

TOWN OF SILVER CREEK
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2025

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Silver Creek was held on Tuesday January 14, 2025 in the Board Meeting Room at 1924 Town Road, for the purpose of discussing all issues before the Board.

Present: Supervisors Chuck Voss, and Greg Hull; Clerk Alison Oftedahl; Town Operations and Facilities Manager Paul Thompson, Sewer Operator Eric Appelwick and (by phone) Deputy Clerk Katie Anderson.

Absent: Supervisor Scott Krech.

Visitors Present: Colleen Wallin for Lake County Solid Waste; and from Bollig Engineering, Nathan Feist. Chairman Voss called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Constituent Concerns

None.

Visitors

Colleen Wallin – Lake County Recycling Trailer – Wallin spoke of the success of the recycling efforts during the past 90 days. The Board reviewed Lake County’s contract for the recycling trailer. The contract specifies that the Town will monitor the trailer and would be responsible for any garbage left outside the trailer and Lake County would be responsible for any garbage placed inside the trailer and will empty it every two weeks. The agreement runs for 60 months and either party can terminate with 60-day notice. Voss and Hull were okay with the contract language and told Wallin that the agreement would be voted on next week.

Feist and Appelwick – Lift Station 1 Possible Pump Replacement – In a lengthy discussion, issues with the age of the system, the number of pump repairs, the frequency of power cycling, grease and failing generators were discussed. There was not a clear consensus on the next steps. Operator Appelwick said that the lift station turning on and off sometimes running for very few seconds is the problem that is hurting the pumps. He suggested surging the system and recommended VFDs for a soft start. However VFDs may be too expensive. Surging would be to try to reduce the number of power cycles of the pumps and “buy some time”. Engineer Feist did not recommend surging the system as it has risks of backing things up, but he said it is one tool in the toolbox. He said he could do some engineering and develop a full lift station replacement project including capacity plans, panels, pumps, generators and wet wells. He said the life expectancy is about 25 years which is where we are. However, these plans are extremely expensive. Hull raised concerns about engineering costs and the operating expense of the system saying he didn’t want to spend \$2,500 to be told to spend \$250,000. Feist also recommended applying for a DNR grant to GPS map the system. The grant of approximately \$7,000 would require a \$3,000 match by the town. The group was in agreement that applying for those funds was fine.

General Sewer Operations

Operator Appelwick presented his Operator’s report and discussed plans for automating the rain gauge to send rainfall totals through the Fleet Zoom. Currently the rain gauge is used for other purposes.

Thompson reported on emergency sewer callouts over New Years and research on strange alarms at Lift Station 1. Also he has been rebuilding pumps.

Grease – Appelwick, Hoops and Voss will be meeting with the owner of the Rustic this Friday to discuss the grease.

Road and Safety

Thompson reported ordering pit run, loam and BA chip rock material. A sign inventory was completed, and a couple signs were replaced. He repaired an air leak on the grader and recalibrated the hydraulics on the International. New tires were put on the Sewer truck. Plowing and scraping were done with this last storm, and the ice rink has been flooded and is ready for use.

Tractor – Lulich is waiting on a couple parts but has our tractor in the shop ready to be repaired.

Stewart River Wastewater Project

A resolution supporting state bonding for wastewater systems will be voted on next week. It is the same Resolution approved last year that will be used by Bollig for requesting funding. This is not the normal Bonding year, but as nothing was passed last year, it is possible that there will be one.

Correspondence

The following items were passed around for consideration:

- US Bank statement of account balance in CD held for Gordon Variance
- Lake County Press article regarding PILT and the failure to get the US government to use the best and highest value when calculating the PILT funds for Lake County (and us).
- Park State Bank Pledge report.
- December MAT Newsletter
- Email from the assessor regarding LBAE training. Hull and Voss are current – Krech is not yet trained.
- Invitation to Township Day at the Capitol on January 27.
- Work Comp Certificate of Insurance and Clerk/Treasurer/Board Faithful Bond coverage details.
- Nationwide Quarterly Report of accounts.
- Nationwide notification of fund swap.
- Signed MPCA permission for one of Eric Appelwick's employees to file MPCA reporting for Castle Danger Sewer.
- Letter from Bollig requesting a Resolution of Support for State Bonding.
- 3 Affidavits of Candidacy for the March 11, 2025 Township Election.
- Determination of Benefit Account from MN Unemployment stating that the Town is required to pay benefits to a past employee.

OLD BUSINESS

Driveway Access Policy – Voss voiced support for the draft policy in which the property owner is responsible for hiring a contractor to install their culvert and driveway. Thompson stated he agreed. It is the same as the 2020 version but with new language on temporary driveways, second or third driveways, and requirement to use a licensed contractor. A sentence on the preferred culvert type was also removed. Krech but will be back next week for the vote on this Resolution.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Mileage Reimbursement Rate – Next week the new mileage rate of \$0.70 per mile will be approved, and the Board gave the Clerks permission to process next week's mileage claims using the new federal rate.

COLA Employee Raise – The annual inflation rate for 2024 has not yet been released.

Transfer for Sewer Truck – Next week a transfer from Sewer to Roads for use of the sewer truck will be approved. Per mileage, the requested transfer is \$2,600.

Set 2025 Fees – Several resolutions setting fees in 2025 were viewed.

- a. Cemetery Fees – There was no interest in raising Cemetery fees.
- b. Driveway Access Fees – Current fees were viewed with no discussion of raising them.
- c. Hall Rental Fees – The possibility of raising fees for non-residents was discussed. The Clerk recommended not renting the Historic Hall at all in winter. Comparison to other community centers will be made. Changes to be discussed next week when Supervisor Krech is back.

Township Election Judge Approval – The Absentee Ballot Board and Election Judge group will be approved next week. The Clerk has recruited 2 of 4 judges needed.

PENDING BUSINESS

Candidate Filing – The Board viewed the Affidavits of Candidacy filed for Township Election. Chuck Voss and Jody Reineccius filed for Supervisor. Shelly Peterson filed for Treasurer.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m. upon motion Voss, second Hull. Carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Town Board will be held on Tuesday, January 21, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Oftedahl, Clerk