

Helena Township Board of Supervisors
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
 Minutes of 3/6/2025 | New Prague Fire Hall

Call to Order	Regular monthly meeting was called to order by Chairperson Nytes at 6 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.																																												
Present	Chairperson Edward Nytes, Supervisor John Wermerskirchen, Supervisor DeAnn Croatt, Treasurer Nathan Hutton, Clerk Heather Taylor DuCharme, Road Overseer Jeff Haag (6 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.), TJ Deutsch (6 p.m. – 6:10 p.m.), and Tom Johnson (6:10 p.m. – approximately 6:45 p.m.). Not present: Deputy Clerk Kimberly Carlberg.																																												
Ditch Mowing Quotes	Supervisors reviewed and compared quotes from TJ Deutsch and NorthStar Companies and asked Deutsch questions. On motion by Wermerskirchen, Deutsch quote approved and accepted; carried unanimously. Supervisors then discussed with Deutsch future ditch mowing on Baseline Avenue and Baseline Boulevard pursuant to obligations under shared road agreement with Cedar Lake Township.																																												
Claims/Receipts	<p>Review and discussion of claims and withholding payments. After review of claims and on motion by Croatt/Wermerskirchen, all claims were approved as presented for payment, including checks 7012-7025 and four ACHs totaling \$24,817.23; carried unanimously. Roll call votes: Nytes – yes; Wermerskirchen – yes; Croatt – yes. Pursuant to request by Treasurer and on motion by Croatt/Wermerskirchen, transfer of \$24,817.23 from savings account to checking account approved; carried unanimously.</p> <table><tr><th colspan="4">CLAIMS</th></tr><tr><th>Check#</th><th>Amount</th><th>Payee</th><th>Reason/Purpose</th></tr><tr><td>ACH</td><td>\$392.16</td><td>First Bank & Trust</td><td>Credit Card</td></tr><tr><td>ACH</td><td>\$1,559.00</td><td>PERA</td><td>Pension</td></tr><tr><td>ACH</td><td>\$4,602.35</td><td>US Treasury/IRS</td><td>Withholding</td></tr><tr><td>ACH</td><td>\$832.25</td><td>Minnesota Revenue</td><td>Withholding</td></tr><tr><td>7012</td><td>\$4,998.00</td><td>Art Johnson Trucking, Inc.</td><td>Grading/Gravel/Snow Removal</td></tr><tr><td>7013</td><td>\$150.00</td><td>Couri & Ruppe PLLP</td><td>Legal Fees</td></tr><tr><td>7014</td><td>\$85.65</td><td>Earl F. Anderson / Safety Signs</td><td>Signs</td></tr><tr><td>7015</td><td>\$6,207.00</td><td>Hakanson Anderson</td><td>Engineer Fees</td></tr><tr><td>7016</td><td>\$420.00</td><td>Minnesota Association of Townships</td><td>Education</td></tr></table>	CLAIMS				Check#	Amount	Payee	Reason/Purpose	ACH	\$392.16	First Bank & Trust	Credit Card	ACH	\$1,559.00	PERA	Pension	ACH	\$4,602.35	US Treasury/IRS	Withholding	ACH	\$832.25	Minnesota Revenue	Withholding	7012	\$4,998.00	Art Johnson Trucking, Inc.	Grading/Gravel/Snow Removal	7013	\$150.00	Couri & Ruppe PLLP	Legal Fees	7014	\$85.65	Earl F. Anderson / Safety Signs	Signs	7015	\$6,207.00	Hakanson Anderson	Engineer Fees	7016	\$420.00	Minnesota Association of Townships	Education
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Supervisor Items

7017	\$240.00	Minnesota Benefit Association	Insurance/Employee Benefits
7018	\$99.00	Suel Printing	Legal Publication
7019-7025	\$5,231.82	Board/Employees	Salary/Meeting Fees/Expenses

RECEIPTS			
Date	Amount	Payor	Purpose/Reason
2/6/2025	\$639.81	Comcast	Franchise Fees
2/14/2025	\$6,382.62	Bevcomm	Franchise Fees
2/28/2025	\$29,953.16	Scott County	Road Tax
2/28/2025	\$279.76	Optima Plus Savings	Interest
2/28/2025	\$232.96	Riverland Bank	Interest

Supervisors presented the following items/reports.

