

Avon Township

Staff Manual

prepared by

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Avon Township

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Summary: This manual is designed to be a reference guide for members of the Avon Township Board of Supervisors. It provides answers to frequently asked questions, forms and other information.

Section 1. General

Anderson Driveway – as a part of the agreement to purchase the land on which the Town Hall is sited, the Supervisors agreed to plow the Anderson driveway, on the condition that they annually request it.

Annual Meeting – 2nd Tuesday of March. Road Report – must be written and posted, but doesn't have to be read. Minutes of the Annual Meeting should be written within a few days of the meeting and then signed by moderator. There is an Annual Meeting notebook with minutes, etc. from previous meetings. There is a black book for residents to sign. A typical agenda is in the files. Only residents can vote and/or make and second motions. Post and publish twice. Refreshments are provided (*i.e.*, cookies, popcorn, water).

Appeals & Equalization Board – this gives residents an opportunity to contest the valuation of property. The meeting is mostly handled by the County. The Assessor's office schedules the date – usually about the third Monday in April – and provides the notice that must be published and posted. At least one Supervisor must be trained (now on-line); training is valid for four years. There is a notebook for past meeting minutes. The Clerk takes minutes. Put the Supervisor's training certificates in the notebook.

Appeals and Adjustments – requests from requirements of zoning ordinances, but not to any use that is prohibited in that zoning. See 462.357 Subd 6(2).

Attorney – the Township attorney is currently Adam Ripple, Rinke-Noonan. 320.251.6700. His fee is \$420/hour.

Audit Board – reviews books of Clerk and Treasurer, as a check and balance, to verify accuracy and completeness. See MN Statute 366.21. Typically meets after the February Supervisor meeting (*it must be at least one week before Annual Meeting*). However, it can also be done during a regular meeting, if desired. The Treasurer prepares a written statement of money received from any source and all money paid out, and book of accounts. Clerk furnishes a statement regarding money paid to town treasurer and info related to fiscal affairs of Town. At meeting: (a) randomly pull some claims – check that the amount on the check matches the bank record; (b) compare to both Clerk and Treasurer records; (c) check for any sign of alterations, proper signatures, missing files, numbering disparities; (d) randomly check receipts in similar manner. Keep voided checks. When finished, summarize what was done and the results to prepare report of Audit Board. The Report contains a statement of the fiscal affairs of the town, with an estimate of the sum necessary to be raised for current expenses. A mandatory audit is required if the population is greater than 2,500 and revenue more than \$500K.

Avon City – Jodi Traut-Austing is the current City Administrator. Send the City copies of meeting agenda's and minutes – we have an exchange set up, though in practice we often forget.

Banking – MAT recommends that more than one officer should be an owner/authorized user on all financial accounts. Check signatories should include: Treasurer (& Deputy), Clerk (& Deputy), and Chair

and Vice-chair of the Supervisors. MAT also recommends that multiple people should have access to bank account and its records. The bank requires new signatures annually.

Beacon – Land management program. At one time we paid \$1.00 per month for access, but it seems to be free lately. URL: <https://beacon.schneidercorp.com/>. It is password protected; contact the Clerk for the login and password. This program is especially useful to generate mailing labels.

Bicycle Tours/Fun Runs/etc – Any event on a Town road must be pre-approved by the Supervisors. If an event occurs on County roads, the County requires the resident to complete a form and requires Town permission if the event also occurs on Town roads. A similar Town form is available to be completed, or the resident can provide a copy of the form given to the County. This form can be used for bike tours, bike races, marathons, 5K or fun runs, and so on. The County also has a parade permit and street dance form. Copies of the form is in the files.

Bids/Quotes – if the cost is expected to exceed \$175K, you must advertise (publish/post) for sealed bids. Lowest responsible bid must be taken. Between \$25 – 175K you need at least two quotes in writing (if can't get a second, then document it in writing); negotiable; don't have to take the lowest one. Under \$25K, open market. Minutes must show authorization of contracts. Note, this pertains to selling as well as purchasing, and these transactions are considered separately. Consider trading in an old grader for \$80K and buying a new one for \$240K. In this case, at least two written quotes are required to sell since it is more than \$25K and two bids to buy the new one, even though the final sale price is under the \$175K requirement for sealed bids.

When posting bids review MN Statute 365.37 subdv 3. Needs to be published for two weeks, posted in three most public places in the town

Budget – the Township budget is set annually at the Audit meeting which is typically held the second week of February. The budget provides guidance for recommending a levy for residents to vote on at the Annual Meeting. See the minutes from the Audit Board meeting for samples.

Building Permits – see Construction Site Permits.

Canvass Board – essentially certify the election within two days of the Township election. Can be part of a regular meeting, otherwise a special meeting must be called and posted. The Board examines the election summary/report prepared by the Clerk and signs off on it. If a tie in the election – flip a coin or pick a card or draw straws. If question of how to proceed, continue the meeting and get advice from the County. Ballots must be saved for 22 months.

Certificate of Compliance – We usually learn about the need for these from a resident sent by the County. Procedure – resident completes form (*see folder or files*). Pays fee (currently \$25). Planning Commission reviews information and makes a recommendation to the Supervisors. The Supervisors review documents and the make a final decision. Chair signs the document. Clerk provides resident with signed copy.

Certificate of Real Estate Value – available through the MN Dept of Revenue website at https://www.mndor.state.mn.us/ecrv_search. Also available on the County Extranet Site.

Compost Facility – The City allows Township residents to use the compost facility for an annual fee. Contact the City in early spring to make payment.

Computer – Staff are issued a computer to use for the duration of service. It must be returned at the completion of service. Do NOT password protect the computer.

Conflicts of Interest – any Supervisor or other Township personnel should not have a “personal interest” in financial, or other, decisions of the Town. See document C6000 from MAT. Complete the Affidavit of Official Interest in a Claim. Supervisors may have a contract with the Town if there is a unanimous vote to pass a resolution authorizing Supervisors to contract with the Town; submit an affidavit with each claim. See MAT document C6000 – Statutory Conflicts of Interest.

Construction Site Permits – nearly all are handled by the County but residents will require the Clerk’s signature (*except in Shoreland*). This was added because residents had been bypassing Town driveway permits. Thus, to ensure that the Township is aware of any project, the Supervisors requested the County require the signature of the Clerk. When presented with a permit: (a) make a copy of the permit (photograph with phone or other); (b) sign the permit; and (c) then ask the resident if the project will impact the driveway and road. If so, give the resident a driveway permit to complete and pay the driveway permit fee which will then be discussed by the PC and approved by the Supervisors. Inform the resident the work cannot begin until the driveway permit is formally approved.

If the project is in the Joint Powers area, the Township is responsible for the CSP. The procedure: The Clerk (*or other Town official*) receives from a resident or County a request for a CSP in the UE area. The Clerk forwards the request to our Zoning Administrator (*i.e.*, Nancy Scott) who will issue the permit. The Clerk also alerts the Supervisors and PC about the request to keep everyone informed, especially regarding neighborhoods in which the project is occurring. The Zoning Administrator (ZA) requests from the applicant the standard County fee for the requested CSP. Once the fee is received, the ZA takes the necessary action to approve the request and ensure that the project follows all pertinent rules and guidelines. The ZA will provide periodic updates to the Township (Clerk) on the status of the application. The ZA completes the necessary work, signs the permit and provides a copy to the applicant. The ZA sends the original to the Clerk along with the applicant’s check and invoice for issuing the permit. The ZA fee is currently the same as the permit. The Clerk sends a receipt to the applicant for the fee payment and also sends a copy of the completed CSP to the County as per our MOU.

Contracts – see the Clerk Manual for samples of contracts to be used for Services. From MAT and available online, too.

County Contacts – Brian Krippener is the County representative to the Township. Send him notes of public hearings, etc. Before a road project contact someone in the survey office (*i.e.*, Dean Schramel, dean.schramel@co.stearns.mn.us), so they can check any monuments before beginning.

Culverts – landowner responsible to clear an approach culvert to allow drainage in the ditch (see Township Insider, Summer 2024, p 52).

Data Practices – the Town is not under the Data Practices Act, but should respond to requests. Anything available to Supervisors for a meeting must be included in a public packet – these should be available if audited.

Deer – a 1987 law shifted most responsibility to local road authorities for vehicle killed deer. Contact Sheriff's office for details. An email from Deputy Sheriff Garrett Okerstrom, August 31, 2021 said, "from my understanding, for any unsalvageable wildlife, the responsibility falls on the appropriate organization to remove the animal from the roadway. My direction would be that you can dispose of them as you please."

