

Oronoco Town Board
Monthly Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2026

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Oronoco Town Board held on **Monday, August 10, 2026**, at 5:30pm at the Oronoco Community Center, located at 115 Second Street SW, Oronoco, Minnesota.

Supervisor Ken Mergen called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

The agenda was accepted as presented.

Fitzpatrick Application

There will be a special Oronoco Township Planning Advisory Commission (OTPAC) meeting on Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Ethan at TCPA noted that OTPAC previously “recommended denial” of the Fitzpatrick request to develop the open-space parcel. Under the Oronoco Township ordinance, OTPAC has the authority to make the final decision on the request, rather than the Township Board.

During Wednesday’s meeting, OTPAC is expected to issue its formal ruling. Township Attorney Ruppe is now involved and is reviewing the documentation to determine whether OTPAC should deny the request outright or approve, it subject to approximately 45 conditions.

Permit and Road Use Agreement for the Mississippi Mankato Transmission Line

The Oronoco Township Board of Supervisors does not believe it is necessary to sign Xcel Energy’s Road Use Permit and Road Use Agreement for the Mississippi Mankato Transmission Line Project, as there are no Township roads that Xcel Energy’s project intersects.

Supervisor Ken Mergen will contact Lucie Ostlund, Xcel Energy’s Right-of-Way Agent, to discuss the matter and determine whether the Road Use Permit and Road Use Agreement are necessary, including whether the project will require Xcel Energy to cross any Township roads.

Road Report

Scott Schumacher stated that the no dumping signs were installed on 85th St last week.

Bakely Court Sign/Parking Ordinance

Supervisor Matzke believes the Township’s parking ordinance needs to be updated and has reached out to Attorney Ruppe to determine what can legally be done. This will be added to the September 14, 2026, meeting agenda.

Supervisor Matzke provided Attorney Ruppe with the current Oronoco Township parking ordinance and explained the ongoing parking situation at Lake Zumbro Park, including the Township's concerns regarding parking and the ability to enforce parking restrictions in the area.

Supervisor Matzke also submitted the following proposed addition to the ordinance for Attorney Ruppe's review and potential revisions:

Subd. 4A. Recreational and Park Access Parking Restrictions

No person shall park a vehicle, permit or allow a vehicle to remain parked, upon any Township roadway, roadway shoulder, or road right-of-way for the purpose of accessing or utilizing any public park, boat launch, recreational area, or similar facility when such vehicle is not attending a residence or property located within the Township.

Any vehicle found in violation of this subdivision may be ticketed by law enforcement or another authorized official. A violation of this subdivision shall be subject to a civil fine of \$300.00 for each occurrence. In addition to the fine, any vehicle creating a traffic hazard, obstructing access, impeding emergency vehicles, damaging the roadway shoulder, or otherwise creating a public safety concern may be removed and towed at the owner's expense.

Lake Zumbro Park Driveway Permit

The Oronoco Township Board has not received any additional information from Logan Tjossum at Widseth Engineering regarding the Lake Zumbro Park Driveway Permit submitted by Olmsted County Parks and Trails. No action can be taken at this time until Widseth Engineering has completed its review of the submitted driveway permit application and provided its findings to the Township Board.

Speed Report on Cedar Beach Drive

Olmsted County Sherriff's Department conducted a speed study of Cedar Beach Drive due to a citizen complaint about speeds. The average speed on Cedar Beach Drive was 26.86mph. The minimum speed was 25mph and the high speed was 35mph.

LRIP Funding

Supervisor Mergen contacted Bob Malm with Bolton & Menk to discuss potential Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) funding opportunities for the Township. At this time, there are no Township roads that carry sufficient outside traffic to qualify for LRIP funding. Therefore, no Township roads would currently be considered eligible for funding.

85th St Illegal Dumping

Supervisor Mergen has picked up garbage dumped illegally on 85th St twice in the last month.

Subdivision Ordinance Update

Supervisor Matzke would like to propose an update to the subdivision ordinance to include provisions requiring homeowners' associations (HOAs) to assume responsibility for the maintenance and repair of roads within subdivisions.

This change would help reduce the financial burden on the Township and help keep property taxes lower. Current funding received from state and federal sources is not sufficient to cover the ongoing maintenance and repair needs of Township roads. The Township would continue to provide snow removal, sanding, and sweeping services in the subdivisions.

Karen MacLaughlin

Karen MacLaughlin, candidate for Olmsted County Attorney, introduced herself at the meeting. She is will be on the ballot for the general election on November 3, 2026.

Minutes Approval

There was a motion made by Supervisor Matzke to approve the July 13, 2026 meeting minutes, seconded by Supervisor Johanningmeier. The motion was carried unanimously. Supervisor Mergen abstained from voting since he did not attend the meeting in person.

