

The ***2025 Annual Township Meeting of Cormorant Township*** was held on March 11th, 2025, at 8:15 p.m. at the Cormorant Community Center. People (electors) who attended are recorded on the sign-up sheet.

- A. **Call to Order** by Clerk Claudia Hanson followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. **Election of Moderator** - The floor was opened for nominations for a moderator, which was followed by a motion made by Susie Braseth, seconded by Tim Erickson, to nominate **Curt Lundeen** as moderator. No other discussion was made, and motion passed unanimously.
- C. **Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting** – Minutes were included in the Information packets listed next. There were no corrections or additions.
- D. **Treasurer's Report and Information Packets** - All present were offered this packet outlining last year's financial information, other information, last year's copy of annual meeting minutes, prepared by Treasurer Susie Braseth. Motion was made by Rick Julian to approve the Report/Packet, seconded by Carolyn Matthees. No other discussion was made, and motion passed unanimously. See attachment #1.
- E. **2024-2025 Road Report** – Chairperson Steve Sorenson gave report, indicating the township spent 134,598. in overlay work in 2024. Many road repairs were significant, including the taring of North Beach Road. Overlay and repairs 132<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Rossman Erickson Road were completed. The gravel roads are graded on a weekly basis. Ditches are mowed as needed throughout the summer as well. He noted shouldering will be completed again in 2025 as needed, and the township crack crew will continue to repair cracks and holes where needed.  

Steve indicated that the Road Inspection will be completed in April.
- F. **Swing Away Mailbox Post program** - John Buhaug added the township is still implementing Swing Away Mailbox Post program. These posts save many mailboxes during winter plowing season. Last year in 2024, eight mailbox posts were installed and the cost of the swing away post is covered by the Township. Township residents should call or email the township office for a swing away post. A form needs to be completed and the township will coordinate with Gopher One to have the post area marked for any underground wires. John noted in 2022, 12 swing away posts were installed, whereas, in 2023, 36 swing away posts were installed.

G. **2026 Levy Proposal-** The township residents (electors) present need to decide what the levy amount should be for each fund for 2026. The total amount of levy voted last year was \$499,000. Agenda outlined last year's amounts levied for each fund.

- 1) **General Fund** - The General Fund levy is \$188,000, which has not changed in several years. Citizens were questioned where to find the amounts spent in this category, which Susie referred the audience to page 6 of the treasurer's report for fund balance information. Claudia informed the public of a large upcoming expense of \$91,000 in five years for new major elevator components. Rick Julian motioned to increase this levy to \$200,000, after agreeing that elevator costs are expensive. Motion seconded by Scott Hanson. No other discussion and motion carried by electors.
- 2) **Road & Bridge** - Last year this levy amount was \$254,000. Steve Sorenson added this levy had \$50,000 increase to this fund last year and he recommended this again this year, due to the significant increase in road repair costs. Steve Sorenson made motion to set the levy at \$304,000, seconded by Tim Erickson. No other discussion and motion carried by audience.
- 3) **Fire Fund** – This fire was increased to \$45,000 last year due to update in the Lake Park Fire Department service agreement. There has been an increase in their Fire service agreement again which the Fire department is asking \$58,535.96. Steve Sorenson and Tony Hubbard explained the majority of the expense to the fire department is servicing our Cormorant Lakes area. There is no closer fire department willing to service our area. To offset this year's increase, Rick Julian motioned to increase the Fire Fund to \$60,000. Motion seconded by Cindy Wipperling. No other conversation regarding this fund. All voted and motion carried to increase the Fire levy to \$60,000.
- 4) **Weed & Gopher Fund** - The gopher bounty must be determined first, which last year was at \$4.00 per gopher. Cindy Wipperling motioned to continue bounty at \$4.00 per gopher, seconded by Tony Hubbard. Tony Hubbard added that there is not much expense in this fund. No additional discussion ensued so motion carried unanimously. Last year, the levy for this fund was voted to be \$0. Cindy Wipperling motioned to keep the levy amount at \$0, seconded by Claudia Hanson. No other comments or concerns were raised. Motion was passed unanimously.

5) **Waste Management** – Electors (audience members) brought up questions on why the ending balance of waste management had a negative balance of -\$212,106.13 and concerns were voiced about deficit spending. Tony Hubbard explained that transfer of money can be made between funds, as the Rod & Bridge Fund had a positive ending balance of \$439,441.31. Questions were brought up what costs are in this fund, which audience was directed to the Waste Management pages of the Treasurer’s Report, and if the costs could be cut back on recycling, etc. Others spoke in favor of recycling and brush/compost expenses as having these services keep our township ditches clean of debris and junk. It was also added that the township hopes to have the Annual Household Hazardous Waste day again to collect old appliances, tires, etc. and hazardous materials. Susie Braseth advised that the total spent last year was \$47,000 in this fund. It also was mentioned that our township produces the second largest number of recyclables in Becker County.

