

2021 AVON TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

March 9, 2021; 8:30 PM

Avon Town Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon; <http://avontownship.org>

Call to Order: Clerk Stephen Saupe called to order the 2021 Annual Meeting of Avon Township at 8:30 PM. This meeting was virtual via Zoom and available at <https://csbsju.zoom.us/j/99109941453>.

Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge was recited.

Welcome & Introductions: Saupe welcomed residents to the Annual Meeting and introduced Town staff including Town Board and Planning Commission members.

Nomination and Election of Moderator: Stephen Saupe was nominated by Marion Gondringer to act as Moderator for this meeting. The motion was seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Rich Sanoki to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Ken Mergen. All in favor. Motion carried.

Election Results: Rich Sanoski was elected Supervisor for a three-year term (2021-2024). Kelly Martini was elected Treasurer for a two-year term (2021-2023).

Avon Fire Department Report: Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Swenson presented the Fire Department Report. He reported that when Covid hit, things slowed down considerably, but they got busy again. By the end of the year there were 217 total calls (compared to 226 from 2019). Of these, 72 were in the Township, 28 in Colledgeville Township, 96 in the City, and 16 from I-94. Fire fighters logged 2,490 hours, excluding trainings and meetings. The main fundraisers were the Blattner Foundation Golf Outing (which the fire department now organizes), Spunk Days raffle, and calendars. The calendars resulted in many donations. Their equipment is in good shape and paid for (except for new truck). They are planning for an expansion of the Fire Hall. They have 26 current members. Some retirements are expected in the near future. They voted to add a new member and will start to accept applications. They have been successful at seeking grant funding (FEMA, DNR, Xcel) and received some CARES Act funding. Unlike some other fire departments, they did not have to shut down due to Covid illnesses.

Road Report: Supervisor Mike Linn presented the 2020 Road Report (*appended*). In addition to routine maintenance, during the past year the Township resurfaced four roads (Shorewood Drive, Orchid Court, Highland Terrace, Tower Road), milled a portion of 140th Avenue, and is developing a Road Maintenance Plan. The Township is planning to resurface several roads this summer including Narnia Lane and those in Blattner Addition.

Planning Commission Report: Clerk Stephen Saupe presented the 2020 Planning Commission (PC) report (*appended*). The PC met 10 times and provided input to the Supervisors concerning plats, certificates of compliance, driveway permits and variances. The Planning Commission has been working on a Road Plan that is almost complete.

Joint Powers Board Report: Supervisor Ken Mergen presented the 2020 Joint Powers Board report (*appended*). Due to Covid, the Joint Powers Board did not meet during 2020. The Township now handles requests for Construction Site Permits in the Joint Powers area. Ms. Nancy Scott, Allspec Services has been contracted to take care of the necessary permits and paperwork.

Continuation: Because the majority of the remaining items on the agenda require action by residents, Ken Mergen moved to continue the 2021 Avon Township Annual Meeting until June 8, 2021 at 7:00 PM at the Avon Township Hall to allow for socially-distanced, in-person voting. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

CONTINUATION OF THE 2021 AVON TOWNSHIP ANNUAL MEETING

Call to Order: The Continuation of the 2021 Avon Township Annual Meeting was convened by moderator Stephen Saupe on June 8, 2021 at 7:00 PM in the Main Chamber of the Avon Town Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN).

Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge was recited.

Welcome & Rules: The moderator, Stephen Saupe, welcomed residents to the Continuation meeting and reminded participants that the reason the meeting was continued was to allow for in-person voting. Residents were also reminded that only Town residents were permitted to make motions or vote.

Introductions: Township staff who were present were introduced. These included: Craig Blonigen (*Planning Commission*), Paul Buttweiler (*Deputy Treasurer*), LeRoy Gondringer (*Supervisor*), Marion Gondringer (*Deputy Clerk*), Will Huston (*Supervisor, Chair*), Joe Koopmeiners (*Maintenance*), Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*), Rich Sansoki (*Supervisor*), Kelly Martini (*Treasurer*), and Lori Yurczyk (*Planning Commission, Chair*),

Minutes of the March 2020 Meeting: A copy of the 2020 minutes was provided to all participants. LeRoy Gondringer moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Lori Yurczyk second. All in favor. Motion carried. Rich Sanoski moved to approve the minutes of the March 2020 Annual Meeting. Joe Koopmeiners second. All in favor. Motion carried.

2021 Board of Audit Report: The Clerk read the 2021 Board of Audit Report including the year-end Cash Control Statement (*appended*). The Town is in good financial shape, though additional funding may be needed for road construction and maintenance because of increased costs in the past few years and to “catch up” on roadwork.

Township Levy for 2022: The Supervisors recommend the following levy amounts for 2022: Total levy – \$472,950; General Revenue – \$86,110; Road & Bridge – \$309,840; Fire –\$75,000; and Capital Reserve –\$2,000. The levy amount recommended by the Supervisors is slightly higher than last year to account for Fire Fund increases.