Demolition – According to Brian Krippner, a permit is not required for demolition of houses on a property.

Deputy Clerk / Deputy Treasurer – appointed by Clerk and Treasurer, respectively. The Town board has no authority to appoint. The deputies have authority to act with full power in absence or disability. Deputy Clerk should also get a notary stamp. Both need to take oath of office and a certificate issued. Put oaths in Organizational/Qualification notebook.

Disposal of Records – Don't. We have passed a resolution adopting the MN Historical Society Retention Schedule, however, we have had confirmation from them yet. Once available, check any item before tossing. List applicable items before being discarded or shredded. Have list noted in next meeting minutes. For more information, check MAT.

Ditch Cutting – see Minn. Stat. 160.232. First 8 feet may be mowed anytime. From July 31 – Aug 31 the entire ROW can be mowed. After August 31 to the next July 31 the entire ROW may only be mowed for safety reasons and may not be mowed to less than 12 inches.

Donations – The Supervisors must pass a resolution to accept any donations. See Resolution book or computer files for examples. Town Boards may donate/contribute to: (a) other units of government; (b) airports; (c) cemeteries, see rules; (d) county parks; (e) health and safety (local emergency management organization, EMT, safety council, etc., see rules); (f) historical societies; (g) libraries; (h) membership dues (i.e., MAT or other); (i) recreational services (including American Legion, nonprofit for health and social programs, youth or senior center); (j) other road authorities. (see MAT document library, F-1000 for more info & details).

Donations made by the Town must be authorized by Minnesota Statute. If funds are donated to unauthorized organization, the Supervisors are personally liable.

Driveways – Any resident who plans to move, change the physical dimensions, or slopes of an existing driveway, or add a new driveway to his/her property requires an Avon Township driveway permit. Changing the surface material does not require a driveway permit. Driveway permits are required to ensure that Township roads are not damaged, and that no public safety hazard is created by the driveway. There is a damage deposit that is collected when the permit is issued; it is refunded if no damage is done to the Town road during construction. See Driveway Standards document. The procedure for issuing a permit:

- Resident completes application & pays fee (*check payable to Avon Township*)
- Give resident a receipt (*copy to Treasurer with monthly bills*) & alert resident that work cannot be started until driveway permit issued
- Verify info on application is correct (*County website*)
- Take picture for file before work begins
- Approval – Put on agenda for Planning Commission meeting. Packet should include a completed application with drawing, and photograph of site. PC discusses and makes recommendation to Supervisors who discuss/approve at next meeting. Permit is signed. Make copy of signed permit. Give original to resident.
- Once resident completes work, photo retaken, assess damage, and report at next Supervisor meeting who approves or not return of the deposit. If so, complete reimbursement form and give to Treasurer.

Driveway - Pillars – Pillars at the end of a driveway should not be in the Township road right-of-way and do not need a CSP; they are treated like a fence.

Drug & Alcohol Policy – The Town is not required to have a policy; but if we do, contact Town attorney about setting a policy and complying with applicable laws (*MAT News – Sept-Oct 2015, p 3*). Alcohol is not allowed in the Town Hall per decision of the Supervisors.

Duties. Clerk – before each meeting, check “Section 2. Things To Do Guide. Clerk “ to ensure that everything is being done on time. MN Statutes 367.11 provides a listing of the Clerk Duties, too (copied below). It shall be the duty of the town clerk to:

- a) to act as clerk of the town board and keep in the clerk's office a true record of all of its proceedings;
- b) unless otherwise provided by law, to have custody of the records, books, and papers of the town and file and safely keep all papers required by law to be filed in the clerk's office;
- c) to record minutes of the proceedings of every town meeting in the book of town records and enter in them at length every order or direction and all rules and regulations made by the town meeting; to file and preserve all accounts audited by the town board or allowed at a town meeting and enter a statement of them in the book of records;
- d) to record every request for a special vote or special town meeting and properly post the requisite notices of them;
- e) to post, as required by law, copies of all bylaws made by the town, and make a signed entry in the town records, of the time when and the places where they were posted and record in full all ordinances passed by the town board in an ordinance book;
- f) to furnish to the annual meeting of the town board of audit every statement from the county treasurer of money paid to the town treasurer, and all other information about fiscal affairs of the town in the clerk's possession, and all accounts, claims, and demands against the town filed

with the clerk; and

- g) to perform any other duties required by law.

The Clerk never votes except in the case of filling a vacancy for a Supervisor. The Clerk cannot be the tie-breaker.

Duties. Treasurer – MN Statutes 367.16 provides a listing of the Treasurer Duties, which are summarized below. See also check “Section 2. Things To Do Guide. Treasurer.” It is the duty of the town treasurer to:

- (1) receive and take charge of all money belonging to the town, or which is required to be paid into its treasury, and to pay it out only upon the lawful order of the town or its officers;
- (2) preserve all books, papers, and property pertaining to or filed in the treasurer's office;
- (3) keep a true account of all money received as treasurer and the manner in which it is disbursed, in a book provided for that purpose, and provide the account, with the treasurer's vouchers, to the town board of audit, at its annual meeting, for adjustment;
- (4) deliver, on demand, all books and property belonging to the treasurer's office, and all money in the treasurer's hands as treasurer, to a qualified successor;
- (5) keep in a suitable book a register of all town orders presented for payment that cannot be paid for want of funds, with the date presented, and to endorse upon the back of each the words "not paid for want of funds," with the date of the endorsement, signed by the treasurer;
- (6) draw from the county treasurer, from time to time, money received by the county treasurer for the town, and receipt for it;
- (7) make and file with the town clerk, within five days preceding the annual town meeting, a statement, in writing, of the money received from the county treasurer and all other sources, and all money paid out as town treasurer. The statement shall show the items of money received and from whom, on what account and when each was received. The statement shall also show the items of payment and to whom, for what purpose, when and the amount of each that was made, and the unexpended balance on hand; and
- (8) perform other duties required by law.

eMail – All Township staff are issued a personal email and it is used for Town business. There is no policy on using personal or private email for Town business. However, if the Town is sued, it is possible that email will become part of the public record. Thus, any personal email will be open to complete access. Town officers who value privacy are advised to only use the Township email for township business.

Employees – A Town is required to display labor law posters if they have an employee. These can be obtained from www.dli.mn.gov/ls/pdf/posters/mn_poster_pack.pdf or by calling MN Dept of Labor and Industry at 800-342-5354. Other documents: Employment References by a Public Employer (MAT E8000). For our hiring policy, see the Policy Section.

Environmental Services – are great to work with – 320.656.3613 – contact them for any land use or planning issues.

Escrow Funds – The Township currently has four escrow accounts/agreements. For details see the document, “Escrow Funds Held by Avon Township.”

- (1) Demolition Escrow – Maciejewski – an escrow was created to ensure that a trailer and associated septic system would be removed from the site either upon the passing of Elmer and Genevieve, or they are no longer full-time residents on the property. This escrow is \$2000 and is being maintained at American Heritage Bank and listed in the Cash Control Statement as “Demolition Escrow.” For details, see Interim Use Permit, 8-27-18 that was approved October 3, 2018;
- (2) Gertken Solar Garden Decommissioning Escrow (#1) – A CUP for this project was completed in July 2017 (see CUP 5-03-17-2). Irrevocable Letters of Credit for two projects (\$62,500 each) were held by Atlantic Union Bank and dated July 2019. In December 2021 the letters of credit were changed to a true escrow and is held at the Falcon National Bank, Foley, as the escrow agent.
- (3) Gertken/Novel Solar Garden Decommissioning Escrow (#2) – this is \$200,000 for decommissioning the solar field being built by Novel. The funds are currently being held at Magnifi Financial in an interest-bearing CD.
- (4) Gertken/Novel Solar Garden Vegetation Escrow – this is \$62,500 to ensure successful completion of the landscape plan. The funds are currently being held at Magnifi Financial in an interest-bearing CD.

Fees for Services, Wages & Salaries – this document is periodically updated and reviewed at the Qualification/Organizational Meeting in March.

Files – When labeling computer file names, do not use any blank spaces because on the website they appear with strange characters. Please use an underscore instead, *i.e.*, PC_minutes_July_2016 not PC minutes July 2016. It is best to start file names with the year, especially if the file will be uploaded to the website.

Fire Service – basic recommended formula (1/3 population, 1/3 land value, 1/3 calls). One Supervisor is typically assigned this as a committee responsibility. The Fire Board typically meets the 3rd Wed of February.

