

Pine Lake Township News

January 2017

Township Officials

Our regular monthly meeting is held at 7:00 PM on the 1st 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:

Chairman/Supervisor: Ed Roberts – 346-5252

Supervisor: Bob Sieling – 320-260-4377

Supervisor: Tim Lachowitz – 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 14th, 2017. Voting hours are from 5 PM until 8 PM. The positions open for election are for one supervisor and township treasurer. The supervisor position currently held by Bob Sieling is for a regular 3 year term and the Treasurer position currently held by Ken Guck 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 1st and end January 15th. The filing fee is \$2.00.**

Also on the ballot will be a vote for approval or denial of a Sunday Liquor License for Pine Lake Lodge on Mosquito Heights Road.

The current town board would like to take this opportunity to thank those present at the 2017 annual meeting for their attendance and interest in local government. We consider ourselves fortunate to represent the people of Pine Lake Township.

Annual Township Meeting

The annual township meeting will be held at the Pine Lake town hall on March 14th, 2017 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 2017 tax levy. It also gives township residents an opportunity to share any concerns they may have with the Board and other residents.

2016 Activity

The Nitche Lake road, Whispering Sands Trail and Whispering Sands Lane project was officially completed. Anderson Brothers completed the construction while Apex Engineering provided the engineering services. The final cost of the entire project came in at \$1,023,874.50 of which \$250,000.00 were received from a Federal grant leaving \$773,874.50 to be shared between adjacent land owners and the township. A bond to provide interim financing was purchased by the township from Farmers and Merchants State Bank of New York Mills. 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 of 2016.

A petition was presented to Pine Lake Township and Perham Township to close a portion of 460th Street. The major concerns of the petitioners is possibility of increased traffic and was brought primarily by the property owners in the new Theodorsen development and adjacent property owners. A vote was taken by Pine Lake and Perham Township Board members and the closing of the road was not approved.

In 2016 a total amount of \$3,000 was donated to the following: Perham Area Community Center, Perham Area Public Library, Cultural Center New York Mills, Perham Center for the Arts 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.

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.

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

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 2016 the township paid \$1,230 in pocket gopher bounty.

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 did not pay out any beaver bounty in 2016. 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.

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 to 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.

2016 Annual Township Levy

At the 2016 Annual meeting township residents agreed to set the 2016 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.

Discussion on Projects for 2017

There are a few areas of township roads that will require a small amount of class 5 and grading in 2017.

At the Annual Township Meeting the Board also wants to discuss the possibility of an overlay project for Minnesota Street and also Wavy Road.

Another point of discussion will be the future plans and options for 460th.

The board will also open up a discussion on the possibility of selling the Township gravel pit property.

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.