

The Cormorant Township Board meeting was held on **Tuesday, April 8th, 2025**, at 7:00 p.m. at the Cormorant Community Center. Board members present were Chairperson Steve Sorenson, Supervisors John Buhaug and Tony Hubbard, Clerk Claudia Hanson, and Treasurer Cindy Wipperling.

- A. **Call to Order** by Chairperson Sorenson followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. **Minutes** from March 25<sup>th</sup> variance and regular meeting minutes were read. Motion to approve minutes made by John, seconded by Tony. Carried 3-0. The claims/bills were signed as presented.

C. **New Business**

1) **Cynthia McDonough, Mahube - OTWA Community Action Partnership -**

Ms. McDonough was present to explain a new program that she has obtained grant money for and would like to start in the Cormorant area. SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) is a 60 yr. + strength, balance, and fitness class that she would begin for a 12-week program twice a week (class is one hour long). Then after 12 weeks, she hopes to have another instructor trained to lead the class. She will supply all equipment, such as weights, bands, etc. There is no cost to the public, due to grant funding. She would just need chairs to be placed in a circle, as exercise is started in a seated position. There currently is a class in Lake Park and in other smaller towns, where classes have been very popular. Some Cormorant-area exercisers are already attending the SAIL class in Lake Park and would appreciate a closer convenient location.

Board reviewed materials she provided. Each participant needs to sign a release and participant agreement. Attendance will be recorded in each class. After discussion, Board is agreeable to preceding, with a motion by Tony, seconded by Steve. Carried 3-0. Ila and Claudia will need to find time in the busy community calendar and will advise Cynthia of available dates.

D. **Old Business**

- 1) **LRIP Road Grant (E. Lake Ida Lane ) -** Jim Olson, Becker Cty. Highway Engineer, had emailed the final resolution for this grant. Board reviewed and Resolution

#2025-3 stating \$183,000 funds (lowest bid they received) will be used for resurfacing East Lake Ida Lane. John made a motion to pass this resolution, seconded by Tony, carried 3-0. Each supervisor voted in favor of passing resolution.

- 2) **Bathroom Fans Getting Worse** - John awaiting other estimates.
- 3) **Push Pedal Pull, Exercise room repairs** – They have ordered parts, and pending date for work to start.

#### E. **Recycling**

- 1) **Opening Date for Brush/Compost Site** – John updated they are cleaning up piles and organizing the area. He added there will be a new separate area for wood logs from regular branches and brush, which will make it easier for patrons to help themselves to logs and larger wood pieces.
- 2) **YMCA Recycling Site** – John recommended to have a fence installed by this site to keep trash, plastic, etc from blowing into the neighboring fields.

#### F. **Roads**

- 1) **Cormorant Road** – John stated that once road restrictions are lifted, the rock and gravel will be applied to Cormorant Road.
- 2) **Swing Away Mailbox Posts** – Claudia has received another request of the year.
- 3) **Roering Drive – Tim Schleffer**, resident on this not-maintained road in the township, inquired if he could add gravel to this road. He would pay for it and grade it onto the road. Board stated that it was ok to do so but was made aware of the road restrictions.
- 4) **Birch Point** – This has been an ongoing dispute and Craig Schroeder, neighbor on road, had recently left an incomplete road petition to have the entire road of Birch Point vacated. Kyle Vareberg (Becker Cty. Zoning Administrator) and Steve Sorenson will meet tomorrow to discuss as there are 8 properties on this road that technically then would not have public access if the road were vacated. Also, the signatures on the petition did not include all of the residents on this road, there was no detailed description of what is to be vacated, no survey, no parcel details, etc. Claudia has advised Craig of the complexity, cost, and process in vacating the road and he will attend the next meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> to reconsider the road petition.

**G. Other Business**

- 1) **Kitchen Ceiling Repair** – This still needs to be done.
- 2) **Becker Cty Association of Townships meeting** – Claudia gave recap of this meeting held on March 27<sup>th</sup>. She gave copies of Lee Brekke's, new County Assessor, handout of tax implications for the county and for specific township's increase in property taxes. Most of the tax increases are due to State of MN imposed mandatory increases.  