File System – There are filing cabinet drawers for Historical Records, Treasurer Records, Supervisor Minutes, Planning Commission Minutes, and assorted other materials. When filing, please get things

back into the cabinet/file from which it came. When filing, consider if the item is related to a resident (permits, etc.) – these materials are filed by the Section Number in which the resident lives. If more than one section, file in the smallest number. All other items get filed alphabetically.

Free Speech – A supervisor has a free speech right to express his opinion and probably can use his title. If the Supervisor is misrepresenting the board's decisions or telling others that s/he has authority that was never given, then s/he is taking actions beyond the scope of his/her authority and could be personally liable for the wrongful actions. It depends on what actions s/he is taking while using the title. Section 5-6, pg 22 of the 2015 *Town Manual* talks about acting without authority.

If the town is harmed by a supervisor's false or misleading representations, a Supervisor could be civilly liable for any expense the town incurs or expenses the county incurs relying on his/her statements. Depending on the situation, there may also be criminal penalties. The insurance that the town may have will not cover a supervisor's legal expenses or restitution in criminal cases. If a supervisor is misrepresenting the board's decision, it should be made clear that there are real and serious penalties for doing so. If a Supervisor has misrepresented to the county, s/he should quickly correct his/her statement and make clear s/he did not have authority to represent the town in the matter. (*from Steve M. Fenske, Attorney, Minnesota Association of Townships*)

Gambling Permits – frequently requested for church raffles, fishing contests, etc. Supervisor approval is not formally required by the permit; if time permits, it is included on the agenda of a Town meeting. Otherwise, the Clerk has the authority to approve it, if there are no apparent issues or questions.

Hiring Policy – see Policies. Compensatory time can be paid at 1.5x to a cap of 480 hours. See Township Insider, Summer 2024, p 51. And 29 USC 207(o).

Insurance/Indemnity Waivers – The Treasurer keeps a copy of all insurance and indemnity forms for all Town contractors; pass them along to her. Contact Info: MATIT Claims Reporting: 800-262-2864; CLC Claims Administrator: dprovence@mntownship.org / matit@mntownships.org.

Inventory – We have an inventory of town items. This document is in the files.

Joint Powers (Planning) Board – established to oversee actions in the UE (joint powers) area. The Township handles any CSP's in the joint powers area. CUP's, etc are handled by the Joint Powers Board. The Board is scheduled to meet the second Monday in April, but the actual date is set according to both Town and City schedules.

Keys – the Clerk is responsible for maintaining keys. The keys are in the store room. Any key removed or returned must be recorded on the records form kept with the keys. The Supervisors and Clerk are issued a master key. Others as need be. A key is kept in the lock box attached to the Maintenance Shop for use by non-Township members (*i.e.*, Lion's Club)

Lawsuit's – If the Town is involved in a lawsuit, contact MATIT.

Liability & Risk Management: see MAT documents: *Liability* – RM1000; *Risk Management* for Supervisors (RM2000)

Legal Notices – Send legal announcements to the *Star-Post*. They will send the invoice directly to the Town. The paper is published Wednesday. Deadline is Friday at 5:00 PM on the week before publication.

Liquor Licenses – Require Supervisor approval. Make a copy, collect fee. *Shady's Sunset Bay, Pelican Lake Ballroom, and The Store* currently require a liquor license. Be sure to approve them at the same meeting. See MAT document TD3000. Church, and other events, may require a temporary liquor license. In all cases, these require approval by motion of the Supervisors (*see form*). Applicants used to be required to attend the meeting, but this has not been done for a while.

Mailboxes – see MN Statute 8818.0300.

Mailing Labels – The County will provide mailing labels of all residents. This works well if we need labels for all residents or large numbers. To prepare labels for residents on a street or other area, use *Beacon* to highlight the area. It can provide formatted labels for the selected properties. These can be printed on address labels (*i.e.*, Avery 8160). For other labels, create an Excel file with the addresses and then do a mail merge in Word.

Manufactured Home Permits – because the Township requires a signature on Construction Site permits, the Clerk also signs these permits. See Construction Site Permits.

Mapping – The County Property Viewer works great for most things. For more functionality, log into the password protected area by clicking on the icon in lower left corner of screen and enter login information. *Beacon* (*see above*) also works well.

MAT & MAT U – the Township Association website is a wealth of information (www.mat.org) and they have an additional website with assorted trainings called MAT U. This latter site is password protected.

Meetings. Minutes – Various minutes are placed in 3-ring binders in sheet protectors for storage. Archival materials (*i.e.*, acid-free paper) should be used. Gaylord is apparently a source for archival sheet protectors.

For information about minutes, in general, visit the State Auditor website or see the MAT Township Guide on the MAT website. Minutes should include at a minimum: subject matter of a motion, person(s) making and seconding the motion, roll call vote on the motion, the character of resolutions or ordinances and whether the motion to approve a resolution or ordinance was defeated or adopted. It is helpful to include information about the reasons for reaching a particular decision. The governing body at the next meeting should approve the minutes. The minutes must be signed by the clerk or secretary and also signed and dated by a designated member of the governing body. Check out MAT Document Number TM2100 for details – Conducting and Controlling Town Board Meetings. It includes info on: Open Meeting Law, Running the Meeting, Agenda, Parliamentary Procedure, Votes, Keeping Records, and Controlling Unruly Participants. See also the Auditor's website at the following URL: <http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20110531.010>.

The minutes are considered a “Draft” and not put on the website or made public until after approval by the Supervisors.

The Meeting schedule should be posted at the Town Hall (*i.e.*, Supervisors – 1st Wednesday, PC – last Wednesday; see model). If the meeting schedule changes, update **Resolution 01-04-23-04**. Also see **Resolution 12-06-17-2** (note – this resolution refers to the wrong resolution; I think it should be **Resolution 01-06-16-3** or **Resolution 02-04-15**).

See MAT Document TM7000 for ‘establishing an administrative policy for town board meetings.’

Meetings. Notices – Special meetings require three days posted notice (*the day of posting and meeting does not count, which practically means 5-days notice*). For publication, send to the *Star-Enterprise* by the Friday before the day required for publication. See Posting and Publishing sections.

Meetings. Scheduling (*note these may change*)

- Supervisor Meetings – first Wednesday (*before the January Supervisor meeting, check that none during the year fall on a holiday, etc.*)
- Planning Commission Meetings – last Wednesday (*check that none fall on holidays, etc.*)
- Joint Planning Commission – *second Monday in April*
- Board of Audit Meeting – *week after Feb Supervisor meeting*
- Annual Town Election – *second Tuesday in March*
- Absentee Balloting – *Saturday before Town election; 10 – 12:00; Monday before Township election (12 – 5 PM)*
- Annual Town Meeting – *second Tuesday in March; 8:15 PM*
- Board of Canvass Meeting – *second Tuesday in March; 8:30 PM*
- Qualification/Organization Meeting – *third Wednesday in March, 7:00 PM*
- Road Inspection – *mid to late April; various scheduled by Supervisors*
- Local Board of Appeals & Equalization – *3rd Monday in April*
- Test of Electronic Voting Equipment – *within 10 days of elections; County/Secretary of State office provides this information*

Motions / Resolutions / Ordinances – see MAT document 4000.

Money Handling Procedures:

Treasurer

- Receives money
- Responsible for all money coming to township
- Writes a pre-numbered, 3-copy receipt for all money received (including interest earnings, taxes, sales etc.)
- Receipt should show total amount, distribution to funds, fund account number, source of money, date received, and signature of treasurer
- One copy to clerk and enters the info into the receipts records. Second copy attached to the bank statement or deposit slip; third copy stays in pre-numbered receipt book for the treasurer records and auditing purposes

- Treasurer prepares written statement of money received from any source and all money paid out, and book of accounts.

Clerk

- Reviews receipts for accuracy in the amount, the source of the money, the fund and account number and the date.
- Clerk prepares the claims to spend the money (367.18)
- Clerk furnishes a statement from County Treasurer money paid to town treasurer and info related to fiscal affairs of Town.
- Writes a pre-numbered, 3-copy receipt for all money received (including interest earnings, taxes, sales, etc.)