Motion was made by Rick Julian to increase the Waste Management levy to \$42,000, seconded by John Buhaug. Discussion surrounding this ended and motion passed unanimously.

**Total levy for 2026 is \$606,000.**

**H. 2025 Election Results were as follows:**

Supervisor (3-year term) = Steve Sorenson with 54 votes  
Arlen Getz (write in) with 1 vote  
Treasurer (2-year term) = Susie Braseth with 14 votes  
Cindy Wipperling (write in) with 37 votes  
Mark Giddings (write in) with 11 votes

A round of applause was given to outgoing Treasurer Susie Braseth and to incoming Treasurer Cindy Wipperling.

I. **Township Bank** –Tony Hubbard made motion to keep the State Bank of Lake Park as the official bank of the township, seconded by Tim Erickson. No other discussion ensued, passing motion unanimously.

J. **Official Paper of the Township** - The official newspaper has been the Detroit Lakes Tribune. A citizen inquired as to why the Lakes Country Connection could not serve as the official paper for the township which it was explained that paper does not publish legal notices.

Also, it was asked what the cost was to file legal ads. Claudia made motion to have that paper the official newspaper, seconded by Tim Erickson. No other discussion and the motion was passed unanimously.

- K. **2025 Township Election Poll Hours and Annual Meeting Time** – Claudia Hanson advised that State of MN dictates the date and time of the Annual Meeting, which will always be held on the second Tuesday in March. No motion was needed but the date of the Annual Meeting will be March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, starting at 8:15 pm with the township election preceding the meeting with the polling hours from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

L. **Other Business**

1. **LARL Library Link Site** – Librarian Cindy Lichtsinn, the new librarian, was unable to attend this meeting. However, Claudia Hanson read a report Cindy provided. Monthly circulation statistics show 2,949 items check out (increase of 651 from 2023). Patron count was 831, with 6 new signed up patrons. LARL sponsored one on-site program last year and will have 2 sponsored reading programs, a winter Blizzard Book challenge and an upcoming Summer Reading Program “Wild About Reading” starting in June. This program is to encourage youth to read in the summer and to encourage attending library sponsored events.
2. **Cormorant Daze** – This year it is scheduled for August 16<sup>th</sup> 2025 (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in August). The township sponsors many events for this annual town celebration, which is attended by more people every year.
3. **Donations** –Electors, at annual meeting, may allow the Town Board to contract with nonprofit organizations to support health, social and recreational services, artistic organizations, public or private non-profit senior citizen or youth programs. Past donations (page 21) and Cormorant Daze expenses (page 23) list in detail what was spent. The audience was encouraged to view these pages of the treasurer’s report and asked if any other donations should be considered. These will be reviewed by the Board and voted upon at the next regular township meeting. No other donation requests were brought up by the public, so the Board will consider the same donations as listed last year, and motion appropriately then at next meeting.

4. **Film Plastic Recycling** – The Cormorant Sportsman’s Club (via Rick Julian) asked Claudia to read the following:

Cormorant Township has been assisting the Cormorant Lakes Sportsman’s Club in collecting film plastic to earn plastic benches and keep hundreds of plastics out of the landfill. Only one bench can be earned each year and it takes 1000 pounds of plastic to get one. The township, with significant help from Ila Lindstrom, facility manager, earned their first bench last July. Since that time, with the Township’s assistance we have earned benches for St. Peters Church, Cormorant Lutheran Church, and we are now working on a bench for Sunnyside Care Center. Just between 9/6/2024 -3/4/2025, Ila has processed 641 pounds of plastic collected in the township box. (not tracking amounts before 9/6/24). We will start the new cycle for another township bench on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Thanks to the community in helping us with this valuable recycling program!

4. **Other Items brought up by the Public:**

Claudia Hanson = Pointed out how active and busy our community center is and to encourage the audience to participate in the variety of the activities available.

Rick Julian = Suggest to have a large drop-down projector screen in the Cormorant Room to assist in projecting items on a larger scale. It was mentioned that the Cormorant Lakes Watershed District was also looking at adding this to the room.

M. **Adjournment** – As no other public business was brought up, John Buhaug made a motion to adjourn, motion was seconded by Ila Mae Lindstrom along with a thank you to Curt Lundeen for being the moderator for this meeting. Curt Lundeen declared meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m., after giving thanks to the township board for all their work this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia M. Hanson, Clerk and

Curt Lundeen, Moderator