Treasurer's Report-Brandi Lind

The YTD Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances as of August 10, 2026, shows: receipts \$1,017,579.35, disbursements \$569,834.92, and an ending balance of \$1,101,233.96

There was a motion made by Supervisor Mergen to approve the treasurers report for August 10, 2026, in written form, seconded by Supervisor Johanningmeier. The motion was carried unanimously.

Approval to pay payroll and claims including electronic transfer

There was a motion made by Supervisor Mergen to approve the payroll and claims, including electronic transfers for August 10, 2026, seconded by Supervisor Johanningmeier. The motion was carried unanimously.

Clerk Notes

The Primary Election is August 11, 2026, polls are open from 7am to 8pm.

The September 24, 2026 OCTOA meeting will be hosted by Oronoco and Orion Townships. The meeting will be held at the Olmsted County Public Works Service Center.

Clerk Schroeder received a citizen complaint, July 1, 2026, regarding ducks and chickens being kept on a property on 1st Avenue SW, along with concerns regarding a rat infestation.

TCPA reviewed the matter and determined that the property is not in compliance with the Township's zoning ordinance. TCPA will send the property owner a letter requesting compliance with the applicable ordinance requirements.

The citizen was also directed to contact Olmsted County Public Health to request an inspection of the neighboring property regarding the reported rat infestation.

Arborists of Rochester Payment

Clerk Schroeder received an email from Jon at Arborists of Rochester because no payment was received from Oronoco Township. Payment from Oronoco Township was mailed on July 14, 2026. Treasurer Lind stopped payment of check number 10266 for Arborists of Rochester on July 31, 2026. Arborists of Rochester was notified that a new check would be issued after the August 10, 2026 meeting.

Positive Pay

Treasurer Lind suggested adding Positive Pay to the Oronoco Township accounts held at Eagle Rock Bank. Positive Pay is a fraud protection program that would allow the Treasurer to upload EFT and check amounts into the system. The system would provide daily updates to verify that check and EFT amounts match the amounts uploaded. If a dollar amount does not match, the system would indicate that review is needed. Treasurer Lind noted that the program would not cost the Township anything because it qualifies as a municipality.

There was a motion made by Supervisor Johanningmeier to add Positive Pay to all Oronoco Township Accounts held at Eagle Rock Bank, seconded by Supervisor Mergen. The motion was carried unanimously.

Construction Management Services

There was a motion made by Supervisor Johanningmeier to approve Tanner Young, Construction Management Services, CMS, to be the building inspector for Oronoco Township.

Board Member Comments

Lake Zumbro Forever (LZF) Quit Claim Deed

Attorney Ruppe is currently working on the Quit Claim Deed. However, LZF is now requesting a "Use Permit" for the property. Supervisor Matzke expressed concerns regarding the proposed use of the property.

Attorney Ruppe has spent a significant amount of time working on this matter. The Township's previous position was to proceed with completing the Quit Claim Deed. Roger Behrens with the state-level DNR has become involved, and discussions have become somewhat contentious. The DNR is currently suggesting the Township issue a Use Permit to LZF before the Quit Claim Deed can be executed.

It should be noted that issuing a Use Permit does not authorize LZF to transport solid waste or begin dredging operations from the property. LZF must still satisfy numerous regulatory requirements and obtain any additional approvals that may be necessary before those activities can begin.

Oronoco Auto Parts

The subsurface cleanup is complete, and the MPCA is scheduled to conduct a final physical inspection of the property and the case will be closed. Moving forward, OTPAC and County Shoreland/Floodplain Ordinance rules apply, meaning a junkyard can never be operated at that location again.

Red Bridge

Supervisor Matzke contacted Mayor Ryland of Oronoco to discuss the possibility of relocating the bridge to Oronoco Park if the County determines that the bridge can be moved.

During the discussion, the historical significance of the bridge was shared, including its connection to stagecoach transportation and travel to the Michenfelder Mansion at Lake Shady. Mayor Ryland expressed strong interest in the concept of preserving the bridge as a pedestrian crossing within Oronoco Park, which could provide a connection between the east and west sides of the community while preserving an important piece of local history.

The concept was subsequently presented to County officials, with a potential cost-sharing arrangement between the County and the City of Oronoco suggested as one option for funding the relocation and installation of the bridge.

Supervisor Matzke also contacted Commissioner Mark Thein, who is currently exploring potential options and a path forward for the project.

If feasible, relocating the bridge to Oronoco Park could provide a beneficial outcome for the County, the City of Oronoco, and Township residents who have expressed interest in preserving the condemned bridge and its historical significance.

Brush Spraying on Right-Of-Ways

Supervisor Johanningmeier contacted North Star Companies regarding right-of-way spraying planned for next year. Fall spraying will primarily focus on the east side of the river and the King's Park area, including the area extending from the guardrail downward.

Adjourn

There was a motion made by Supervisor Mergen to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Supervisor Johanningmeier. The motion was carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Oronoco Township Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2026

Clerk Jody Schroeder

Tammy Matzke

Ken Mergen