Checks & Balances

- One person should submit claim, another sends the check
- One person issue payment or receipt, another checks inventory
- Supervisors approve the claims that have been prepared
- Upon approval, the chair signs each 'order for payment;' the clerk then signs attesting that the claims were approved and the order for the payment was signed by the chair. Then signed by treasurer.
- Affidavits of official interest in claim
- Claims attached to minutes

Other

- 6 months of cash flow for expenses
- Board of Audit – see Audit section.
- Keep voided checks.
- Mandatory CPA audit required if population greater than 2,500 and(?) revenue more than \$500K.

Notary Stamp – The stamp is used: (a) for any document that is signed by both chair and the clerk; (b) any document signed for residents or others when witnessing their signature; (c) filing notices; (d) oaths of office; (e) certificates of elections; (f) affidavits of candidacy; (g) affidavit of interest in the claim; (h) minutes; (although by signing you are not witnessing a signature but are stating them to be a true and factual recording); (i) federal and state documents required a signature of the chair; (j) resolutions signed by the chair. The Clerk and Treasurer should both obtain a stamp. Victor Lundeen Company is one source.

Open Meeting Law – there are some exclusions to deal with emergencies, check rules carefully. Essentially, supervisors should never communicate with one another about Town business except at a regularly scheduled meeting. Supervisors may communication through the Clerk in a one-way fashion. Two supervisors are considered a meeting (quorum), which must be open to the public. There is no need to publish/post if Supervisors attend the PC or other Town meetings – that is done through a resolution at the beginning of the year. For info about electronic communications see the MN Association of Cities document “Risk Management Information, Electronic Communications between Council members..” Also see Chapter 7 in the Township Manual on the MAT website.

Ordinances – essentially laws. Must be able to enforce; contact Sheriff to see if willing to enforce. File with County Recorder and Law Library.

Paying Vendors – There is a prompt payment act (47.425 subd 4) that states when you meet monthly we have an obligation to pay within 35 days of receiving the invoice. There is not a legal problem is pay early, as long as it is clear that expenditure is approved. Otherwise, legally whoever approved could be on hook for payment. Late payment in act have a penalty of 1.5%/month. Also note that contract could have different time period for payment specified.

Permits – The general procedure to obtain a permit is that the resident appears before the Planning Commission to present the request. The resident should complete the appropriate form (in files). The Planning Commission then makes a recommendation to the Supervisors concerning the permit. If the permit requires a public hearing, the PC recommends to the Supervisors whether or not to set a public hearing. The Supervisors then decide whether to schedule a public hearing. If approved, a public hearing is held at the next Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission then makes a recommendation to the Supervisors concerning the request. The Supervisors make the final decision. Since this approval process normally takes more than a month, residents should plan ahead. Expedited public hearings can be requested, but the resident will incur an additional fee.

Approvals – the Clerk is authorized to sign CSP's, Water exhibition permits and gambling permits. The Supervisors must approve at a meeting liquor licenses, Town Hall use, and road use events.

Construction Site Permits (Building Permits) – required for new construction, adding on to an existing building by changing the building envelope in any way, ***structural changes including a new foundation***, or increasing the square footage of a building structure. A permit is not required for patios/decks lower than one foot, reroofing, re-siding or replacing windows unless, as stated, the building envelope is changed. Most CSP's are issued through Stearns County Environmental Services (320.656.3613). Before the County will issue a building permit, residents must have the permit signed by the Clerk or other designated Township representative. This step is required to determine whether the resident will also require a driveway permit so that the proposed construction will not affect a Township road. Residents can apply online (<https://services.co.stearns.mn.us/csp/>). If the project is in the Urban Expansion area (adjacent to the City of Avon), then the Township will handle the paperwork for the CSP (see above).

Burning Permits – Contact the Fire Marshall or DNR.

Certificate of Compliance – required for land splits, plats and some other transactions. These are obtained through the Township.

Conditional/Interim Use (CUP/IUP) – permit obtained through the Township. IUP's are for a specific length of time. Forms to use are in files. Planning Commission should go through the Findings of Facts form.

Driveway – the construction of any driveway that accesses a Township road requires a driveway permit. See Driveways.

Variations – A variance is a temporary reprieve from a Township, County, or other rule. For example, constructing a building closer to a road than is currently allowed. Forms available in files. Planning Commission should go through Findings of Facts form.

Zoning Changes – handled by Stearns County Environmental Services (*see Zoning below*).

Planning Commission

The role of the Avon Township Planning Commission is to:

1. Make recommendations to the Supervisors concerning variances, conditional use permits, and interim use permits
2. hold public hearings
3. assist the Supervisor's with tasks as assigned; and
4. serve on the Joint Planning Commission (*if appointed*)

Recommended Timelines:

- Terms are for three years.
- Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of the month.
- Terms of service begin with the April meeting.
- The Chair of the Planning Commission is selected at the April meeting.
- At their March meeting, the Supervisors may conduct, at their discretion, an annual performance review of all Planning Commission members.
- When there is a new opening on the Planning Commission, it will be posted.
- Planning Commission members whose terms are expiring in March
 - will be asked prior to the March Supervisors meeting if they want to be reappointed.
 - A Planning Commission member who wants to be considered for reappointment to another term should undergo a performance review before possible re-appointment.
 - At the April meeting, Supervisors review the applicants for an open position and appoint (or reappoint) a member for a 3-year term.
- Filling a Vacancy
 - New applicants who want to be considered for appointment to the Planning Commission must complete an application and submit it to the Clerk.
 - New candidates may be interviewed by the Supervisors at their next available meeting.
 - The new candidate would complete the term of the vacant position.

Performance Standards: *Planning Commission members are expected to:*

1. attend meetings
2. be on time for meetings and other scheduled activities
3. participate fully in PC business
4. be respectful to the public and other members
5. have no conflicts of interest or other personal reason to gain from participating on the board
6. become familiar with appropriate Stearns County (*i.e.*, 439), and Town (*i.e.*, MOU, Ordinance #5) ordinances and planning documents.

Plat Approval: the basic process is outlined in **Resolution 02-07-18-4**. **Minor plat:** Preliminary plat goes to the PC and Supervisors and gets signed for approval. At this meeting it is also granted final plat approval and authorized for the PC Chair and the Supervisor Chair to sign the final plat outside of a meeting. Final plat gets signed by PC Chair and Supervisor Chair outside of meeting. Note: this will incur a fee. **Major plat:** Preliminary plat go to PC and Supervisors and gets signed for approval. Final plat goes to PC and Supervisor and gets signed by the PC and Supervisors Chairs. Note: Major plat requires four meetings. Minor plat can be done in two meetings (but resident will have to pay for plat signing outside of regular meeting). Note: Town could adopt minor plat process to approve major plats.

Pools – meet same setback standards as other structures (7.1.1). If not, will require a variance.

Posting Notices – Notices of meetings, public hearings, bids, and other items must be posted in the official Town posting locations, which are selected at the Annual Meeting. These places have traditionally been *The Store* and the Town Hall bulletin board. After posting, complete an Affidavit of Posting and attach a copy of the notice to the form and then have it notarized (the Treasurer and Clerk are notaries). Public hearings must be posted at least 10 days in advance; special meetings three days in advance (not including day of posting or event). Emergency meetings – can be held but should be a good faith effort to publish/post.

Public Hearings – These must be posted, published 10 days in advance and letters sent to residents (see MN Statute 394.26). To send letters to residents using *Beacon*: Find the Property. Click the Map tab and the property should be highlighted. Choose the Spatial Selection Tool. Highlight Buffer & Parcel. Insert a distance (variance = 500 feet; CUP/IUP = ¼ mile, or 10 nearest properties, whichever is greater). The list of residents can be viewed in the bar at the right of the map; or (b) Size the map to show the property and the properties you want to highlight. Choose the squiggly line selection tool. Draw a line through the properties to select making a loop. This works well especially if you want to highlight the residents on a particular street. You can also get addresses through the new County website using similar techniques.

Once you've highlighted the area you want with a reasonable number of residents, then click the Results Tab to download the results. You can download address labels directly but I usually select to download as an Excel file (or csv file) because many of the properties are owned by the same individuals; I sort the resulting Excel file by street address and then deleted duplicate addresses. I print mailing labels in Word (see Mailing Labels).

Public Information Requests – see MAT document TM7000 (p 8). See also Resolutions 6-06-12 and 11-02-11.

Publishing Notices – Notices of meetings, public hearings, bids and other items are published in the official Town newspaper, which is selected by the residents at the Annual Meeting. Our legal publication is the *Star-Post*. To publish, email the document to the editor (currently Gretchen; office@star-pub.com). The *Star-Post* is published on Wednesday; the deadline for publication is 5:00 PM the Friday before. They will directly bill the Town; they know the routine. They will return to us an Affidavit of Publication; these should be saved and filed.

