

MINUTES - ANNUAL MEETING 2025

Girard Township, March 11, 2025, at 2:30 p.m.

Present: Sandy Gregg, Steve Nelson, Randall Witt, Larry Kreager, Randy Torgerson, Blaine Larson, Brad Grewe, Pete Knapp, Kathy Trites, Al Pedersen, Keith Fleischauer, and Debbie Irmen

Tax levies for 2025 were set at the Continuation of Annual Meeting in August 2024 as follows:

2025

Category	Change	Total
Revenue	\$ 0.00	\$ 67,200.00
R&B	-\$29,200	206,000.00
Fire	0.00	112,000.00
Equipment	0.00	33,600.00
Ambulance	0.00	11,200.00
Total	\$ 29,200.00	\$ 430,000.00

Girard Clerk Debbie Irmen called the meeting to order with the pledge to the flag. Clerk Irmen then called for nominations for Moderator. Blaine Larson was nominated as Moderator. With no other nominations made, motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to elect Blaine Larson as Moderator.

The moderator stated the purpose of the meeting was to do any business proper while the meeting was convened, with speakers limited to 5 minutes.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda as presented.

It was noted that levies are usually set at the Continuation of the Annual Meeting in August and that only those eligible to vote in the township election may act or cast a vote at this meeting.

A motion and second to approve these items was cast and carried unanimously.

Following the reading of the March 12, 2024, Annual Meeting Minutes by the clerk, a motion, second, and unanimous vote was cast to approve the minutes as corrected.

Treasurer Kathy Trites read the 2024 audit report which showed ending fund balances as follows:

General Fund – \$109,426.06
Road & Bridge Fund -- \$505,981.90
ARPA/Other Federal Fund -- \$14,705.83
Special Revenue Fund -- \$28,676.15
Fire Fund -- (\$73,409.97)
Ambulance Fund -- \$54,041.25

Capital Projects Fund -- \$122,868.80

Equipment Fund -- \$234,297.57

Total: \$1,020,681.85

The total balance as presented is \$1,228,761.84

It was noted that the supervisors had approved the purchase of an additional CD, in the amount of \$300,000.00, at First National Bank. The total amount of CDs is \$508,079.99. The clerk pointed out that the Supervisors are setting aside funds for anticipated fire equipment purchases planned over the next 3 to 8 years. For example, one truck will likely cost more than \$1 million which will be divided by the five entities served by the fire contract. Earned interest from all bank accounts and CDs is being applied to the negative fire fund balance. No further discussion followed.

The clerk's report highlighted 2024 activity taken by the board in the areas of finance, road upkeep, equipment purchases, township projects, building, and approach permits issued, a resolution on Cannabis, and ongoing projects. The report is filed as a part of these minutes.

Supervisors Report showed that the township had a beginning balance of \$463,708.48 in the Road & Bridge Fund, received \$268,295.93 in receipts, expended \$226,022.51 in disbursements, leaving a cash balance of \$505,981.90. There was no further discussion.

The clerk noted that the supervisors had identified road repairs during their 2024 spring road check that included approximately \$65,000.00 in asphalt repairs, and that approximately 1,125 tons of gravel had been applied to township roads at a cost of approximately \$10,000. A resident requested that gravel on Blanche Creek Road be applied more heavily in a low spot or suggested that it be plowed over more. There was no further comment on the Road Report.

The clerk pointed out that the supervisors had approved the spray foam insulation of the Town Hall and an uninsulated portion of the shop, to include insulating the overhead door, to spend the remaining \$14,705.83 federal Covid relief money received by the Township. There will likely be approximately \$2,200 that will require a township expenditure. The Township received a total of \$80,213.16 from the federal government in 2021 and 2022, which could be used to cover a wide range of improvements and expenses. Among the projects the township completed was building a bathroom and office in the town hall and replacing a damaged tarp on one of the buildings. Projects were to have been identified by December 2024, and the money must be spent by 2026. The township met the December deadline and is on track to meet the spending deadline in 2026. There was no further discussion.

