

# **TOWN OF SCHROEDER**

## **Minutes for Regular Board Meeting on April 8, 2025**

Present: Supervisors Bruce Martinson & Cathy Johnson; Treasurer Carla Menssen, Clerk Amy Brugge, Fire Chief Cody DeWandeler, and Residents of Schroeder.

Proposed amendments to the agenda included: approval of Tofte 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks donation as Other Business, the 1926 Red Pines as Other Business, Wetland Delineation study as Other Business, Skou Road plowing and the Hwy 61 MNDOT Overlay plan under Roads & Bridges, American Rescue Plan money, and Taconite Harbor Strategic Plan as part of Land Use Committee.

**C. Johnson motioned to approve the agenda as amended. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Johnson motioned to approve the minutes for the March 10, 2025 Regular Meeting. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Johnson motioned to approve the minutes for the March 11, 2025 Board of Canvass Meeting. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Treasurer's Report - reported by Treasurer C. Menssen for March 2025**

Provided an update to the board about the recent Grand Marais Bank card for the fire department coming through as a debit card, not as a credit card as intended. There were 3 charges for fuel on the fire department card that will need to be approved as claims today even though they had been processed as transactions already.

Disbursements = \$9,278.39   Receipts = \$35,324.15   Total Financial Assets = \$517,541.88

**C. Johnson motioned to accept the treasurer's report and approve claims present of \$27,538.21 paid by checks #5996 - #6020 and the 3 debit card transactions. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **West End Lodging Tax – January 2025 = \$1,512.67**

B. Martinson inquired if there had been any reporting completed this spring in relation to American Rescue Plan money. Clerk Brugge stated that there had not been and then when she attended the MAT year-end clerk training, they had stated that no reporting would be necessary if you did not spend any additional dollars. All money received had been used up in 2022. However, Clerk Brugge will further investigate current year reporting requirements and connect with past clerks to better understand reporting portal.

## **Board Reorganization & 2025 Wage Rates**

**The compensation review for 2025 wage rates was tabled until the May Regular Meeting.**  
Clerk Brugge was instructed to inquire what current rates are for Tofte & Lutsen.

**C. Johnson motioned for all officer roles to remain the same (B. Martinson as Chair, T. McKeever as Vice Chair, C. Menssen as Treasurer, & A. Brugge as Clerk); for all positions to remain the same (B. Martinson as Road & Bridge Supervisor, B. Martinson as Cemetery Supervisor, & T. McKeever as Recreation Supervisor). B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Johnson motioned for publications the local newspaper to remain the Cook County News Herald and posting sites to remain the Schroeder Post Office, Town Hall Bulletin Board, and the Schroeder Township website. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Johnson motioned for the Town depository to remain Grand Marais State Bank and the North Shore Federal Credit Union and Raymond James for investments. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Johnson motioned for the polling place to remain the Schroeder Town Hall. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Commissioner's Report** – Rena Rogers has been named the interim county administrator after the recent search did not yield a new administrator. The hope is that the board will be able to hire a permanent administrator by mid-June. A grant for just under \$400,000 in ARMER radio equipment grant was recently awarded to the county. There was discussion around emergency management in the county and the designation of Lutsen Town Hall as an emergency shelter site. The County approved \$8500 for Lutsen to purchase a generator for its service as a winter emergency shelter site. Also discussed was PILT money and lobbying efforts at the state Capitol, as well as Sen. Hauschild's March town hall in Grand Marais. The board reconfirmed that personnel from the County's Emergency Management office would attend the May Regular Board meeting and determined that they would like to invite officers from Lutsen & Tofte.

**Fire Report** – Chief DeWandeler reported that there were 3 calls last month, 1 of which was a total loss of a building outside of Tofte. He has been reviewing equipment and expiration dates for their safe use and/or certification as equipment. He will put together an estimate of potential replacement equipment and wildland gear, and then bring that as a proposal to the Board in a future meeting. B. Martinson discussed that he had additional discussion with the Tofte Board last month while attending their regular meeting about the potential to combine fire departments.

**Road & Bridge** – there was a report of damage to the Skou Road after plowing with the final snowstorm of the season. C. Johnson inspected and took pictures which she shared with the

Board. The Board agreed that there was not significant damage requiring further attention, but that the Skou Road should be graded again.

Road restrictions signs were placed on Sugarloaf Road on April 6, 2025 and will remain in place during the spring season.