Qualification/Organizational Meeting – typically scheduled for the Wednesday two weeks after the annual meeting/Town election. Oath of Office must be kept (Elections notebook). See agenda for past items.

Quorum – a meeting quorum is the amount that provides more than 50 percent of the voting power of the board. Therefore, with 3 supervisors → 2 members; 5 PC members → 3 members, and so on. (email from Steve Fenske, MAT attorney, Dec 18, 2017).

Recording Documents – be sure to comply with all of the guidelines specified by the County Recorder (see Notebook). There are precise requirements for everything from font (*Arial preferred*) to margins (*3 inches from top, at least ½ from side*), originals, complete legal description which is usually NOT the one on the tax statement. You can use the Town seal or notary stamp. If the latter, be sure to include the full acknowledgement block that must accompany it (see examples).

Record Retention – see MAT Document RR1000. The Township has adopted the Record Retention Schedule – see Resolution 02-05-14-1, which was passed before we learned we had previously passed Resolutions 03-06-93-1 & 01-22-11-2)03.

Resolutions – recorded in a Resolutions book. Must be adopted by motion; these set policy.

Roads

Brushing/Tree Cutting – If trees greater than 6 inches in diameter are cut, residents should sign the Notice of Tree Cutting form. These forms were created in response to MAT document TR6000. See Document and Appendix.

Events – Road use events, such as bicycle races, marathons and other activities require Supervisor approval. Form available.

Inventory – There is a file with a listing of roads, maintenance, etc.

Inspection – typically set for a Saturday in April; however, the Supervisors are recently considering moving it to summer/fall. Should be posted (and published). There is a worksheet listing all roads in the Town that can be used to record comments. According to Steve Fenske (MAT attorney), roads inspections are not required by state law but it is an implied duty of a supervisor to maintain roads.

Minimum Maintenance – see MAT document TR1000, Understanding Minimum Maintenance Roads (including closure in winter – TR16000)

Obstructions – see appendix

Standards – see Document on file

Trees & Vegetation in ROW – see MAT document TR6000

Sheriff's Department – Sheriff Soyka is attempting to get a greater connection and working relation. He has assigned two deputies to the Town; they rotate frequently.

Signs – 911 – Typically the County sends a notice about residents who need a 911 sign. The policy is that the resident must pay for a sign, post and installation. Send resident a letter (*in file*) requesting payment.

Snow

Snow Plow Operators – 171.02 Subd. 5. A commercial license is not required if the person is employed by a government with a population of less than 3000, is operating within the Township, and holds a valid Class D license.

Snow Plowing – Routes: see document in files. Minimum maintenance roads must be plowed (or closed). See MAT TR16000 for details.

Snow Removal Policy: see *Resolution on file*

Special Assessment Searches – These are received from title companies. At this time, there is only one assessment of any kind (03.01043.0000 – owe \$5.00, manufactured home). To complete the form, I first check the Stearns County Website to ensure that the address is correct and that the property is in the township. Then, I complete the form indicated no assessments. I usually write a little note saying, “None of any kind to the best of my knowledge,” just to cover myself. I sign and then stamp with my notary stamp just so my name is legible, make a copy, and then return the original to the sender. If a check is not included, they are sent an invoice for \$25 (and if a request from a new company, I may send a letter about the policy – see files). Complete a receipt and return it with the form and give the duplicate with check attached to the Treasurer. I used to mail the completed forms and invoices, but now, all are done electronically (I make copies with my phone and return via email). Make a copy to report on at the next Town meeting.

Town Hall Use – Non-profit, youth-oriented organizations may use Avon Township Hall facilities located at 16881 Queens Road, Avon, MN 56310 for meetings and events when available. Priority use for the building belongs to the Township Boards and Committee. The use by Township Boards and Committees takes precedence over any other use, and other uses may be cancelled if a Township meeting must be scheduled. All scheduling of public use will be arranged through the Township Clerk after *approval by the Supervisors at a meeting*. No use, which in the judgment of Township officials could cause damage to Township property or disruption of Township operations, is permitted. The Rules governing the use of the Township building facilities are found in the policy documents.

A damage deposit will be required; the amount to be determined by Township officials.

Users will be held responsible for any damage to Township property. Willful violation of these rules will lead to the loss of the eligibility to use the facility.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) – see County Ordinance 9.3.7. Residents may transfer between properties that they've owned for 3 or more years. The County requests a letter from the Township allowing the export/import of a TDR. Use the Township form. There is a fee (see fee schedule).

Tree Removal – (check this) If less than 6 inch can remove as necessary in town road right-of-way. If greater than 6 inches in ROW, can remove, but must alert resident.

Volunteers – need to complete the Volunteer Service Agreement form.

Water Exhibition Permits – for fishing contests and related activities. The Clerk has the authority to sign these outside of a Township meeting.

Website – Our site is currently hosted by Jim at BigGroovy. We pay annually. We are also charged at intervals for the domain name. Our domain name is organized by ENOM (enomcentral.org) and is invoiced at about \$110 per two or three years (I think). I handle most simple edits; others are sent to Jim. I typically update the website once a month – after the Supervisors meeting – and if there are announcements.

To edit the site, check out the three videos created by Jim. Quick summary: 1. Calendar: Components/JEvents/Manage Events/Add and then fill in form. Be sure to remove to click on calendar tab to insert date/time of event. 2. Announcements: Extensions/Modules/Announcements. 3. Web pages: Content/Articles/ navigate to page. To add a document/link: Click link (chain) button. In Link box, click the document icon (upper right corner), then docs, then folder where you will upload document. It's best to label documents with year first. Then click on upload (upper right) / browse and find the document. Click upload (lower right). In box, click open separate file. Done.

Weeds – Minn. Stat 160.23 requires all noxious weeds in town road ROW to be cut or destroyed or eradicated as often as necessary. Also see MS 18.75 – 18.91. One of the Supervisors is appointed as weed inspector but Joe carries out his tasks. Bob Dunning is the County contact. The 'weed' person is required to attend a training meeting in the spring. The Noxious Weed list available at www.mda.statemn.us/weedcontrol. MAT information document is TD4000.

Zoom – Town meetings are recorded and available via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945>. Passcode: AvonTown. They automatically record to help with minutes writing and are deleted automatically (Resolution 01-03-18). Zoom is also set to produce a meeting transcript, but the algorithm needs some work. To enable the transcript click on settings, recording tab, and in Cloud recording section tick the Audio transcript check box.

Zoning – A Township Zoning Map is provided. For set back and other zoning issues, see the Appendix – Summary Stearns County Ordinance 439 Setbacks. Zoning changes are handled by the County using the following procedures:

- Contact ES
- Town should contact affected property owners
- A public hearing is not necessary, though nice
- Submit application to County, include list of proposed changes – Rezoning Application (available via County Website), include properties, current zoning, proposed changes.
- County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing. Notify anyone within 0.5 miles
- No charge to the Town

- County adopts

Section 2. Things to Do / Calendar of Events

CLERK

Monthly

- Prepare agenda for Planning Commission meeting. Send out to PC members (and Supervisors) the Sunday before the meeting. Include a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting.
- Attend Planning Commission meeting. At the meeting:
 - a) Record the meeting. The recording must be stored and available to the public upon request.
 - b) Take minutes during the meeting and then type up the minutes. Send the draft minutes once they are done. Use a “Draft” watermark on the minutes until they are approved. Then remove the watermark and make the final pdf. When labeling file names, avoid blank spaces because on the website they appear with strange characters, and begin with the year. Use an underscore instead, i.e., 2016_PC_minutes_July not PC minutes July 2016.
 - c) At the meeting, provide PC board members with a copy of the agenda, minutes from the previous meeting, Time Sheet, and any other pertinent documents. Collect time sheets at the end of the meeting and then take to the Treasurer.
 - d) Have a public packet available that includes any materials provided to the Board (*i.e.*, minutes, agenda). Collect the public packet at the end of the meeting and file it.
 - e) Collect any invoices/etc. from the mail, as well as time sheets
- Prepare Documents for Treasurer
 - a) Prepare a list of all invoices and checks taken to Treasurer.
 - b) Take invoices etc. to Treasurer by Sunday before the Supervisor meeting
- Prepare the agenda for the Supervisor meeting. Send it to the Supervisors (and PC members the Sunday before the meeting. Include a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting.
- Attend the Supervisor meeting. At the meeting take minutes. These should be typed and sent to Town officials (see above).
- Update website
- Send copies of Agendas and Minutes to the City of Avon
- Complete Special Assessment Searches as they arrive
- Send notices (*and results*) of public hearings to the County
- File documents
- Backup computer

