duden, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 4-0. Supervisor Duden abstains.

Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to pass Resolution 2026-5 David Patten, Second by Supervisor Knutson, Carried 4-0. Supervisor Patten abstains.

Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to pass Resolution 2026-6 Jessica Knutson, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 4-0. Supervisor Knutson abstains.

Gopher Bounty

Supervisor Duden raised the issue of “gopher feet,” prompting an informal discussion.

Proposal: \$2 bounty per gopher using traditional method of submitting severed feet in salt-filled mason jars. Multiple species clarification: “Streaky” refers to thirteen-lined ground squirrels; true pocket gophers are more destructive.

Decision: **Defer action**; place gopher bounty program on next month’s agenda.

Next steps: Research programs in neighboring Townships (e.g., Baldwin pays \$3–\$4 per gopher), funding sources, and establish designated submission days.

Zoning and Future Planning

No zoning report submitted

Supervisor Reports

Roads

Contracts issued for: gravel and dust control, roadside mowing, brush removal.

136th Street: City of Baldwin annexing 200-foot segment; Township to reassess shared maintenance.

Greenbush Road: Negotiate 50/50 cost split with Greenbush for segment from County Road 102; if there is no agreement, road may be **returned to gravel** as it does not meet the current scoring matrix for pavement.

County Road 1 Improvements: Turnback proposal is for County Line Road aka 50th Avenue. A second topic to discuss with the County.

Trade-off: Loss of state aid (~\$40,000 total) if County assumes responsibility.

County requires roads to meet their standards before acceptance.

Tree removal: Ongoing on 50th Avenue.

Road Maintenance Bid – Farhner Asphalt vs. Astech Corporation

Bids received for flex patch, crack sealing, chip sealing, and micro surfacing.

Farhner bid selected

To stay within budget (\$157,948.55), exclude work in **pink-shaded areas** on work cut documents.

Crack filling only in flex-patch zones (orange and green).

Contingent on City of Princeton's participation:

Northwest area shared with Princeton.

Princeton has not yet submitted plans; Supervisor Whitcomb secured bids just before 20% asphalt/oil price increase.

Expected City of Princeton to join due to rising costs; their share estimated under \$40,000 of \$160,000 total.

Motion by Supervisor Patten to accept Farhner Asphalt, Second accept Farner's bid passed unanimously.

Clarify 50th Avenue Funding

Princeton Township is **not financially responsible** for Wyanett's portion of infrastructure projects.

Wyanett has its own certificate of indebtedness and must secure its own funding.

Upcoming Events

Princeton School Referendum – May 12, 2026: [Link on the Township's website for more information](#)

Adjournment at 8:15 pm:

Motion by Supervisor Whitcomb to adjourn, Second by Supervisor Patten, Carried 5-0.