

# Town of Duluth

Town Board Meeting November 14, 2024

## **Interviews:**

5:45 p.m. Laura Herzog  
6:10 p.m. Nellie Torgeson  
7: 34 p.m. Seth O'Donovan

**Call to order:** The regular meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:33 p.m. Supervisors Rolf Carlson, Stacia Grayson, Saprina Matheny, and Jim Ward were present. ArMand Nelson was absent. Fire Chief Bob Engelson, Planning Director Liz Strohmayer, Planning Secretary Beth Mullan and Police Chief Mark Haselow were present. Clerk Nicole Chattersson was also present.

**Approve Minutes:** Under Fire Department remove potential cost of fire truck. With that change the minutes were approved.

**Approve Agenda:** The agenda was approved as written.

**Finances:** The Treasurer provided a report a Beginning Balance of \$687,404.99, with Deposits of \$3,915.91 and Expenses of \$64,841.89, for an Ending Balance of \$ 626,479.01. Stacia moved to approve the financial statement and payroll. Saprina seconded. The motion passed. The payroll net pay account distributions and the claims list for approval were approved and signed.

**Public Comment:** No public comment

## **Department Reports**

**Police:** Mark and Nicole are working on gathering the requested information for the union contract renewal.

**Fire:** There has been an issue with Waste Management not picking up the garbage at the hall on Ryan Road. It was suggested that the Fire Department bring the trash to the Town Hall. Since Waste Management had taken over the route there was a period of time where Waste Management did not pick up the trash as scheduled. The Department wanted to withhold payment as the service was not rendered, now Waste Management has sent a notice that they will be passing this past due amount to a collection agency. Bob will reach out to Waste Management to resolve this issue. They are meeting with a grant writer to assist with writing a grant request for a new engine. There would be a 5% match required for the Township.

**Planning and Zoning:** The Planning Commission was asked to look at the "Welcome to Duluth Township" building pamphlet. This pamphlet needs to be updated to properly reflect the most recent ordinance. It was discussed when a piece of property changes hand, we could send the pamphlet to new owners in the Township. St. Louis County shared their draft Cannabis Ordinance. Liz will share with the Planning Commission for their review. Liz stated that we could default to the state law. Liz provided a two-page letter to the Sieverts. They are in violation for five things. They have land disturbance over five thousand square feet. They removed over 25% of vegetation without a plan in place. There is a lack of erosion and sediment control BPMs. Their LUP and LDP applications were incomplete. There is no current update regarding the ongoing issues with Mr. Zurcher's property. ArMand recommended in an email for the Town Board to move forward with hiring MS4 consulting firm Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH).

Motion: A motion was made by Stacia to move forward with hiring Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH) as a MS4 consulting firm. Saprina seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Legal:** Nothing to report.

**Roads:** The Torgeson Road project is nearing completion. The snow plowing contracts for the Mace and Englund Roads and the Town Hall completed and will be serviced by JBL Trucking for the 2024-2025 winter season. Jim addressed the requests made

by the County for winter snow plowing on Township Roads. They also updated the contract with the resident at the end of the Shonberg for turnaround.

**Town Hall:** ArMand shared some information about First Community Foundation/Victory Fund. The Victory Fund, a local Foundation, is sponsoring training to township citizens on CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation), use of AED devices (automated external defibrillator) and methods for mental health first aid to for CPR training and menta. The Board agreed that this would be a excellent opportunity for our residents and we will move forward. The Presidential Election was successful for our Township. Morning of election we had a total of 1,571 voters registered as of 8:00 a.m., there were 84 election day registration. There were 300 absentee/early voters reported by the County and a total of 1,146 cast ballots. This was a HUGE turnout for our Township. The Clerk would like to thank the Election Judges who serve our Township for the excellent job they did ensuring Duluth Township administers a fair and accurate election. The DNSSD Board of Managers Annual Election is coming up. They requested that the Township pass a resolution in support of the candidate.

**Resolution 11142024:** Saprina moved to accept resolution 11142024 Jim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** We received two bids for the kitchen project, one for twenty-one thousand and one for nineteen thousand. Stacia recommends going with ASU, as they are the ones who completed the ramp project, and we are pleased with their work. Stacia also provided some information on appliances for the kitchen project. She found that a standalone fridge would cost \$2,950.00 and the standalone freezer would also cost the same amount of \$2,950.00, The cost for an over the range hood with microwave would cost between \$250.00-300.00. It was discussed that we will hold off on purchasing a dishwasher until further research can be done.

**Motion:** Saprina moved to approve the bid that ASU provided for \$19,000.00 for the Kitchen project. Stacia seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Stacia moved to purchase the following appliances: freezer-less fridge, stand-alone freezer, and an over the range hood with microwave for up to \$7,500.00 out of capital improvement. Jim seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Stacia moved to authorize the Clerk and Treasurer to purchase the appliance before the next board meeting. Saprina seconded. The motion passed unanimously

**Materials Management:** There will be an advertisement for a backup recycling attendant in the next newsletter.

**Cemetery:** Buckthorn issue at the cemetery will have to wait until spring.

**Communications:** There is a new Minnesota law that states that any municipality who administers absentee voting must have a .gov website. The Clerk with work with the Deputy Clerk on getting more information and how to get this project completed with our website administrator.

**Supervisor Report:** How should we move forward with Congdon Trust land? Saprina met with the City of Duluth, and they are interested in entering into a MOU with the Township to allow the Township to become the stewards of the Congdon trust land.

**Motion:** Saprina moved to spend up to \$2,000.00 on legal fees out of the ARPA fund for legal fees surrounding creating a MOU with the City of Duluth. Stacia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Saprina completed a lot of research regarding the NSCR. She had found that their non-profit organization status was dissolved by the state as the appropriate forms were not submitted, and their tax-exempt status was also revoked due to non-filing. It appears that this has since been corrected. Question: What do we want to do with their current request for 2025? Saprina recommends for 2025 we authorize \$5,000.00 once they provide their budget information and then dissolve the MOU. Then add a budget line for recreation and create an application process. Saprina will communicate that we will send the \$5,000.00 and what we need from them to receive the money.

**Personnel:** ArMand would like to attend the MAT Annual Conference in St. Cloud and is seeking approval for registration, hotel, mileage, and meals.

**Motion:** Saprina moved to spend up to \$1,500.00 for ArMand to attend the MAT Annual Conference in St. Cloud. Stacia seconded the motion.

The Board discussed the three candidate options for the Planning Secretary position.

**Motion:** Stacia moved to hire Laura Herzog on a 90-day probationary period. For up to 15 hours/week at a rate of \$16.00/hour. Saprina seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Rolf will mail an offer of employment letter to Laura.

**Old Business:** No old business.

**New Business:** No new business.

**Correspondence:**

- Duluth Township Newsletter
- CLP Powerlines
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- NSMB-North Shore Management Board
- MPT

**Calendar Events and Meeting Schedule**

- November 28-29, 2024, Clerk's Office Closed (Thanksgiving)
- Thursday, December 12, 2024, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting with a cookie and coffee social to follow
- December 24-27, 2024, Clerk's office closed
- December 31, 2024-January 1, 2025, Clerk's office closed
- January 9, 2025, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting
- February 13, 2025, 6:30 p.m. Town Board Meeting
- February TBD 2025 Budget Meeting

**Adjournment:** Saprina moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. Stacia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.