

Royalton Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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28 April 2026
Approved

7:31 p.m., 28 April 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, Deputy Treasurer Brenda Belland, Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, and Road Superintendent Dan Saumer also attended, along with members of the planning commission and 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 campers, chloriding, and late arriving bill. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve the minutes of the reorganizational meeting of 24 March 2026 as presented. The motion carried unanimously,

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

Treasurer Jenessa Saumer read her April report, noting that as of 1 March 2026, the township had a beginning bank balance of \$294,023.33 in the treasury. Deposits were \$30,085.50; disbursements were \$15,980.11, with an ending bank balance on 31 March 2026 of \$319,128.59. Outstanding checks were \$10,999.87 and a certificate of deposit in the amount of \$52,868.10 was in place, leaving a spendable balance of \$308,128.72. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Graham seconded, to approve the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Graham called for discussion of checks #11844-11877 in the amount of \$17,133.53 with checks 11872 and 11876 being void. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to approve payment of the bills with the caveat that the McCoy Construction & Forestry bill be held until it can be verified whether the mileage is covered under routine maintenance. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Graham, Supervisor Schlaeger, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye." Clerk Swanson presented a late-arriving bill from the Minnesota Association of Townships for \$150 for the registration of Clerk Swanson and Deputy Treasurer Belland to attend the MAT Spring Short Course in Carlton. Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Chair Graham seconded, to approve payment of the late bill. The motion carried unanimously with Chair Graham, Supervisor Schlaeger, and Supervisor Belland voting "Aye."

Joe Zappa, representing erba Inc., took the podium to announce gifts of \$2,000 each to five local non-profit organizations: Braham Youth Outdoors, Dragons Wrestling Booster Club, North Country Hillbilly's Car Club, Pine City School Parent Teacher Organization, and Pine County Sheriff's Office Foundation. These awards are in fulfillment of the company's promise to the township supervisors to return one percent of its profits to the community. Mr. Zappa then announced a \$5,000 matching award to Royalton Township to be paid if, within one year, the township can raise matching funds from local residents, individuals, and organizations. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to

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draft a resolution for the May meeting to approve or deny acceptance of the matching grant, consistent with the recommendation of legal counsel. The motion carried two to one with Chair Graham and Supervisor Schlaeger voting “Aye” and Supervisor Belland voting “Nay”.

Planning Commission recommendations

The commission reviewed updated certificates of survey for the Johnson, Orvis, Tchida land split proposals. Consistent with the planning commission’s recommendation, the issue was referred back to the commission until additional documentation had been received.

The board acknowledged citizen complaints against itself and erba/Trawa and will await further study by the commission.

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

Old Business

Septic issues: The septic and garbage issues at 1995 Royal Heights Lane (PID 295231000) remain with Pine County. During its road inspection, the board noted that additional garbage had been dumped at the property, with new photographs having been sent to Pine County.

Zoning issues: Regarding PID 290019001 (10696 Pine Bough Road), Clerk Swanson reported that legal counsel has recommended no immediate action until the issues of foreclosure of the property have been resolved.

Supervisor Schlaeger will contact the owners of 9451 Brunswick Road (PID 290157000) regarding the need for a fencing permit.

Regarding 1437 Royal Heights Lane (PID 295223000), the county has visited the site. The clerk was asked to contact Building Inspector Dan Rydberg to remain in contact with the owner.

Road issues: Supervisor Belland reported that the road inspection on 27 April had gone well. Minutes and detailed recommendations will be forthcoming.

Campus building issues: Travis Kemen continues to attempt to contact Kent Bombard about transfer of the administration of the website. Clerk Swanson presented, and the board approved, a draft thank you letter to the Rock Creek Lions for their excellent work on installing the picnic shelter and drainage upgrades.

Treasurer Saumer reported that East Central Energy has decided that Royalton Township must have a business phone plan rather than a residential one. This change will increase monthly phone charges from \$24.95 to \$29.95. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to accept the additional charge. The motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Schlaeger and Road Superintendent Saumer reported that the fire district consultant had completed his study and that the consultant will share the massive report with the township shortly.

There was no further update on the composition of the planning commission.

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New Business

Clerk Swanson reported on his attendance at the MAT Spring Short Course, noting especially potential pitfalls for townships issuing credit cards to officers. Deputy Treasurer Belland reported that the new officer track she attended contained very useful information.

Clerk Swanson noted the written report of the Rush City Fire Department.

Supervisor Schlaeger moved, Supervisor Belland seconded, to hire Teresa Luginbill as administrative assistant at the standard township wage for between 16 and 20 hours per month, with additional training hours as authorized by the clerk. Said benefits to include Earned Sick and Safe Time and Paid Family Medical Leave consistent with state law and regulations. A performance review will occur within 90 days. The motion carried with two “Ayes,” zero “Nays,” and one abstention, the latter being Chair Graham because of a family connection to Mrs. Luginbill.

Clerk Swanson updated the board on the redetermination of benefits for parcels impacted by Judicial Ditch No. 6 of Isanti, Chisago, Pine, and Kanabec counties. Most of the parcels are in sections 30 and 31, but a 1.3-acre section of Timber Drive in section 32 is also included. If decisions were made to upgrade the ditch, the township may incur assessments on this parcel.

Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to approve Resolution 2026-2 accepting a donation of office equipment from Pete Belland. The motion carried with two “Ayes,” zero “Nays,” and one abstention, the latter being Pete Belland because he is the donor.

By consensus, the board authorized Clerk Swanson to contact Kevin Hofstad about recommendations for a replacement local legal counsel.

A request by Doug Stanger to chloride a portion of Raspberry Road south was reviewed. Supervisor Schlaeger will contact Mr. Stanger to recommend that chloriding be postponed until the road has been graveled later this year.

Supervisor Schlaeger noted that the road inspection had identified an increasing number of parcels on which people were living in campers. He noted that the ordinance has a limited number of exceptions where this is possible.

Public Forum

Public forum was offered. Priscilla Schneider strongly recommended that Paul Wilkens be appointed to the planning commission, noting that he comes with no ulterior agenda, is motivated to work with the township, and is incredibly knowledgeable.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

In a return to new business items, Zoning Administrator Kemen updated the board on questions raised by the owner of 8738 Greeley Loop (PID 290357000) about the possibility of constructing a structure on an existing cement slab that is too close to the road. Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to refer this issue to the planning commission for review. The motion carried unanimously.

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Chair Graham moved, Supervisor Schlaeger seconded, to authorize extra hours for training for Deputy Treasurer Belland. The motion carried with two “Ayes,” zero “Nays” and one abstention, the latter from Supervisor Belland because of a family connection.

By consensus, the board authorized Clerk Swanson to contact Nessel Township and report that Royalton will take responsibility for 540th Street on 1 June and that the west part of the street is scheduled to be graveled this year. Nessel will be asked to share one-half of the anticipated gravel costs, approximately 450 cubic yards at \$13.23 per yard.

FYI

Chair Graham reported that the statement of town officers had been sent to Pine County, that the town officer list had been sent to the Minnesota Association of Townships, that the March report of building permits had been sent to the US census bureau, and that the Rodney Hoover interim use permit had been filed with Pine County.

The next regular planning commission meeting will be at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, 26 May 2026.
The next regular board meeting will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, 26 May 2026.

At 8:35 p.m., Supervisor Belland moved, Supervisor Schlaeger 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