LeRoy Gondringer moved to approve a 2022 General Revenue levy for \$86,110. Paul Buttweiler second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Recognizing the need for additional roadwork and increased costs (approximately \$200K per mile), Will Huston moved to approve a 2022 Road & Bridge levy of \$350,000. Craig Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

The Town was charged \$92,000 for Fire Protection this year, which is significantly more than had been levied. To make up the balance in the upcoming year, Joe Koopmeiners moved to approve a 2022 Fire Fund levy of \$92,000. Stanley Streit second. All but one in favor. Motion carried. This amount can be lowered next year when the Fire Fund invoice is anticipated to decrease.

Will Huston moved to approve a 2022 Capital Reserve levy of \$2,000. LeRoy Gondringer second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Joe Koopmeiners moved to approve a 2022 Total Levy of \$530,110. Sanoski second. All but one in favor. Motion carried.

Posting Places: Joe Koopmeiners moved to approve the Avon Township Hall and *The Store* as the legal posting places. Paul Buttweiler second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Legal Newspaper: LeRoy Gondringer moved to approve the *Star-Post* as the legal newspaper for the Township. Will Huston second. All in favor. Motion carried.

2022 Poll Hours: LeRoy Gondringer moved to hold the 2022 Annual Township Election from 2:00 – 8:00 PM. Rich Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

2022 Annual Meeting Time/Location: The 2022 Annual Meeting will occur on the second Tuesday of March, March 8, 2022. Will Huston moved to hold the Annual Meeting in the Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN) at 8:30 PM. Craig Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Decision on Budget Amount for Memorials & Celebrations: Joe Koopmeiners moved to approve a budget of \$250 to be used for Town memorials, awards, recognition, and community celebrations. LeRoy Gondringer second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Discussion/Comments – Open Forum: Stanley Streit inquired about funding opportunities through recent government programs. The Township received CARES Act funding for personal protective equipment, election supplies, automated door openers, and automated soap and towel dispensers in the bathrooms. The Town is looking into funding from the ARPA program for drainage repair on Noble Oak Circle.

Concerns were raised about recent brushing work which left debris on the road, etc. The Town is aware of the problems and will attempt to minimize issues in the future.

The Town is working to get weeds under control (*i.e.*, thistles on Norway Road)

Crack-filling will occur this summer on newer roads that justify the cost.

There was a discussion about using the Town Hall for public events. Currently the Hall is available to use by non-profit organizations (*i.e.*, Scouts, Lion’s Club). Though it would be good to make the Hall more widely available for use by residents, there are concerns about liability, staffing during events, damage to the Hall, alcohol use, and taking business away from local venues. There will be no changes for now.

There was a discussion about the goals and purpose of the Township. Among its main responsibilities, the Township handles roads (including maintenance and snow removal), weeds, elections, fire protection, and zoning. There was a discussion whether or not the Township should provide more recreational opportunities for residents including greater availability of the Town Hall and perhaps an outdoor pavilion at the Town Hall. No consensus was reached about whether taxpayer dollars should be spent on other services.

A resident recommended that the Town should consider installing a sign similar to Collegeville Township’s, near the road identifying our building.

Announcements: The County Road 9 bridge over Spunk Creek will be repaired this summer, likely early to mid-July. The project could take 2-3 weeks and will likely result in a road closure and detours.

Adjournment: Rich Sanoski moved to adjourn the 2021 Annual Meeting of the residents of Avon Township at 8:00 PM. Will Huston second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Saupe, *Clerk & Moderator*

Signature: _____

date: _____

Avon Township Road Report – 2020 Actions

March 9, 2021

Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN)

The following is a summary of Township road-related activities during 2020:

1. Avon Township held the annual road inspection on August 3, 2020 to assess the condition of roads. Based on the inspection the Supervisors authorized an assortment of projects.
2. Several were identified for resurfacing. An engineer from StanTec was hired to help prepare bid documents. Knife River supplied the lowest bid and we were able to resurface the following roads:
 - a. Shorewood Drive
 - b. Orchid Court
 - c. Highland Terrace
 - d. Tower Road (1 mile from Co Rd 54)
3. The blacktop was removed from a portion of 140th Avenue and the road was converted to gravel.
4. The Supervisors authorized the development of a Road Maintenance Plan. It is nearly complete.
5. The Township completed routine maintenance (brushing, removing downed trees, trimming trees, filling potholes, shouldering work, replaced signs, etc) on nearly 50% (30 of 61) of our roads.
6. Gravel roads were graded three times.
7. Weeds were managed by spraying on three different days.
8. Ditches were cut twice.
9. Roads were plowed and salt-sanded on 25 days. Some residents who pushed snow across a Township road were sent letters informing them that the practice is illegal and requesting them to stop doing so.
10. Several streets were swept to remove sand.
11. Work to pull in shoulders was completed on about three different days.
12. We continue to do the majority of our own truck maintenance.
13. We are planning to resurface Narnia Lane, and several roads in the Blattner Addition.