January

- Recruit Election Judges for March election, send letter
- Include on January agenda: Resolution for regular meetings & Resolution to appoint judges for March election & Resolution to appoint absentee ballot board for March election
- Affidavit period – usually starts in late December or early January. Ends mid-January. Town Hall must be open on final day from 1-5 PM.
- Absentee balloting location/time – resolution and publish
- Notify County about candidates who filed, after last day to file for Town election
- Schedule & publish Board of Audit meeting (*hold week after supervisors meeting in Feb.*)
- Back-up all computers & Town website

- Seek bids for upcoming road work
- Service fire extinguishers
- Contact City regarding fee payment for Compost facility
- Update *Road Manual* with final repairs from previous year

February

- Preliminary audit of financial records – prepare Board of Audit meeting
- Schedule, post & publish: Public Accuracy test (*at least 3 days before*)
- Schedule, post & publish: Office opening to accept absentee ballots (Saturday before election from 10 – 12, Town Hall; AND Monday before election from 1-5 PM)
- Schedule & publish (TWICE):
 - Annual Township Election (2nd Tuesday March; 2:00 – 8:00 PM)
 - Annual Meeting (8:15 PM Election Day)
 - Board of Canvass (8:30 Election Day)
 - Qualification/Organizational Meeting (set between 7 – 17 days after election; typically the Wednesday after the Annual Meeting/Election)
- Plan annual meeting
- Post sample ballot
- Contact PC members whose term will expire to see if they want to be considered for reappointment.
- Post (publish?) Planning Commission opening(s)
- Audit Board meeting (*mid-Feb – 2nd Wed.*)
- Send follow-up/reminder letter to election judges
- Newsletter?

March

- Finish plans for Annual Meeting
- Set date for Road Inspection – post & publish
- Annual Township Election (second Tuesday; 2 – 8:00 PM)
- Annual Meeting (second Tuesday; 8:15 PM)
- Board of Canvass (second Tuesday; 8:30 PM) – must Canvass within 2 days of election. Collect campaign finance forms (scan and include in website);
- Qualification/Organizational Meeting (on Wednesday, 7 days after election). Agenda includes: Issue Certificate of Election to candidates – *no sooner than 10 days after election to allow time for contested election*; complete Oath of Office – *within 10 days of Certificate of Election*; possible interviews with PC applicants, authorize contracts)
- Post Campaign Financial Report for candidates on web site
- Performance reviews for Planning Commission members (especially those for reappointment)
- Performance review for Town employee(s)

April

- Supervisors – review PC applicants and appoint/reappoint Planning Commission members
- Road inspection
- Publish/post Board of Appeals & Equalization

- PC meeting – officers elected; new PC members begin term

May

- Board of Appeals & Equalization

July

- Appoint election judges for primary election
- Publish public accuracy test (for primary year)
- Recruit/confirm plow drivers
- Propane quotes for winter
- Contact SWCD to do site inspection for Gertken/Novel solar seed planting (2023 – 2025)
- Contact SWCD to do site inspection for vegetation restoration (2028 & 2030)

August

- Primary election
- Interview Plow drivers
- Order salt/sand

September

- Snow plows operational; drivers hired
- Appoint election judges for general election
- Water test

October

- Publish public accuracy test
- Publish Newsletter

November

- General election – 1st Tuesday, even years
- Go over roadwork for year and update database of repairs

December

- Publish (twice) & post affidavit of candidacy (candidate filing period) – first week of month
- Notify County of Township seats to be filled
- Start to recruit judges for Town election (must appoint by Feb meeting)
- Post annual meeting schedule (no later than January)
- PC – recommendations for: annual meeting agenda, audit board agenda, township needs, web site, joint planning board agenda items
- Affidavit of Candidacy period – begins near end of month (or in early January)

TREASURER

Monthly

- Pay Bills and Payroll
- Enter bills and payroll in the CTAS program
 - After meeting, enter check numbers and post so that claims become disbursements
 - IRS needs to be figured out each month and on website (eftps.gov to make a payment)
- Back up CTAS
- Print out & bring to meetings: Cash Control Statement, Claims list for Approval (supervisors to sign), Net Pay Account Distribution Report (supervisors need to sign)
- Give claims and payroll to clerk to file.
- Balance Checkbook and Bank Statements, move Outstanding checks and Deposits in Transit in CTAS program
- Send: Bank Statements, Disbursements, Receipts, Cash Control Statement to clerk after meeting.
- Pay MN PERA

Quarterly

- Fill out 941 and send to:
 - Department of Treasury
 - Internal Revenue Service
 - Ogden, UT 84201-0030
- Pay MN Revenue
- Fill out MN Unemployment

End of the Year

- File MN Revenue –by Jan 31.
- File Social Security – print off W’2 to be sent to employees

After Audit Board Meeting

- CTAS Year-end Processing – Generate and Submit
- Send CTAS info to MN State Auditor (auditor.state.mn.us/safes)

Make a binder of End of the Year Treasurer

- Print and put in binder:
- Cash Basis Reporting Form
- Schedule 1: Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Balances (have supervisors sign)
- Receipts for the Year
- Disbursements for the year
- Include all the Cash Control Statements (that are signed)
- Net Pay Account Distribution Reports, Claims List for Approvals (that have been signed)
- Indebtedness; Schedule 6 – Statement of Indebtedness
- Investments; Schedule 8 – Investment Activity with Accrued Interest

New Employees

Fill out:

- MN w-4 – Minnesota Withholding Allowance/Exemption Certificate
- w-4; Department of the Treasury internal Revenue Service – Employee’s Withholding Certificate
- i-9; Employment Eligibility Verification (Department of Homeland Security)
- employee notice – MN Department of Labor and Industry
- PERA for elected officials: Membership Election by Public Officials (need to fill out even if the elected official does not want it.)
- File and keep all documents.

Maintenance Manager Job Description

Requirements for employment:

- Class A driver's license
- Health Permit

General building and Town Hall upkeep

- Maintenance of buildings
- Parking lot upkeep
- Pumping holding tank
- Cleaning Town Hall
- Check on water softener – Erkens for more salt
- Change furnace filters (usually May)
- Vacuum and sweep floors when needed
- Clean bathroom sink and toilet
- Wash windows in Hall every spring
- Clean kitchen
- Take garbage to Opatz when needed
- Check mail – bring into Town Hall and put in office. If looks like a bill, contact Clerk

Grounds:

- Maintenance around hall property
- Trim and upkeep the bushes in front
- Fix the yard as needed after winter
- Grade parking lot when needed
- Seal concrete as needed
- Mow the lawn and weed whack before meetings and when needed
- Keep watch on flag – get new one when needed
- Managing weeds around Township buildings
- Spraying thistles around Township buildings

Trucks and Equipment:

- Plow and pickup repairs
- Plow and pickup maintenance
- Washing trucks
- Equipment and tools maintenance and care
- Wash plow trucks from winter
- Wash pick-up from winter
- Wash bobcat from winter
- Get lawnmower ready for summer
- Check 80/90 in ditch mower; change yearly
- Clean shop floor from winter (power wash)
- Put new float in tank for floor drain
- Get the septic tank pumped

- Check on salt sand quotes

Roads:

- Plowing snow and sanding roads as snowfalls or icy conditions demand
- Handling reports of emergency road situations
- Handling reports of road hazards
- Thawing frozen culverts
- General culvert maintenance
- Handling downed trees and storm damage concerns
- Filling potholes in gravel or tarred roads
- Blading roads
- Shouldering roads
- Driveway inspections
- Mowing ditches
- Brush cutting in ditches
- Brush chipping or disposal
- Road sign maintenance
- Replacing road signs with highly reflective signs
- Check roads for potholes
- Check culverts
- Check on road signs – missing or damaged
- Pick up garbage (tires, tv's etc) in road ditches
- Cut road ditches with tractor mower. Wash and clean under mower after each use.
- Grade gravel roads as needed.
- Check ditches for noxious weeds and spray as needed
- Road shouldering with bobcat where needed
- Make a list of roads that require crack sealing
- Clean up any downed trees in the ditches

Other responsibilities:

- Keeping a daily log of activities
- Attending monthly Board meetings to present the Maintenance and Road Report
- Maintaining an up-to-date inventory of equipment, materials and supplies
- Any other tasks as requested by Avon Township

Update: August 21, 2024

Updated: April 5, 2025

Section 3. New Staff Welcome

(from Employee New Welcome document)

Welcome to Avon Township. You are joining a fantastic group of dedicated individuals who work tirelessly on behalf of the township without any personal agenda or expectations of gratitude. Board members are responsible to serve our residents in a politically non-partisan manner to maintain roads, run elections, oversee permits, etc., and to help maintain the quality of life for all township residents. We work extensively with Stearns County Environmental Services. You are expected to familiarize yourself with County and Township ordinances, etc. These (or links) are all available on our Township website. Prepare for a lot of work, but hopefully you'll agree, that it will be worth it. This document is intended to serve as a way to welcome new members and provide basic information necessary to effectively begin work on the Board. If you have questions, contact the Clerk or other board member.

