

Girard Township

Regular Monthly Meeting -- MINUTES

Tuesday, August 19, 2025 – 6 p.m., Town Hall

Website: (www.girardtownship.us)

Open meeting with the pledge to the flag

Present: Supervisors Blaine Larson, Peter Christianson and Larry Estes, Treasurer Kathy Trites, Clerk Debbie Irmen; and road maintenance worker Will Luhning.

Absent: Road Engineer Jeff Stabnow

Estes moved to approve the MINUTES from the regular monthly meeting held **Tuesday, July 15, 2025**, at the Town Hall as printed. Larson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report – Treasurer Trites presented the July financial report showing ending balances in the General Fund: \$119,043.32; Road and Bridge: \$550,962.95; ARPA: \$0.00; Special Revenue: \$30,176.15; Fire Fund: (\$45,876.67); Ambulance Fund: \$52,236.49; Special Assessment: \$24,094.26; Capital Projects: \$137,868.80; and Equipment: \$253,685.86; for a total of \$1,122,191.16. The treasurer's report was filed for audit.

Estes moved to approve claims as presented/audited, totaling \$161,759.74; payroll for Estes, Irmen, Larson, Luhning (2), Christianson, and K. Trites; new claims presented at the meeting for \$1,370.00 for gopher feet payable to trappers Witt and Cichy pending verification, for a total of \$163,129.74. Larson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports/Information

Roads and Equipment – Luhning reported roads are in decent shape; the plow truck will be scheduled for its annual DOT inspection soon; and road striping on 230th, 440th and Liberty Dr. is completed. The clerk noted that the invoice from OTC Highway Dept. hasn't come through yet. Luhning put in a request to take a week of vacation (40 hours) from Sept. 8-12, 2025.

Larson moved to accept the request. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Clerk's Report -- The clerk reminded the supervisors that the District 9 meeting will be Thursday, August 21, 2025, at the Cormorant Community Center, Pelican Rapids - Rep. Vance Bachmann, is up for reelection. Larson noted that he should attend the fire meeting instead; Irmen said she planned to attend. Clerk Irmen said she had laminated Employee Posters, which must be posted where the employee can see them as required by law; she also shared information on variances within Girard Township which OTC would decide. She also pointed out that the Performance Paving quote was \$154,566, and the township was invoiced \$154,745 this month – a difference of \$90.

Fire meeting – Supervisor Larson shared that gear for new firefighters costs \$11,000 per firefighter. He talked about a vote planned at the upcoming fire meeting to increase the retirement amount from \$3,000 to \$3,800. He made numerous calls to several communities to get a sense of what other entities think. Overall, the increase is opposed by the other entities. There is concern that the increase may potentially put the fire and rescue in a funding deficit position in the future, requiring additional money from the townships that pay for fire

coverage. He said he should be a part of the firefighters' pension vote and will not be able to attend the District 9 meeting.

New Business

Randall Witt (69 prs of feet) and Chris Cichy (205 prs of feet) presented signed claims for gopher feet. (Total claim for the two vouchers is \$1,370.00) which was approved with the claims pending total count verification.

Estes moved to nominate supervisor Blaine Larson as board chairman. Christianson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Christianson moved that Larson be added to the bank signature card. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

In response to a request for a dead end or private drive sign from Chris Green, 265th and Lake Ethel Rd, Christianson made a motion to deny the signage as it doesn't qualify for a dead end road. Larson seconded. Motion carried, with Estes voting against the motion. The clerk was asked to send a response indicating that such a sign is the responsibility of the property owner. Regarding a request for a speed limit sign, the board felt it was a question for the road engineer to clarify.

The clerk needs to further research a resident's request for a burial plot on lake property located at 23510 Co Hwy 5, Henning for Tonni Starkweather. (701-578-4236)

Following a brief discussion about weed control in which it was noted that the township doesn't spray for weeds, Will was asked to mow weeds in response to a request from Tammy Halverson who lives on Blanche Creek Road.

Larson moved to accept the Fixed Contract agreement with Pro-Ag for approximately 2,300 gallons of fuel over the course of the year, charged at \$1.64/per gallon. It was noted that the number of gallons includes both the town hall and the shop. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Estes moved to allow gambling at a township business. Christianson seconded. It was noted that the township does not issue licenses or enforce any rules pertaining to gambling, the vote was simply a formality that the township is in favor of the activity. Motion carried unanimously.

The clerk was directed to draft and send a letter to a resident who submitted a bill for ditch mowing stating the township isn't responsible to pay residents for mowing ditches.

Old Business

The clerk noted that the cost for a new overhead door opener to include installation from Overhead Door in Fergus Falls for the back shop door that was spray insulated will cost \$2,691.41 and is on order. The company has adjusted the springs to allow for easier lift.

The clerk said she has not received any sealed bids for the Township's Rand Air Compressor. Christianson will contact Matt Thorson to determine his interest in the compressor.

Larson moved to approve an approach constructed by Neil Grosse following a Final Inspection of the project. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

After a brief discussion, the board of supervisors said that a request to carry over vacation from one year to the next must be made in November and that there must be a compelling reason for the carry-over for the board to consider the request. This determination further defines and clarifies the handbook entry, found on Page 18 under "Paid Time Off (PTO), which says: PTO hours cannot transfer to next year unless it is warranted and approved by the Township Board." Christianson moved to pay Luhning for the unused 2 weeks of vacation from 2024 at Luhning's 2024 rate of pay (\$31.00/hour), with no carry-over of unused PTO days to 2025. Larson seconded. The motion carried with a majority vote. Estes voted against the motion. It was also determined that Christianson would be the employee's point of contact with the board and Christianson would be considered Luhning's supervisor. The clerk was also asked to provide the board with Luhning's hours each month and to check with MAT attorneys about paying him by salary rather than hourly.

Dates to remember

Thursday, Aug. 21, 2025 -- District 9 Meeting, Cormorant Community Center, Pelican Rapids (EOTC's Rep. Vance Bachmann, is up for reelection)

Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025 – Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025 – Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Thursday, October 23? -- East Otter Tail Meeting -- TBD

Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025 – Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 11-13, 2025 – MAT Annual Conference, St. Cloud's River Edge Convention Center

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025 – Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

With no further business to discuss, Christianson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

SIGNATURES ON FILE

Blaine Larson
Supervisor

Debbie Irmen
Clerk