Summary: Overall, Avon Township roads are in reasonably good shape. We are lucky to have a full-time employee who closely monitors Town roads and handles the majority of our roadwork. We encourage residents to alert Supervisors to roads in need of attention.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Linn (*Supervisor, Road Manager*) & Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*)

**Avon Township Planning Commission Report:
2020 Actions/Activities**

March 9, 2021

Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN)

The following is a summary of Planning Commission (PC) activities during 2020:

1. The PC met 10 times during the year. Two meetings (March, April) were canceled during to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Plats – one plat (Kasner Acres) was examined and approved.
3. Certificates of Compliance – one request was examined; approval was recommended to the Supervisors.
4. Driveway Permits – Seven requests for permits were examined and recommendations forwarded to the Supervisors. One driveway was non-compliant which required considerable discussion followed by action by the resident.
5. Variances – Four variances, including public hearings, were considered and recommendations forwarded to the Supervisors.
6. The Planning Commission began work on a revision of the Township Comprehensive Plan.
7. The Planning Commission has nearly finished an evaluation of Township roads and a comprehensive road maintenance plan.
8. The Planning Commission was assigned to provide the Supervisors feedback on a variety of issues including: a bicycle race on Township roads; CARES Act funding; issues on Red Maple Drive; Utility work in the Township road right-of-way; SCORE grant funding from Stearns County, including the Avon Compost Facility; and the CoPart/Lang development project.

Respectfully submitted,

LeRoy Gondringer (*Planning Commission, Chair*) & Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*)

**Avon Township Joint Planning Commission Report:
2020 Actions/Activities**

March 9, 2021

Avon Township Hall, 16881 Queens Road, Avon (MN)

The following is a summary of Planning Commission activities during 2020:

1. The Joint Planning Commission did not meet during 2020. There were no issues that required a meeting. The Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Township specifies that a meeting must be held on the second Monday in April. Due to COVID and a lack of business, this meeting was also cancelled.
2. The Township now handles and Construction Site Permits in the Joint Powers Area. This year, there were two requests. Ms. Nancy Scott, Allspec Services handled the paperwork for the Town.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Mergen (*Avon Township representative to the Joint Planning Commission*) & Stephen Saupe (*Clerk*)

Township of Avon County of Stearns | State of Minnesota

Audit Board Report for 2021

The Board of Supervisors for the Town of Avon met on February 4, 2021 in their capacity as the annual Board of Audit as required by State Law. All claims submitted to the Town during 2020 were brought before the Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors divided up roles to ensure different people were involved with the different parts of this internal audit review. Claims were randomly selected and examined in detail. A listing of the specific claims examined in the audit accompanies the Audit Board Minutes. A listing of all claims against the Township accompanies the monthly Clerk minutes. No discrepancies were found. No claims were denied for payment. The financial records (year-end cash control statement & bank account summary) maintained separately and independently by the Treasurer and Clerk (Deputy Clerk) were found to be identical. As a result of this audit, no discrepancies were found.

The year-end cash control statement for the Township as of December 31, 2020 is given below:

Avon Township Year End Cash Control Statement – 2020				
	Beginning Balance (\$)	Receipts (\$)	Disbursements (\$)	Ending Balance (\$)
General Revenue	\$155,018.31	\$181,164.60	\$156,978.84	\$179,204.07
Road & Bridge	\$370,672.51	\$362,697.21	\$412,747.46	\$320,622.26
Road Damage Deposit	\$2,850.00	\$3,000	\$1,700	\$4,150
Demolition Escrow	\$2,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,000
Fire	\$4,468.14	\$67,643.01	\$36,225.00	\$35,886.15
Capital Reserve	\$45,152.72	\$1,935.14	\$0.00	\$47,087.86
Total	\$80,161.68	\$616,439.96	\$607,651.30	\$588,950.34

The funds in Township Accounts as of December 31, 2020 are summarized below:

Avon Township Year End Bank Account Summary – 2020	
Account	Amount (\$)
Checking (<i>American Heritage Bank</i>)	\$131,308.78
Outstanding Checks (<i>American Heritage Bank</i>)	(\$1,341.98)
Money Market (<i>American Heritage Bank</i>)	\$436,157.10
Money Market (<i>Credit Union</i>)	\$20,826.44
CD (Demolition escrow)	\$2,000
Total	\$588,950.34

The Supervisors analyzed the receipts and disbursements for 2020, the budget for 2021, and then determined a budget for 2022. Based on their analysis, the Supervisors recommend the following levy amounts for 2022: Total levy - \$472,950; General Revenue - \$86,110; Road & Bridge - \$309,840; Fire - \$75,000; Capital Reserve - \$2,000. The levy amount recommended by the Supervisors is slightly higher than last year.

Conclusion: The Township is in good financial shape. Additional funding may be needed for roads because the costs of road construction and maintenance have increased markedly in the past few years. The levy is only slightly higher than last year.