Computer. All town board members (Supervisors, PC) receive a laptop computer to use during their service. You can use it to check email or whatever. Also, you will want to bring the laptop to meetings because I will typically not provide hard copies of any documents I send via email (except for the agendas). It must be returned when you complete your Township service.

Contact Information. You will be issued a Township email. Use it for all town correspondence, etc. Some people have set it up to forward to another account, though best practice is to keep your personal and other business separate from Township business. Be sure to check your town mail at regular intervals. Once available, you will receive an email from BigGroovy to log into your township account.

eMail. You will be issued a Township email to use for all town correspondence, etc. Be sure to check your town mail at regular intervals. Some have set it up to forward to another account, though one disadvantage is that your personal email could be subpoenaed in the event of a lawsuit.

Keys. Supervisors are issued a master key to the Town Hall. Keep it safe. It will be returned when you complete your Township service.

Financial Forms – the Treasurer will provide you to complete necessary HR forms (*i.e.*, I-9, W4, Employment Contract), and contact information (phone, address, Town email) to set up payment for services. You will receive a stipend for the meetings that you attend. To receive payment, you must submit a time card to the Treasurer by the weekend prior to the monthly Supervisors meeting. We only process checks once a month; anything turned in after gets paid the following month.

LBAE – Supervisors are required to take training for the Board of Appeals and Equalization. Information will be provided as necessary.

Meetings – the Supervisors meet the first Wednesday of every month at 7 PM. The meetings end anywhere from 9 - 11 PM; lately we've been going to about 10:30 PM so please block off these times in your calendar. In addition, there are other periodic meetings that are required such as the upcoming Qualification meeting and Local Board of Appeals and Equalization. PC meetings are the last Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM. These typically last from 1-2 hours.

Staff Manual – an extensive document summarizing township activities is available on the website.

Town Hall – new Board members will be given a tour of the Town Hall and maintenance shop.

Website – the Town website is a useful source of information and has copies of past minutes, permits and other documents including the Staff Manual.

Checklist

- Send welcome letter/information
- Request email to be set up from BigGroovy
- Request contact information (name, address, email, phone)
- Take photo for website
- Issue keys as necessary
- Issue computer, sign waiver
- Internet code
- Tour of Town Hall
- HR employment documents signed with Treasurer
- Provide copy/link to *Staff Manual*

Section 4. Elections

General Information

- Township must use an assistive voting machine (Omniballot) since the Town has over 500 registered voters
- Must have a minimum of four judges on duty at any time; with party balance
- Contacts: Roxanne Gerards (320.656.3910; Roxanne.gerads@co.stearns.mn.us).
- Election costs: ballot counter – \$800; epoll book – \$350; Assistive Voting – \$600. Total town election is \$1300; Primary or General is \$2450.
- Info at MN Statutes 367.03.

Elections – Primary & General

- Start recruiting judges in January for the new election cycle (even years). They will need to go through training with the County.
- We need a minimum of about 10 judges, especially for the General Elections.
- Judges need to be appointed by the Supervisor (June or July meeting for the primary/general election and January for Township elections)

Election – Township. Absentee Ballot Procedure

- The County handles absentee ballots for the primary/general elections; the Town only deals with them for the March Township election.
- Directions follow:
 1. Voter completes absentee ballot application
 2. Determine if voter is registered (*check Administrative Voter List prepared by County*)
 - a. If yes, proceed to #3
 - b. If not, give voter a Voter Registration Application (VRA). (*Be sure voter is a resident of Avon Township – check voter list for addresses. Use the VRA form with the “voucher” information on the reverse side; not the one to be returned to County. Return VRA to County after election with rosters.*) Once complete proceed to #3.
 3. Give voter
 - Ballot – *determine voter’s precinct – either P1 or p2 to give correct ballot. Ballots are in the Record Storage room.*
 - Brown Ballot (secrecy) envelope
 - Return envelope – *it should have \$0.70 postage if it will be mailed back and should be addressed to Town Hall*
 - Signature envelope – *regular or NR depending on whether voter was previously registered to vote. Voter fills out the top; you witness. Or, voter can take and complete at home and have someone else witness.*
 - Instruction sheet – *regular or NR depending on whether voter was previously registered to vote*
 - I voted sticker

- ☐ Note: if these materials are mailed to voter, put in 8.5 x 11 envelope with \$1.40 postage.
4. Applicant completes absentee ballot and returns it in signature envelope including witness signature
 5. Absentee Ballot Board convenes. *Confirm that signature card information matches application and is completed correctly. If not, return to voter to redo.*
 6. Note that voter may complete the entire process at the Town Hall or take the materials home and mail back.

Election – Township. Absentee Ballot Board Procedure

The absentee ballot board must check that the:

1. voter's name and address on the signature envelope are the same as the information provided on the absentee ballot application
2. voter signed the certification on the envelope
3. voter's Minnesota driver's license, state identification number, **OR** the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number, are the same as a number on the voter's absentee ballot application or voter record. *(If the number does not match, the election judges must compare the signature provided by the applicant to determine whether the ballots were returned by the same person to whom they were transmitted)*
4. voter is registered and eligible to vote in the precinct, **OR** has included a properly completed voter registration application in the signature envelope
5. voter has not already voted at that election, either in person or by absentee ballot.

Accept:

If the ballot meets the above criteria, write accepted on the ballot and process with the election ballots on election. Place the ballot in the ballot box for the judges to open on election day. Note: The signature envelope from accepted ballots must be preserved and returned to the county auditor.

Reject:

If the ballot failed to meet one of the requirements provided above, mark the signature envelope "Rejected," initial or sign it below the word "Rejected," list the reason for the rejection on the envelope, and return it to the voter. There is no other reason for rejecting an absentee ballot beyond those permitted by this section. Failure to place the ballot within the secrecy envelope before placing it in the outer white envelope is not a reason to reject an absentee ballot.

If an envelope has been rejected at least five days before the election, the envelope must remain sealed and the official in charge of the ballot board shall provide the voter with a replacement absentee ballot and signature envelope in place of the rejected ballot.

If an envelope is rejected within five days of the election, the envelope must remain sealed and the official in charge of the ballot board must attempt to contact the voter by telephone or e-mail to notify the voter that the voter's ballot has been rejected. The official must document the attempts made to contact the voter.

The official in charge of the absentee ballot board must mail the voter a written notice of absentee ballot rejection between six and ten weeks following the election. If the official determines that the voter has otherwise cast a ballot in the election, no notice is required. If an absentee ballot arrives after the deadline for submission provided by this chapter, the notice must be provided between six to ten weeks after receipt of the ballot. A notice of absentee ballot rejection must contain the following information:

- the date on which the absentee ballot was rejected or, if the ballot was received after the required deadline for submission, the date on which the ballot was received;
- the reason for rejection; and
- the name of the appropriate election official to whom the voter may direct further questions, along with appropriate contact information.
- An absentee ballot signature envelope marked "Rejected" may not be opened or subject to further review except in an election contest filed pursuant to chapter 209.

Election – Township. Affidavit of Candidacy Procedure

1. Give applicant Affidavit Application
2. Have applicant fill out form, which must include:
 - a. Name
 - b. Office
 - c. Residence Address (*if they want this private, they must complete another form*)
 - d. Phone (*must be included; this is important*)
3. Applicant signs form
4. Clerk (*or whoever accepts*) signs and date form
5. If using a pre-printed form, give Applicant any color except white (top one). Or give applicant a photocopy. Additional forms can be downloaded from the Secretary of State website at: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/1027/affidavit-of-candidacy.pdf>.
6. Collect \$2 dollars.
7. Write out a receipt (*give candidate white or top one, remove yellow one and attach to check*)
8. Give applicant Campaign Finance Form (*must return following the election*)
9. Give candidate Campaign Manual. We don't have many hard copies. But if we run out and applicant wants a hardcopy, write down his/her name and I will make a copy and mail it to him/her. Or, we can send it to the applicant by email (get email address) or candidate can download a copy at the following URL - <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/4908/minnesota-campaign-manual.pdf>.
10. Sign and date the form at the bottom. Use notary stamp, if a notary, otherwise, no worries.