1. Croatt provided updates regarding several matters.
 - a. Croatt received a complaint from resident Kevin Green about the size of the rock/gravel on 250th. Supervisors discussed with Johnson the size of gravel/rock used. It was determined that the rock samples provided to Croatt by Green are not representative of the rock/gravel actually used by Johnson based on color and composition. It is possible the rock/gravel came from a nearby driveway or other private use.
 - b. Supervisors discussed with Johnson cost and gravel options from available pits as well as reviewing Township related topics. Johnson advised the Board that Cedar Lake Township had asked him at its recent meeting why his rates are better than its vendor. Johnson advised the Supervisors that he talked to Eric Bryan at Bryan Rock about the proposed 2025 costs and ways to mitigate costs to Township. Johnson requested that the Board/Clerk contact him if regular meeting times/dates change so that he can be at meetings. The Board advised him that all meeting times and changes are posted on the website and posting location.
 - c. Supervisors discussed the current status for 255th/Willow project, compared the planning stages to other projects (including KML and Raven Stream), and levy requirements for projects (including timing).
 - d. Croatt requested verification that an email had been sent to Scott County regarding the Township having no comment on the accessory dwelling issue (Taylor DuCharme confirmed it had).
 - e. Additional review of proposed shared road maintenance agreement with Cedar Lake Township. Haag proposed adding “both sides” to numbers 1, 2, 8, and 9 on the second page of the agreement to clarify that point. Supervisors requested Taylor DuCharme make revisions and resend to Cedar Lake Township for review/execution.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Supervisors and Haag discussed future dust coating on the shared road and other roads and associated costs. The cost in 2024 was approximately \$20,000 total and is expected to be approximately \$22,000 for 2025. Discussion of if/when to discontinue Township paid dust coating due to cost. Issue tabled. g. Review of Greater Minnesota Gas proposed rate increase. h. Croatt addressed recent contact by Great River Energy. GRE advised Croatt it wants to pull up the lines along Baseline where the trees have been cleared in the next week. GRE advised Croatt that it would pay for any damage to the right of ways and ditches caused by its work. Croatt explained to GRE that it is a shared road with Cedar Lake Township and that she would talk to Cedar Lake Township. Croatt talked to Joe Lambrecht from Cedar Lake Township. Croatt and Lambrecht agreed it would be appropriate to request a \$5,000/township escrow in case of damage, including damage by heavy equipment to the ditches and right of ways due to the ground being wet/saturated. Supervisors approved Croatt contacting GRE and requesting the \$5,000/township (\$10,000 total) escrow prior to engaging in additional work. Wermerskirchen requested Haag go out and take photographs of the construction area prior to additional work and again after to assess possible damage. Haag advised Croatt he has contact information for the GRE project manager. <p>2. Wermerskirchen provided information and updates regarding the following items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wermerskirchen asked for confirmation that the Code of Conduct had been signed by all Board members (Taylor DuCharme confirmed). b. Wermerskirchen provided a recap of the recent Jordan Fire Department meeting and the Board reviewed the current Jordan Fire contract. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Jordan Fire Department approved the purchase of a new \$2.1 million dollar truck without any discussion with or input from any township that it will be assessing for portions of the cost. The Jordan Fire Department is ordering the truck and it should take approximately three years to take delivery. The Jordan Fire Department advised the townships that they can start paying now or after received/delivered. ii. The Board discussed the problems associated with levying for a truck that hasn't been delivered or paid for yet. Helena Township's share of the costs by the Jordan Fire Department is 6.3788690% (approximately \$142,000 for the estimated truck cost). iii. When Wermerskirchen referred to the contract between Helena Township and the Jordan Fire Department, Greg Pekarna advised him that he wasn't concerned with and hadn't read the contract. iv. Chad Sandey from Sand Creek Township will be contacting
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	<p>Ted Kornder to add fire costs and related issues to the upcoming Scott County Townships Association meeting agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Wermerskirchen stated that the Jordan Fire Department representatives told him that they have been sending over fire call bills to Helena Township. Taylor DuCharme advised the Board she hasn't received any since last year (approximately spring of summer). Supervisors instructed Taylor DuCharme to send an email to the Jordan Fire Department, including Greg Pekarna, regarding this issue. vi. Supervisors discussed the option to develop a Jordan Rural Fire Association similar to the New Prague Rural Fire Association. vii. Discussion of other nearby townships regarding payments to the cities they contract with and amounts paid/services provided. viii. Nytes advised the Board that Belle Plaine Township recently attended a New Prague Rural Fire Association meeting to discuss. Belle Plaine Township asked at that meeting about changing from contracting through the City of Belle Plaine to New Prague. <p>c. Wermerskirchen was recently advised the "human fertilizer" contains forever chemicals. A resident at a meeting years ago had requested a permit to use it but at that time it was not known it was a forever chemical. The Township may need to develop ordinances regarding products such as these in the future in part due to the ability to develop land impacted by them.</p> <p>3. Nytes provided an update from the recent meeting of township chairs and county commissioners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Only seven of the ten Scott County townships had chairs present. b. There was a review of code compliance and what actions the Scott County Sheriff's Department will take. c. There was discussion of spacing of driveways for rural developments on county roads and when adding residential roads is appropriate. d. Blakely Township has a resident requesting a permit to grow a half-acre of cannabis. Some rules include that it cannot be visible from the road and must be appropriately fenced. There was discussion about the smell of cannabis as a crop. e. Scott County has believed that THC beverages in bars are going to be a big deal. f. Discussion of SMSC and its ability to grow cannabis and service THC products given its land is held in trust by the federal government. g. Review of accessory dwelling unit changes. h. Discussion about Imagine 2050 comprehensive plan, including Met Council recommending a change from 4 houses per acre to 3.5 houses per acre. i. Review of fire calls and distance from fire halls/departments within the county. Discussion of possibility of adding a fire district between
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	<p>Prior Lake, Savage, and Shakopee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. Review of county employee return to work status, how many are and will continue to work from home, and upcoming retirements (4) of high-level staff. k. The State of Minnesota declared a disaster area in Scott County for last year. l. Marty Schmitz was contacted by Faith Point Church requesting a permit to build a small building to hold urns. Scott County is unlikely to object. Supervisors and Board discussed possible issues if there is a separate structure and the church dissolves. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Nytes (and Taylor DuCharme separately) received a call from a fence contractor about requirements for a fence near a wetland. Nytes advised the contractor to contact Troy Kruphal at Scott County. 5. Keyland Homes has pulled out of its agreement with the Biseks to purchase and develop a residential neighborhood because there is too much black dirt. Croatt stated the needed changes to the adjacent county and city roads may have also contributed. This lowers the likelihood of imminent annexation or changes to the county roads.
Road Overseer Items	<p>Haag presented the following items/report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request to hold performance review after next workshop due to scheduling conflict after regular meeting. Supervisors agreed. 2. Received response from USPS regarding Willow Court mail posts. USPS prefers the swing away mail posts be clustered after the road project. Haag will advise engineer and take photographs. Haag advised that the mailbox posts on 245th/Indian will also need to remain clustered. 3. Scott County contacted Haag providing two options for weed control and dealing with "do not spray signs." Option 1 is that the County contacts residents with such signs and has them sign an agreement including but not limited to terms such as having to control weeds themselves and the County deals with residents who don't comply. Option 2 is that the Township contacts residents with such signs and has them sign an agreement and deal with residents who don't comply. Supervisors instructed Haag to advise Scott County that the Township chooses Option 1. 4. Dust coating will cost \$0.05/gallon for 2025. This is estimated to increase the overall cost from \$20,600 to \$22,000. Supervisors instructed Haag it is okay to schedule dust coating. 5. Haag asked to go attend a class in Mankato on pavement life. Supervised approved his attending the class.
Treasurer Items	<p>Hutton presented the following items/reports.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of road tax and franchise fees receipts 2. Update from 2/28/2025 bank meeting (Riverland needs minutes, First Bank & Trust sweep account having only Hutton as signer). 3. Update of Couri & Ruppe PLLP claim from December. 4. Review of fund balances, escrow balances, debt services (WCLD, Raven Stream) tracking total project costs and assessments paid annually, AA

