

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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29 April 2025
Approved

7:30 p.m., 29 April 2025, Chair Jeff Schlaeger called the Royalton Township regular board meeting to order, with Supervisors John Graham and Pete Belland, Treasurer Jenessa Saumer, and Clerk Duane Swanson present. Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, Zoning Administrator John Kemen, Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson, and Road Superintendent Dan Saumer, along with members of the planning commission and the public attended. Town counsel Robert Ruppe was also present. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the agenda as presented, with the addition of 4694 Hummingbird Road. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the reorganizational board meeting of 25 March 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 25 March 2025 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Saumer read her report, noting that as of 1 March 2025, the township had a beginning balance of \$355,127.98 in the treasury. Deposits were \$6.09, disbursements were \$6,550.66, with an ending bank balance on 31 March 2025 of \$348,583.41. Outstanding checks were \$5,151.20 and a certificate of deposit in the amount of \$50,000 was in place, leaving a spendable balance of \$303,734.61. Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Schlaeger called for discussion of checks #11504-11527 in the amount of \$13,590.68. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to approve payment of the checks as presented. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger and Supervisors Graham and Belland voting "Aye." Clerk Swanson requested approval to pay the late arriving \$532.00 bill of Ledin & Hofstad; Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger and Supervisors Graham and Belland voting "Aye."

Planning Commission recommendations:

Planning Commission Member Gary Valvoda reported that the commission had recommended that the board approve two proposed ordinances (the updated zoning ordinance establishing a new zoning district, amending the zoning map, and including text changes to zoning of cannabis businesses, adult uses, short term rentals, and campgrounds and associated modifications to permitted, interim, and conditional uses and the amendment establishing the map for a new zoning district). Chair Schlaeger noted the general unhappiness of many of the public hearing attendees and asked for discussion. Supervisor Graham expressed his disagreement with how the draft ordinance is currently written. Supervisor Belland noted that, after public comment at the hearing, additional time may be needed to study the issues and recommended tabling action. Chair Schlaeger noted that the township could fall back on the county ordinance. After clamor from the audience, Chair Schlaeger noted that security from the Pine County sheriff's office was present and would maintain order if outbursts continued. Town counsel recommended that both ordinances be passed as drafted. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, not to adopt either proposed ordinance. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Graham, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye." Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to declare the town's intent to defer to the county ordinances in the regulation of cannabis businesses and to direct the town clerk to work with the county attorney to take necessary steps to give effect to that intent. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Graham, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye."

PB _____ JG _____ JMS _____ JS _____ DPS _____

Old Business:

Septic issues: Clerk Swanson updated the board on the situation regarding PID 295231000 (1995 Royal Heights Lane), noting that the property had been visited during the previous day's road inspection, that the property is filled with abandoned junk, and that photo documentation had been taken. He reported that the board had received a query from the bank owners about who is responsible for well and septic systems and garbage disposal. Clerk Swanson had reported that the property is in the Shoreland zoning district so that the county is responsible for well and septic systems and that the landowner is responsible for garbage disposal. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize the clerk to direct town counsel to negotiate with the owner's counsel in an attempt to get the property cleaned up. The motion carried unanimously.

Zoning issues: Regarding PID 295137000 (5214 Royal Woods Road), a pre-trial hearing is scheduled for 15 May in Pine County District Court. No additional action has been taken regarding PID 290043000 (8011 Cabin Drive).

Road issues: Clerk Swanson noted a culvert price list from East Central Culverts & Supplies (Mora) in members' packets.

Campus building issues: Treasurer Saumer reported that Talon Sanitation is now providing garbage and recycling services to the town. Waste Management has been uncooperative in arranging for the return of their containers.

Clerk Swanson noted that Travis Kemen had sent a list of recommendations to consider in writing a security policy. These will be referred to the planning commission for study and recommendation. No updates were available on the website domain change. Dan Saumer reported that most carpet tiles appear to be holding with the new gluing; this issue will be removed the agenda. Chair Schlaeger reported that the next steps in the picnic area updating are waiting for good weather and will include coordination with wood chip replacement and potential drainage alterations. Supervisor Graham will speak with former Chair Marshall Pearson about minor changes in the cabinetry in the storage room. Clerk Swanson reported that Treasurer Saumer had purchased two new soap dispensers for the bathrooms. The existing dispenser in the women's bathroom had rusted through and Dan Saumer replaced it.

Chair Schlaeger, Supervisor Belland, and Clerk Swanson reported on their attendance at the Minnesota Association of Townships' spring short course in Duluth. Useful information was shared.

New Business:

Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to authorize staff to review and recommend a proposal on establishing an Amazon Prime Account through the Minnesota Association of Townships.

Clerk Swanson read Planning Commission Chair Jessica Johnson's letter of resignation, effective 22 April 2025. Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to accept the resignation with regret and to approve Resolution 2025-3 thanking Jessica Johnson for her leadership on the commission. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be part of these minutes.

Supervisor Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve Resolution 2025-4 accepting a Magnum 4426/4117 PRO series adaptable service cart as a donation from the Duane Swanson family. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be part of these minutes.

Septic Administrator Thompson updated the board on the situation of 4694 Hummingbird Road (PID 290215001). Ordinance section 401.43 requires a Type I septic system, but the owners are having difficulty finding a place with sufficient good soil to construct one system. She explained the variance process under Royalton's zoning ordinance and M.S. 503.01. She has repeated her recommendation to the owners that they need a wetlands delineation report done by the working meeting of the planning commission on 13 May.

PB_____ JG_____ JMS_____ JS_____ DPS_____

Treasurer Saumer noted that the town's certificate of deposit was up for renewal at 4.4%. Supervisor Belland moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to renew the certificate. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Forum:

Gail Downing read a letter from Wendy Tchida about coding of expenses. Troy Downing asked why the town was still enforcing the state building code. Denise Weis expressed her disappointment about having Pine County regulate cannabis in the township. Kathryn Tiede asked if the zoning ordinance would now remain the same. Peter McMahon noted that Royalton remains an agricultural township and that is why he purchased land here. Joe Zappa thanked the board for supporting the Pine County cannabis ordinance. Les Orvis thanked the board for listening to the people. Linda Latourelle thanked the board and planning commission for their hard work in the face of all the criticism.

Correspondence:

Clerk Swanson noted that East Central Energy had requested endorsement of and a financial contribution to its latest Broadband Equity Access and Deployment grant request, but that it had arrived after the last meeting and the deadline was prior to this meeting.

Joe Zappa, representing erba, thanked the board for their decisions and stated that erba would be designating a percentage of its net profits for community projects in the community.

Chair Schlaeger noted that the signed proposal for Rasmussen Services for lawn moving had been returned to them, that approval of the minor subdivision request of John Kemen had been submitted to Pine County, the 2025 report of town officers had been completed and returned to the county auditor, the report of town officers had been forwarded to MAT, and the March report of building permits had been submitted to the US census bureau.

The next regular meeting of the town board will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 27 May 2025.

At 8:35 p.m., Chair Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Graham seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

Jeff Schlaeger, Chair

John Graham, Vice-Chair

Pete Belland, Supervisor

Jenessa M. Saumer, Treasurer