

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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24 March 2026
Approved

7:30 p.m., 24 March 2026, Chair John Graham called the Royalton Township regular board meeting to order, with Supervisors Pete Belland and Jeff Schlaeger, Treasurer Jenessa Saumer, and Clerk Duane Swanson present. Zoning Administrator John Kemen, Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, and Road Superintendent Dan Saumer also attended, along with members of the public. The audience recited the pledge of allegiance.

General administrative detail

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the agenda with the addition of election update, Facebook, additional bills, additional correspondence, and administrative assistant position. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Graham seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of 24 February 2026 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

The board acknowledged receipt of the minutes of the annual meeting of 10 March 2026. They will be approved at the 2027 annual meeting.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the board of canvass as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer Jenessa Saumer read her February report, noting that as of 1 February 2026, the township had a beginning balance of \$301,791.79 in the treasury. Deposits were \$52,872.74; disbursements were \$60,641.20, with an ending balance on 28 February 2026 of \$299,622.80. Outstanding checks were \$5,599.47 and a certificate of deposit in the amount of \$52,868.10 was in place, leaving a spendable balance of \$294,023.33. Supervisor Belland moved, Chair Graham seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Graham called for discussion of checks #11813-11839 in the amount of \$15,133.25. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve payment of the bills. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Graham, Supervisor Schlaeger, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye." Clerk Swanson presented late-arriving bills from NAPA, Pine City (\$41.98 for antifreeze) and PERA (\$207.68 for retirement contributions). Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve payment of the late bills. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Graham, Supervisor Schlaeger and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye."

Planning Commission recommendations

The zoning ordinance draft was deferred to the working planning commission meeting.

Upon recommendation of the planning commission, Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the interim use permit application of Rodney Hoover to operate a tractor/machinery repair facility at 9187 Apple Road (PID 290277004) terminating upon sale of the business or land, to approve the findings of fact with nine (9) additional restrictions, and to authorize the office to file said approved application with the Pine County Recorder, all contingent on the receipt of the \$600 application fee. The motion carried unanimously.

Old business

Septic issues: The septic and garbage issues at 1995 Royal Heights Lane (PID 295231000) remain with Pine County.

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Septic Administrator Thompson described issues relating to the application for installing a holding tank at 5271 Royal River Road (PID 295110000) and requested that the board determine if this application needed to be considered in conjunction with the potential use of the parcel as a campground. Owner Adam Jenkauski replied that the current use is for family only but that he is anticipating an interim use permit application to the town for operation of a campground on the parcel. He acknowledged that the parcel was operated as a campground in 2025, that he was following state protocols for said operation, and that this holding tank may be part of that operation. Board and audience members commented, noting that the parcel is partially within the shorelands district and that the county may have to be involved in any discussion. By consensus, the board agreed to separate the installation of the holding tank from future discussions of the potential use of the property and authorized Septic Administrator Thompson to sign the septic application if all other aspects comply with the septic regulations.

Zoning issues: Regarding PID 290019001 (10696 Pine Bough Road), Clerk Swanson reported that legal counsel has issued a second “final” letter to the owner with a copy to the mortgage holder seeking cleanup of mattresses and other junk.

Zoning Administrator Kemen noted that he had not yet contacted the owners of 9451 Brunswick Road (PID 290157000) regarding the need for a fencing permit.

Brian Nielsen of 1437 Royal Heights Lane (PID 295223000) reported that he had submitted a building permit application last fall. Building Inspector Dan Rydberg has a copy along with building plans. Chair Graham thanked Mr. Nielsen for his update.

Road issues: Clerk Swanson reported that the call for gravel quotes had been posted and published as required. Three submissions were distributed to board members, who each opened one. All submissions satisfied the submission requirements. Bjorklund Companies quoted \$13.23 per cubic yard; Rydberg & Sons, Inc. quoted \$13.55 per cubic yard; Knife River quoted \$21.00 per cubic yard. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to award the gravel quote to Bjorklund Companies at a cost of \$13.23 per cubic yard for approximately 5,000 to 6,000 yards of modified class V gravel to be installed on selected town roads and to provide scale tickets to Road Superintendent Saumer. The motion carried unanimously.

Campus building issues: Travis Kemen continues to work on the website domain change. Supervisor Schlaeger will follow up with the placement of the “thank you” sign on the picnic shelter.

Treasurer Saumer updated the board on negotiations with ECE for installation of Internet and phone service. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Graham seconded, to commit to a five-year agreement with a ten percent reduction in charges. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Schlaeger had nothing new to report on the fire district study.

Clerk Swanson reported that Chair Graham and Clerk Swanson had received certificates of election and had submitted notarized copies of the oath of allegiance and were therefore eligible to assume office. He noted that three of five candidates had submitted campaign finance reports and that the remaining two had been contacted.

