

**ORONOCO TOWNSHIP
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2022 8:15 PM**

The annual Oronoco Township meeting was **called to order** on March 8, 2022 at 8:15 pm by clerk Lucy Shonyo. There were 11 people present. Ken Mergen nominated Kim Stanton as moderator. Kim Stanton noted that to offer or second motions or to vote attendees need to be residents of Oronoco Township and qualified voters in Minnesota.

The **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.

These documents were available: proposed agenda, minutes of the 2021 annual meeting, 2022 Board of Audit minutes, 2021 Financial Report including road expenditures, levy information, township accomplishments and challenges.

The **agenda** was changed under Reports, putting PIFD first, followed by other reports.

The meeting paused to allow time for attendees to read the **2021 minutes**.

The **Board of Audit** met February 14, 2022. The minutes of that meeting were available. The monthly process of reconciling financial accounts between the clerk and the treasurer was noted. No irregularities were found.

Treasurer Kim Stanton reviewed the 2021 Financial Report explaining some significant activities and expenditures. Oronoco Township's total revenue was \$1,193,843, disbursements \$731,479 with an ending balance of \$1,275,330. It was noted that revenue includes a significant amount of non-reoccurring payments. Also the first half of ARPA funds were received. Liabilities include the notes for King's Park Septic and Cedar Beach Septic. The township has special assessments in place for these septic projects as well as road projects River Hill and 18th Ave Extension.

A significant 2021 accomplishment was the completion of the Ryan's Bay Road project done in partnership with Zumbro Township. Before and after pictures of the steep hill that was taken down were shown. An agreement with Bevcomm to get high speed internet to 330 households was also completed.

Road maintenance and repair, including snow removal, continue to be the township's largest expense.

Reports

Pine Island Fire District (PIFD) – Fire Chief Brandon Sather and Assistant Chief Kyle Dessner were present. PIFD responded to 451 calls in 2021, up from 350 calls in 2020. PIFD's rating has improved from a 4 in 2020 to a 3 now on a scale of 1-10. PIFD has purchased a new tanker to be delivered this summer. Having updated equipment is a factor in a high rating. A high rating affects members' homeowner insurance costs. PIFD covers about 121 square miles which includes all of Oronoco Township and four other jurisdictions. The highest call count is Oronoco Township. They are "on the road" four to five minutes after getting a call from dispatch. Typically, 12 firefighters respond. Mayo ambulances are dispatched with the fire department. Fire calls are billed, the amount dependent on the type of fire.

PIFD, continued

There is an effort to keep charges to what homeowner's insurance will cover. Oronoco Township's PIFD dues are \$100,633 this year. 28% of this amount is dedicated to equipment renewal.

Oronoco First Responders - Director Dan Sundt was present. First Responders responded to 163 calls in 2021, up from 128 in 2020. 86 of the calls were from township residents, 77 from city residents. Four new responders joined the force last year. Another atrial defibrillator was purchased. Mayo ambulances are dispatched to all calls as First Responders do not transport. First Responders do not bill persons who receive their services. First Responder's dues are \$8,000/year.

Oronoco Food Shelf – Director Jeff Gisi was present. The food shelf has updated their space with new floors, paint, shelving and freezers. They serve 20 – 25 families a month. Last year they distributed about 34,000 pounds of food, up from 25,000 pounds in 2020. Food is getting more expensive, but people are generous with donations. They do summer pop-ups in Oronoco Estates. They are open the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month. Volunteers are welcome.

Rural Broadband - Supervisor Tammy Matzke spoke of the township's commitment to get high speed internet to more township residents. In 2020, the levy included \$50,000 toward this goal. \$40,000 was spent with Bevcomm in a project last year that connected 330 households. The remaining \$10,000 will be spent on helping remote residents connect via satellite. It is thought 40% of the township now has access to high speed internet. This is important as it allows residents to work from home, and children to learn from home when necessary.

The "Money Raised by Tax upon Taxable Property" was appropriated as follows:

General Revenue: Rachel Stanton made a motion to fund at the 2021 level, \$69,000. Tammy Matzke second, motion carried unanimously.

Road & Bridge: Ken Mergen made a motion to fund at the 2021 level due to the receipt of APRA funds, \$652,860. Tammy Matzke second, motion carried unanimously.

Fire and First Responders: Ken Mergen made a motion to fund at \$109,000. Rachel Stanton second, motion carried unanimously.

The total levy approved is \$830,860 up .28% from 2021.

A motion was made by Ken Mergen to set the **2023 Annual Meeting** time at 8:15pm, to be held at Oronoco City Hall/Community Center on the second Tuesday in March, 2023. Tammy Matzke second, motion carried unanimously. [Election hours are set by Minnesota Statute as 5:00-8:00pm on that day.]

A motion was made by Tammy Matzke to authorize the Town Board to spend the yearly sum of up to \$1,000 for the purposes of **citizen or board member recognition**. Rachel Stanton second, motion carried unanimously.

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The Board of Canvass met at 8:10pm and certified these **election results**: Charlie Lacy, Supervisor, 3 year term, 12 votes and Lucy Shonyo, Clerk, 2 year term, 12 votes.

Tammy Matzke made a motion to adjourn at 9:15pm. Rachel Stanton second, motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lucy Shonyo, Clerk

Kim Stanton, Moderator