There was discussion around the entrance of Fly Ash Road onto Highway 61 and the recent water on the road that was freezing overnight. Simultaneously B. Martinson gave an update about MNDOT's 2027 Mill and Overlay plan for Highway 61, which will span from roughly 4 miles prior to the County line to LeVeaux Road between Tofte & Lutsen. The board was in agreement that the entrance of Fly Ash Road should be improved to meet state requirements for entrance onto Highway 61.

**C. Johnson motioned to authorize the Clerk and Chair to collaborate on a letter together to be sent to MNDOT regarding Fly Ash Road. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Cemetery** – nothing to report

**Recreation** – Two bids were received for lawn mowing services, which the Board reviewed for comparison on price and services.

**C. Johnson motioned to accept the bid from Full Sun Services for a two-year contract. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

Garbage pick-up for the parks was discussed and a new collection person will be sought for this summer. The clerk will post information about the role at the Schroeder post office and inquire about billing options with the Tofte Transfer Station. A port-a-potty should be ordered for May 15 for the Baraga's Cross Park. C. Menssen reported that the Cross River Wayside will open on April 9, 2025. The dock at Dyers Lake will need to be placed in May.

**Town Hall** – A portion of the retaining wall at the town hall parking lot collapsed on 3/28/2025. The board elected to table resolving this until the next meeting as the weather will be more optimal for repair after that point.

**Land Use Plan Committee** – The next meeting of the Land Use Plan Committee will be on April 28, 2025. B. Martinson provided an update regarding the Cook County EDA's Taconite Harbor Strategic Plan, as he had attended the March meeting. At that time, he made a recommendation that the EDA add additional people to their sub-committee on the strategic plan (a Minnesota Power representative and a representative from Schroeder), which will now occur. The EDA is currently soliciting proposals and will meet again on May 5, 2025 to review proposals received.

**Schroeder Area Historical Society** – Gregg Westigard and Steve Schug from the Schroeder Area Historical Society provided an update on the organization's current projects and finances. The group is working on an oral history project with people who lived and worked at Taconite Harbor. The historical society has received a grant from Arrowhead Electric for new video

equipment to use with the project. Will have a new display on loan this summer on Erie Mining and will try to host a Taconite Harbor reunion the same weekend as Fisherman's Picnic.

There will be a meeting on April 16, 2025 about the organization meeting its financial obligations. One of the options on the table does include the potential to return the current building to the town of Schroeder, which is the owner and has a perpetual lease with SAHS that delineates SAHS as responsible for all operating and maintenance costs. Sub-leasing is an option under the current agreement and those options are being explored. C. Johnson requested a copy of the organization's annual budget. There may also be a request to the County for monies from the tourist tax. The organization's aim is to remain in the building; however SAHS wanted to be transparent regarding all the options currently on the table and inform the township as the owner of the building.

**Other Business** – Biernbaum Trust case: a new document was received providing notice of a hearing scheduled for June 18, 2025. B. Martinson had requested and received updated maps depicting the Skou Road easement. The Board determined that there is no reason to attend the scheduled hearing, as there is agreement with the depiction of the easement in the case.

**PERA Omitted Deduction Payment** – C. Johnson motioned to pay the \$475.81 for omitted PERA deductions in 2024. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Tofte 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks** – C. Johnson motioned to approve the \$1500 donation to the Town of Tofte for 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks proposed by residents during the Annual Meeting. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**1926 Red Pines** – C. Johnson reported that she called and spoke with Visit Cook County, and they indicated they are doing more research about the proposed logging of the 1926 Red Pines at the county line. B. Martinson reported that he had contacted Mike Young in Forestry at the DNR office who stated that because it is school trust property they are obligated by law to get income from the parcel, and that they had awarded a contract but that no one can do it until the following season. Board and clerk will prepare a letter to send to the Forestry Department at the MN DNR.

**Wetland Delineation Study** – In relation to the discussion in recent Land Use Committee meetings, B. Martinson communicated with CK Wetlands regarding a potential Wetland Delineation Study and provided board members with proposals for two different studies. The item was tabled and will be part of the May agenda.

#### **Correspondence**

**Sent** – SSA 2023 Tax Year Reply

**Received** – SSA 2023 Tax Year Request

**C. Johnson motioned to adjourn. B. Martinson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 9:19pm**