New Business

Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to continue participation in the silver life insurance benefit plan from the Minnesota Benefit Association and to authorize payment of the annual fee of \$805. The motion carried unanimously, with Chair Graham and Supervisors Schlaeger and Belland voting “Aye.”

Clerk Swanson reported now that the installation of security cameras is complete, the board needs to officially adopt the security camera policy that it approved prior to installation. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor

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Schlaeger seconded, to approve Resolution 2026-1 adopting a township security camera policy. The motion carried unanimously. Said resolution shall be a part of these minutes.

Clerk Swanson reported that the town had received two letters of application for seats on the planning commission. Chair Graham read letters from Jan Patterson and Paul Wilkens. Jan Patterson gave a brief introduction of herself; Clerk Swanson reported that Paul Wilkens was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Supervisor Belland moved, Chair Graham seconded, to appoint Jan Patterson to the planning commission, effective this date, replacing Chair Graham. The motion carried unanimously.

The board again discussed the Facebook site appearing to be an official township site. The administrator has inserted a statement that this is not an official town site, but the site still identifies itself as a "government entity." The name of the site has not been changed as requested by the town. The site administrator has offered to sell the page to the township for \$28,000. Board and audience members reacted to this price with near universal approbation. Several audience participants expressed the desire for the board to have a social media presence. Board members expressed the recommendation of the Minnesota Association of Townships to be incredibly careful before hosting a social media site due to potential legal implications.

At 8:21 p.m., Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to temporarily close the meeting, citing Minn. Stat. § 13D.04 subd. 5 for a performance review for Administrative Assistant Mollie Davis. Chair Graham, Supervisor Schlaeger, and Supervisor Belland moved to the town office to join Administrative Assistant Davis for the meeting. At 8:29 p.m., on the return of the supervisors, the meeting was reopened. It was announced that Administrative Assistant Davis had decided to resign her position effective immediately. Supervisor Belland moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to accept Ms. Davis's resignation and to authorize the office to post a job vacancy notice and to publish the notice in the 2nd and 9th of April editions of the Pine City Pioneer. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Forum

Public forum was offered. Jacque Belland sought a definition of the right-to-farm in the town's comprehensive plan and additional information on the town's certificate of deposit. John DeGray said that Pine County Administrator Kelly Schroeder had said that cannabis operators had to follow all township zoning regulations, including solar and fencing requirements within public rights-of-way. He asked why others needed interim use permits if cannabis operators did not. Troy Downing was told that any former candidates for the position of administrative assistant would have to reapply.

Correspondence

Clerk Swanson presented information on the upcoming MAT spring short course at Black Bear Casino in Carlton. Supervisor Belland moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to pay registration fees for up to four board members. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson shared an email from Dee Wolf advocating for chloriding town roads for dust control, claiming that the town's website domain was not legal, and questioning why members were not supporting cannabis growers. Road Supervisor Belland reported that the town has a policy of sharing costs for chloriding and that Maple Shores Drive has benefited from that policy in the past. He noted, however, that numerous residents are plowing snow across the roadbed and storing it in the right-of-way, thereby narrowing the traffic route for the town plow and potentially inhibiting emergency vehicles. Clerk Swanson reported that the website domain is still legal and that it is in the process of being changed to a .gov address before the upcoming deadline.

Clerk Swanson shared an email from Brian Stuckey questioning the fee schedule for buildings. He has been directed to Building Inspector Dan Rydberg for clarification and has been informed that the town supports the current fee structure.

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Clerk Swanson noted the solicitation for business from Carr's Tree Service.

In return to new business items, Septic Administrator Thompson asked the board to reconsider its decision regarding septic fees made at the reorganizational meeting. She proposed the following: adding a holding tank installation fee of \$250.00 and a re-inspection fee of \$50.00 and removing the certification of existing systems and repair mound/septic systems from the fee schedule. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve these recommended fee changes. The motion carried unanimously.

FYI

Chair Graham reported that the voting operations grant agreement with Pine County had been signed and returned to the auditor, that the February report of new housing units had been submitted to the US census bureau, and that the Rasmussen Lawn Services contract had been signed and returned.

The local board of appeal and equalization will be held at 9:00 a.m., Monday, 27 April 2026.

The annual road inspection will follow the local board meeting on Monday, 27 April 2026.

The next regular planning commission meeting will be at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, 28 April 2026.

The next regular board meeting will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 28 April 2026.

At 9:07 p.m., Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk

John Graham, Chair

Jeff Schlaeger, Vice-Chair

Pete Belland, Supervisor

Jenessa M. Saumer, Treasurer