

# Pine Lake Township News

Volume 1, Issue 8

January 2016

## Township Officials

Our regular monthly meeting is held at 7:00 PM on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at the Pine Lake town hall near the intersection of U.S. 10 and County 53. You also may contact any of the following township officials:

**Supervisor: Ed Roberts – 346-5252**

**Supervisor: Bob Sieling – 320-260-4377**

**Supervisor: Tim Lachowitzer – 346-3127**

**Treasurer: Ken Guck – 346-3456**

**Clerk: Susan Schmid – 346-3436**

## Twp Elections and Voting

Pine Lake Township will hold their annual town board election at the Pine Lake town hall on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Voting hours are from 5 PM until 8 PM. The positions open for election are for one supervisor and township clerk. The supervisor position currently held by Tim Lachowitzer is for a regular 3 year term and the clerk position Susan Schmid is a two year term. **Filing for town board positions can be done at the home of the clerk. The filing periods begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> and end January 15<sup>th</sup>. The filing fee is \$2.00.**

The current town board would like to take this opportunity to thank those present at the 2016 annual meeting for their attendance and interest in local government. We consider ourselves fortunate to represent the people of Pine Lake Township.

## 2015 Activity

The major project that occurred in 2015 was the paving project for the Nitche Lake Road, Whispering Sands Trail and Whispering Sands Lane. The project officially started with the advertisement for bids on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Bids were opened on May 5<sup>th</sup> and awarded on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The successful bidder was Anderson Brothers. The final design with the lowest bid amount came in at \$777,784.10 with the grant amount subtracted.

A bond to provide interium financing was purchased by the township from Farmers and Merchants State Bank of New York Mills. The first pre-con meeting was held on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and the project was underway. The township board was very pleased with Anderson Brother's work on the project itself and their respect and concern for all property owners. The project was completed by mid August and the property assessment public hearing was scheduled for October 8<sup>th</sup>. A second public hearing was scheduled on October 14<sup>th</sup>. The project total came in under budget and the cost sharing ratios were reworked; this dropped the assessable amount from from the initial public meeting amount of \$631,270.00 to \$527,184.00 and the township portion changed from \$201,860.00 to the final of \$233,576.00. The type 1 non-residential sized and/or undeveloped parcels were set at \$1,569.00 and type 2 resential sized and/or developed parcels were set at \$4,707.00; both of these assessment amounts were passed. Two properties were given a deferment by the township board. Property owners have the option to pay their assessment amounts in full by the 2015 deadline or pay annually in conjuction with their property tax payments. The term for payments is 10 years, the interest rate is 3.49%.

Other areas that have received a good portion of our township dollars are fire protection and emergency services, grading roads, mowing ditches, snow plowing and sanding, dust guard and road stabilizer and miscellaneous road repairs.

In 2015 a total of \$2,400 was donated to the Perham Area Community Center, Perham Area Library, History and Cultural Association and the East Otter Tail County Fair. In order to be eligible to receive a donation from the township, the organization must send a representative to the annual meeting to make an official request and provide information about their organization.

A complete breakdown of our township income and expenses is presented at the annual township meetings in March.

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## Gophers and Beaver

Pine Lake Township currently pays a bounty on pocket gophers and beavers trapped within the township. Pocket gopher bounty is currently set at \$2.50. In 2015 the township paid \$1,642.55 in pocket gopher bounty. The township received \$179.70 from Otter Tail County to subsidize gopher trapping. Trappers must complete and sign a form indicating the section of the township in which the gophers were trapped. Forms can be obtained from the township clerk. The board also requests that the gopher feet be displayed on a board or cardboard in pairs. This can be done by stapling or tacking the feet to the board. Beaver bounty is currently set at \$25. The township paid \$50 in beaver bounty in 2014. Beaver bounty is paid only when the township supervisors request that beaver be trapped in a particular area. Residents of the township that are aware of beavers affecting township roads are encouraged to contact a township supervisor.

## Noxious Weeds

If your property has a noxious weed problem you will receive a notice from the township supervisors. Failure to comply with the notice is a misdemeanor and upon conviction, a fine of \$1,000 and imprisonment of 90 days is possible. In addition, failure to comply means that the weed inspector serving the notice may hire the control or eradication work done and the costs may be entered as a tax lien upon the land. For more information on noxious weeds in Minnesota refer to the document on the Otter Tail County website at [www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/land/forms/NoxiousPlantsMinnesota.pdf](http://www.co.otter-tail.mn.us/land/forms/NoxiousPlantsMinnesota.pdf).

## Road Ditches

Township officials would like to remind all township residents to refrain from planting crops or trees in ditches on town road right-of-way. There have been a number of incidents where this has been a sight hazard while traveling in our township. It is also difficult for farmers to make turns with their machinery if trees or crops are planted too close to the road. The township may apply for a land use fee for crops planted in township road right-of-way.

It is also unlawful for anyone to deposit any snow or ice in a public road right-of-way or to otherwise obstruct a public road. Minn. Stat. §§ 160.27, subd. 5(a)(1); 169.42, subd. Depositing snow or ice in a road also increases snowplowing costs, creates a potential public safety hazard, and could damage equipment.

## 2015 Annual Township Levy

At the 2015 Annual meeting township residents agreed to set the 2015 levy as follows:

General Fund: \$35,000  
Road and Bridge Fund: \$200,000  
Fire and Rescue Fund: \$30,000

**If you would like to have input in setting the township portion of the annual levy please attend the annual township meetings.**

## Projects for 2016

There are a few areas of township roads that will require a small amount of class 5 and grading in 2016. Township supervisors will conduct an annual road inspection this in the spring. Please report to any of the Supervisors concerns with township roads. Funds are planned each year for these expenditures and are set aside in order to accomplish road maintenance and repairs without further impacting township taxes.

## Annual Township Meeting

The annual township meeting will be held at the Pine Lake town hall on **March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016** following the township election (8:15 PM). **It is vital that residents of the township attend the annual meeting to set the township portion of the 2016 tax levy. It also gives township residents an opportunity to share any concerns they may have with other residents.**