	<p>Endeavors emails regarding escrow, and levy payment tracking.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Discussion of amounts remaining in covid relief fund. On motion by Croatt/Wermerskirchen, moving \$4,3711.11 from covid relief fund to general fund approved; carried unanimously. 6. Review of report showing \$30,000 moved from interest fund to general fund after February meeting. 7. Additional discussion of levying for Jordan Fire Department trust and roof. Supervisors will ask attorney about this issue at the Scott County Townships Association spring meeting. 8. On motion by Wermerskirchen/Croatt, Treasurer's Report approved as presented; carried unanimously.
Clerk Items	<p>Taylor DuCharme presented the following items/report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Office of the State Auditor had a link to a letter in a recent email providing guidance on townships and credit/debit card use. Provided a copy of the letter to Hutton for additional review and discussion of policies. 2. Update on recent MATIT email regarding valuation of insuredTownship property. There are no real property or vehicles insured. MATIT later sent a correction email regarding this. 3. Advised Board of upcoming Scott County Board of Adjustment meeting. Township is not on the agenda for that meeting. 4. Correspondence received from Scott County Transportation regarding its planned brush and tree clearing in right of way along CR 15. No action taken. 5. Review of Met Council grant application for community tree planting. No action taken. 6. Review of plans and specs provided by engineer for 255th/Willow road improvement project. On motion by Wermerskirchen/Croatt, plans and specs approved as presented; carried unanimously. 7. Taylor DuCharme asked by Supervisors if there have been any all clerk/treasurer meetings. Taylor DuCharme advised the Supervisors there have not been any such meetings but the clerks are active communicating with each other as a group by email.
Minutes	<p>Review by Supervisors of proposed 2/5/2025 regular meeting, 2/19/2025 workshop meeting minutes, and 2/28/2025 Special Meeting Minutes for bank meeting (incorrectly titled "Workshop"). On motion by Croatt/Wermerskirchen, minutes approved; carried unanimously.</p>
Motion to Continue	<p>At 8:20 p.m. on motion by Wermerskirchen/Nytes, meeting continued to 3/19/2025 workshop; carried unanimously.</p>

Dated: 4-3-2024

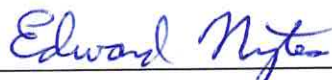
Respectfully submitted



Heather Taylor DuCharme, Clerk

Dated: 4-3-2024

Approved



Edward Nytes, Chairperson