The Town Board is authorized to set wages of employed people and township officials and supervisors which has historically been reviewed at the organizational meeting later in March, but it can be determined at any regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors. Current wages:

- a. Hourly rate, which includes election judge wages - \$19.00 per hour
- b. Supervisors - \$100.00 per meeting and \$200.00 salary per month
- c. Treasurer - \$100.00 per meeting and \$250.00 salary per month
- d. Clerk - \$100.00 per meeting and \$525.00 salary per month
- e. Federal Mileage rate: 70 cents (set by federal government)

A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize the board to set wages as they deem necessary and to accept the federal mileage rate for mileage compensation.

A motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to accept the following annual meeting and election-related dates, times, and location: The 2026 annual meeting will be Tuesday, March 10, 2026, beginning at 2:30 p.m. and ending no later than 4:30 p.m., at Girard Town Hall.

Regular meetings will be the third Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at Girard Town Hall, subject to change (changes will be posted at the town hall and online when/if changed) Scheduled meetings, which include all additional meetings, are available on the back table, or on the Township’s website, at www.girardtownship.us The Township Election will follow the annual meeting from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Polls must be open from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The inclement weather date for the meeting and election is one week later on March 17, 2026, at the Town Hall. The Board of Canvass will follow the election at approximately 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, 2026, following the election.

Donations made by a township must be statutorily authorized for a public purpose and in the town’s interest. (Information provided) A motion to keep the donation amount at \$1,500.00 was made, seconded and carried unanimously.

Discussion regarding additional donation requests from Fergus Falls Food Shelf and the History, Arts and Cultural Association of EOTC in Perham, and a request from Prospect House resulted in a motion and a second to make the following donations:

a. Otter Tail County Historical Society	2024 \$300.00
b. Henning Public School – Summer Rec Program	2024 \$250.00
c. Battle Lake Public School – Summer Rec Program	2024 \$250.00
d. East Otter Tail County Fair – Operational expenses	2024 \$100.00
e. Glendalough Park Partners	2024 \$300.00
f. Battle Lake Food Shelf – March is Food Share Month.	2024 \$150.00
g. Henning Food Shelf – March is Food Share Month.	2024 \$150.00
TOTAL	<u>\$1,500.00</u>

The motion carried unanimously.

The topic of pocket gopher bounties was discussed. Several residents who trap the nuisance rodents noted that with gasoline prices and other conditions, the cost to do the job has increased for them. Anticipating the discussion, the clerk contacted seven townships and received four responses regarding policies and payment for gopher feet: Most had no policy, though one required that residents verify they lived in the township, and with the exception of one township, which pays \$4.50, the others paid out \$4.00 per

pair of feet. Townships directly surrounding Girard pay \$5.00. Girard's present rate is \$4.00. The clerk had also contacted a MN Trapper Association member from Bluffton who indicated that by not trapping the rodents, though they may be far from a road, they could become so populated that they would encroach enough to cause road or right-of-way damage, thereby making management a township concern. With no further discussion, a motion was made, seconded and approved to increase the pocket gopher bounty to \$5.00 per pair of feet, beginning immediately. There was one dissenting vote.

The clerk shared information about the emergency response crisis going on across the state and impacting local EMS and ambulance crews. She suggested opening a discussion regarding a one-time expenditure of funds to EMS to help offset expenses. No action was taken; however, it was agreed she should contact Chelsey with the Henning EMS to speak at an upcoming meeting and invite residents to attend. She also talked about reporting storm damage to the OTC Emergency Management Department to aid in receiving emergency funding. She noted that at this time there is no paper document which would better facilitate recording of damage. Right now, it is in an electronic format which makes reporting less convenient and therefore less reliable. The clerk requested feedback on interest in an electronic Township newsletter with opportunities to send out notifications and other relevant information throughout the year. The project would likely be ready to launch in 2026. Generally, the residents in attendance were agreeable.

Announcements – Otter Tail County Auditor/Treasurer Wayne Stein is retiring, and a farewell open house is scheduled Tuesday, March 25, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Otter Tail Lake Room at the Government Services Center, 500 W. Fir Ave., Fergus Falls

A motion was made and seconded at 3:55 p.m. to continue the Annual Meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at the Town Hall prior to the regular meeting, to set levies and any other business deemed necessary. The motion carried unanimously.