

Wacouta Township

August 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Following is the written text of the business transacted by the Wacouta Board of Supervisors at its monthly meeting on August 14, 2023. Board members present were: Supervisors John Plehal, George Thoma, and Daryl Franklin. Laan Dommer, Clerk/Treasurer was also in attendance. The meeting was held at the town hall, 27700 Grace Trail, Red Wing, Minnesota.

- 1) Chair John Plehal called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2) Approval of the July 10, 2023 minutes: Thoma moved to approve the minutes of 7/10/2023; seconded by Franklin. The motion carried.
- 3) Old Business
 - a) Bike race update: Thoma reviewed the consideration for using the Wacouta roads for a Triathlon in September. Plehal stated that the organizers chose a different route.
- 4) New Business
 - a) Roads & trail
 - i) Winter snow removal: Plehal discussed the efforts to secure a contractor for winter road maintenance. He stated that over the weekend they had final discussions with an individual. Thoma moved to allow John Plehal to negotiate with snow plow services to secure their work if it fits within previously discussed parameters; seconded by Franklin. The motion carried.
 - ii) Tree removal on lower trail (DNR): Plehal briefed the group regarding the trees that may need to be taken down along the lower Lakeview trail. Thoma volunteered to contact Xcel Energy to see if they may come back to evaluate or remove trees along this area.
 - iii) Signs update & "No Parking" areas: Thoma reviewed the signs ready for placement within the township, for the roads and trail; professional help may be needed to place these.
Thoma made a motion to allow blue or yellow paint around the town hall in front of the shed and portable toilet, for no parking or disabled access; Franklin seconded. The motion carried.
 - b) Planning & Zoning
 - i) Air BNB discussion: Thoma led a discussion of the possible need for an ordinance change within the township regarding Air BNB rules or permitting. Florence Township ordinance samples were recommended for reading. It was recommended that the Planning Commission meet to address the issues and then return to the Board with suggestions.
 - ii) Lee septic tank: Franklin attended a meeting with County and DNR officials regarding the property in question. After review the officials stated that the property owners are following state and county regulations. There is no township consideration needed.
 - iii) Permits: No new permits were considered.

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- c) Town Hall & Cemetery
 - i) Cemetery survey status: Franklin stated that a survey team had been contracted to complete a cemetery survey. The work should be completed in the upcoming months.
 - ii) Diseased tree update: Diane Mueller reviewed the recent marking of seven trees in the town hall and cemetery area. Franklin suggested getting bids from contractors for removal. A motion was made by Plehal to allow Franklin to put out bids for the removal of the seven trees; seconded by Thoma. The motion carried.
 - iii) Recreational areas update: Dommer updated the recent completion of the court seal and painting. Within the court is a basketball court, three doubles pickleball courts, and a combination badminton-singles/youth pickleball court. There has been a significant increase in play activity.
 - d) Diane Mueller asked for the status of the funds for the trail “ditch” maintenance. Plehal stated that the current situation is that the township is responsible for the maintenance of the ditch/prairie restoration. If donations for ditch maintenance are offered from private parties or nonprofit organizations, the Board can vote on whether to accept such funds. That said, acknowledgment that this township Board owns the property in question and is responsible for maintaining the trail ditch. Also, the long-term agreement to maintain the Rattlesnake trail was briefly discussed. This agreement was a twenty-year commitment ending in 2027.
 - e) Election fund allocation: Dommer reviewed an email from Goodhue County regarding the appropriation of funds to cover annual election hardware and software for the DS200s, DS450, and Omniballots. He suggested allowing the County to secure the funds instead of the township. They are proposing that they “will pay these fees with the Voting Operations Account and then not ask cities and townships for annual reimbursements.” Franklin made a motion to allow Goodhue County to access these funds and then allow them to distribute the election fees for hardware and software maintenance to the township; seconded by Thoma. The motion carried.
- 5) Treasurer’s Report as of July 31, 2023
- a) Pay Bills – Amount of ‘checks for approval’ (*disbursements & payroll*) – \$ 12,655.95; Plehal moved to accept the claims for approval for \$12,655.95; seconded by Franklin. The motion carried.
- 6) Thoma moved to adjourn; seconded by Franklin. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

The next meeting of the Wacouta Board of Supervisors is Monday, September 11, 2023, at 6:00 PM, Wacouta Town Hall, 27700 Grace Trail, Red Wing, Minnesota.

- submitted by Laan Dommer