Also, Becker Cty. Highway Dept can assist townships with dust control, shouldering, culverts, chip sealing and signs. Lastly, Steve Skoog with Becker Cty Environmental Services, offered if any lake accesses need gravel or grading, he would contact the DNR to help in getting these accesses conditions improved.
- 3) **Safety Meeting** –The annual safety meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. Clerk is in process of notifying all employees.
- 4) **Board of Review** – Reminder to all that the Board of Review meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.
- 5) **Amazon Township/Government Business card** - At the annual short course training in Mahanomen, it was advised that Amazon is introducing a special offer for townships to sign up for a government account which would not include any sales tax and reduced rates. Board agreed this would be great to take advantage of.
- 6) **Scheel Donation to the Township** – Claudia sent thank you card to Scheels, noting Mr. Craig Holly for nominating us as a donation recipient.
- 7) **New Employee for Tar Crew** – John advised that current employee, Tim Peterson, who works on the Tar Crew, is dealing with significant health issues. As it is unknown how much he will be able to work this summer, John suggested Curt Aarsvold be added to tar crew as a substitute for Tim. Board discussed and Tony motioned, seconded by John, to approve Curt Aarsvold to help on tar crew. Carried 3-0.

**H. Reorganization Items -**

- 1) **Chairperson** – The Board unanimously voted Steve Sorenson should continue to serve as Chairperson, with a motion by John, seconded by Tony. Carried 3-0.

2) **New Treasurer – Cindy Wipperling** has been elected as the new Treasurer for Cormorant Township, has been sworn in, and now needs to be an authorized signer on the township bank account, which the official bank is the State Bank of Lake Park. John motioned, seconded by Tony Hubbard to approve Cindy as an authorized signer on the township bank account effective today, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Carried 3-0.

3) **Conflict of Interest** – Conflict of Interest forms were signed by the Board as required. These documents outline if a supervisor does any work for the township, that their work price is as low or lower than prices at which services could be obtained elsewhere.

A resolution for any conflict of interest was reviewed if John does any such road work as snow removal or other community center projects. Tony motioned, seconded by Steve, to accept resolution #2025-5 as written. Carried 3-0. Each supervisor voted in favor of resolution and was signed by Steve.

As Tony may do some emergency debris removal or snow removal on township roads, or community center work, a resolution regarding any conflict of interest was reviewed, and Steve motioned, seconded by John, to accept Resolution #2025-6 as written. Carried 3-0. Each supervisor voted in favor of resolution, and it was signed by John.

As Steve may do some snow removal at the community center parking lot and on township roads, another resolution regarding any conflict of interest was reviewed and John motioned, seconded by Tony, to accept Resolution #2025-4 as written. Carried 3-0. Each supervisor voted in favor of resolution and signed by Tony.

4) **Donations** - The list of donations was presented at the annual meeting held on March 11, 2025. The list was reviewed by the electors and no other suggestions or recommendations were made to the donation list at that time.

a) Alert =\$6,000; Becker County Historical Society =\$150; Lake Park Historical Society = \$250; LPA Dollars for Scholars = \$2,000; LPA Post Prom = \$300.

b) YMCA = This is for two children to be sent to YMCA Camp Cormorant this summer (approximately \$1,075).

c) Cormorant Daze related items = Games Galore, Kiddyland tickets, gift cards, etc. There may be additional related Cormorant Daze donations once planning for the event evolves.

Other donations that were suggested at the annual meeting were also considered. Tony made motion for all donations to be made as outlined above. Seconded by John. Carried 3-0.

5) **Wages and mileage reimbursement =**

a) **Waste Management Crew** – Current pay is \$375 monthly for recycling sites, \$80 for each time to do additional mowing, snowplowing over monthly base pay. Board discussed and agreed to make no changes. Steve motioned, seconded by John to maintain same wages as mentioned above and motion carried 3-0.

b) **Snowplow operators** – Board discussed hourly wage of \$50 and agreed increase amount to \$55 an hour for the snowplow operators. The \$80 per time rate for equipment usage will stay the same. Steve moved for plow operator change and keeping equipment usage the same, seconded by John. Carried 3-0.

c) **Other township employees (tar crew, maintenance crew. etc.)** – Board reviewed, and John moved to maintain same hourly wage at \$30. Seconded by Tony. Carried 3-0.

d) **Board members** – Board discussed that no increase is warranted based on comparison of earnings with other similar townships. Tony motioned to keep \$35 hourly rate and meeting rate of \$80 the same. John seconded motion and carried 3-0. Cindy indicated mileage is currently at \$.70 per mile and recommended to pay mileage accordingly to the current federal rate. Board agreed, moved by Tony, seconded by Steve. Carried 3-0.

6) **Rental rates for space in the community center** - Board discussed to keep rates as is.

7) **Tar Clothing Allowance** - The Board agreed the tar clothing allowance should remain at \$100 this year. Motion made by John, seconded by Steve, and carried 3-0.

I. **Adjournment** - The township meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m. with a motion from Steve, seconded by John, and carried 3-0. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia M. Hanson, Clerk