Elections – Township. Judges – Party balance not required for Town Elections, only for General and Primary. Supervisors must appoint judges at least 25 days before election – for a Town election typically January meeting, February at the latest. Or July meeting for Primary/General Election. Four judges minimum. Trained every two years (even years). Begin recruiting for Town election in late December/early January. The Judges also act as Absentee Ballot board (resolution required). Send a letter after the judges agree then another a few weeks before the election. Judges get paid for service (see fee schedule) but not for travel. Judges should complete I-9 form – Treasurer will handle this. Neither judges nor the public are permitted to wear campaign logo apparel at the polling place. Voter’s can be asked to remove or cover the item up. They cannot be prevented from voting, though they should be reported to the County Attorney’s office.

Elections – Judge Duties – Here’s a *quick* guide to the general responsibilities of each judge. For more information, check out the *Election Guide*.

Greeter Judge

- Welcome voter to Town Hall & Election
- Direct voter to an open ePoll book station.
- Control traffic entering polling place

Roster Judge

- Judge should like to work with digital devices since the Town uses ePoll books for the Roster.
- Ask voter his/her name; or accept a driver license only to help find the voter in the roster (ID is NOT required to vote)
- Follow poll pad instructions.
- Have the voter since the oath (save). The school district/precinct should be written on the receipt.
- Then, give the voter a Receipt. Direct the voter to the Ballot Judge

Ballot Judge

- Count and initial ballots. Record number of ballots opened in the Incident Log.
- Take receipt from voter.
- Determine which ballot to give voter. Note that there are multiple possibilities: P1-NS, P1-745, etc. *It is critical to give the voter the correct ballot.*
- Show voter that there are two sides to the ballot (*if appropriate*).
- Put the ballot in the secrecy cover (*folder*)
- Point out the various voting stations (*seated, standing*)
- If a voter returns a ballot, write “void” on it, place it in the appropriate “void” envelope and give the voter another ballot – be sure it is the correct ballot.

Machine Judge

- Remain at least six feet from the ballot counter, but close enough to determine if the ballot is properly accepted.
- If not, step up to the machine and read the message about the ballot. Depending on the problem, ask the voter what he/she wants to do. One common problem is voting for too many

people in one race. In this case, the voter returns the ballot to the ballot judge. This ballot is voided and the voter is given another.

- Offer the voter an “I voted” sticker.
- Collect the secrecy cover and return it to the ballot judges
- Be prepared to help the greeter judge if it gets busy and to offer assistance to any voter that might require it

Registration Judge

- Uses the ePoll book to register voters according to guidelines in *Election Guide*.
- We typically have the roster judges, or head judge, register new voters

Election Emergency Plan

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 204B.181, Avon Township, Stearns County, Minnesota has developed the following Election Emergency Plans:

1. **Emergency Contacts** – in the event of an emergency necessitating moving the polling place, the Clerk – Stephen G. Saupe (320.248.8036; clerk@township.org) – will be the Township representative responsible for making any election emergency decisions. If the Clerk is unavailable, decisions will be made by the Treasurer (Kelly Martini; 320.493.9134; treasurer@avontownship.org) followed by the Chair of the Board of Supervisors.
2. **Who to Contact** – in the event the Township needs to activate election emergency planning, the Township representative (*i.e.*, Clerk) will contact the following individuals (in order) to alert them to the situation: (a) Treasurer (Kelly Martini; 320.439.9134); (b) Chair of the Board of Supervisors; (c) Avon Township Maintenance; (d) Roxanne Gerards (Stearns County, 320.656.6960); and (e) Stearns County Sheriff (320.259.3700).
3. **Town Hall Emergency** – if a problem in the Town Hall prevents voting, the alternate location for voting in Precincts 1 & 2 of Avon Township is the Avon Township Maintenance shop, located at 16883 Queens Road, Avon (MN). If both the Town Hall and Maintenance Shop are unavailable, then the polls will be moved to the Church of the Immaculate Conception (37186 Co Rd 9, Fr. Gregory Mastey, 320.746.2231). Directions to the Church from the Town Hall will be posted at the Town Hall.
4. **Power Failure** – in the event of a power failure during voting in the Town Hall, if time permits, voting will be moved to the Maintenance shop. If not, a generator will be used to run the voting machines and lights in the Town Hall. The Avon Township maintenance worker – will set up the generator.
5. **Inclement Weather** – if there is a snow storm, tornado or other weather that interferes with voting, the responsible Township agent, in consultation with the Sheriff, weather service, County or other agent, will decide if it is necessary to postpone voting to the following week (for a Township election) or where to relocate the polls (if a Primary or General Election).

6. **Information Distribution** – if there is an emergency, the public will be notified via KASM radio (AM 1150), the Avon Township website (www.avontownship.org), notices will be placed in the designated Township posting places (The Store, Town Hall), and an email will be sent to anyone on the Township email list. Signs will be placed in the Town Hall bulletin board notifying residents of any change in voting plans.

7. **Security** – If it is necessary to transport ballots or other voting materials to a new location, this process will be directed by the Town Clerk and at least one other Township representative (not on the ballot) or election judge. These individuals will be responsible for the safety and security of the ballots and voting materials.

Section 5. Policies

Many of these are formalized in motions/resolutions while others reflect general practice that has been followed. Most are available on the website.

1. **Alcohol & Tobacco** – not permitted in the Town Hall
2. **Awair** – safety (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies*)
3. **Compensation Policy** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies; Resolution 04-06-22-1*)
4. **Driveway Standards** – *see Resolution 1-06-21-1*
5. **Gambling Permits** – approved by Clerk as necessary. Make a copy and share with Supervisors at a meeting.
6. **Hiring Policy** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies*)
7. **Liquor licenses** – approved by motion of Supervisors at a Town meeting
8. **Mailboxes** – if the plow directly hits a mailbox on a breakaway post, it will be replaced at Township expense. Otherwise, it is the responsibility of the resident (*see snow policy*). If a resident purchases a breakaway mailbox post, the Township will install it (*see Nov 2023 minutes*).
9. **Manure Line Policy** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies*)
10. **Meetings** – *see Resolution 01-04-23-04*
11. **Memorials** – a card will be sent if there is a death of a board member or close family member.
12. **MidCo Company** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies; Ordinance 06-05-09*)
13. **Noise** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies*)
14. **Parking Ordinance** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies*)
15. **Plat Approval** – *see Resolution 02-07-18-4*
16. **Posting Locations** – *see Resolution 03-18-20-2*
17. **Publishing** – when possible, Avon Township is committed to publishing notices of special meetings, in addition to the required posting. Official newspaper is the *Star-Post*: *see Resolution 03-18-20-1*.
18. **Recording meetings** – *see Resolution 01-03-17-2*
19. **Record Retention Schedule** – *see*
20. **Road Standards** – *see appended document*
21. **Service to Township** – a plaque is awarded after 10 years of service
22. **Signs – 911**. Residents pay for their own 911 sign (*Resolution 04-06-11*).
23. **Signs – Policy**. *See roads folder*
24. **Snow & Ice Control** – *see Resolutions 11-05-14; 04-04-18-4; 03-20-19-4 & 6-03-20-1*
25. **Town Hall Use** – *Supervisors approve any use of the Town Hall. See document in file.*
26. **Using Township Records** – *see Resolution 06-06-12*
27. **Utility Work in the Road right-of-way** (*see web site, Ordinances & Policies; Resolution 08-05-20*)

Section 6: Documents

The following is a listing of documents that are important for Township business. These are available on the website and/or in the Clerk files.

1. Budget
2. Fee Schedule
3. Inventory
4. Joint Powers Board – *see notebook*
 - a. MOU
 - b. Annexation agreement
5. Ordinances – *see notebook*
 - a. 439 Ordinance – available from County website
 - b. Memorandum of Understanding between Stearns County & Avon Township
 - c. Ordinance #5 – land use and zoning ordinance
6. Road Map – in roads file & notebook
7. Road Inventory – in roads file & notebook
8. Township Map
9. Zoning Map