

Girard Township

Regular Monthly Meeting -- MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 – 6 p.m., Town Hall

Website: (www.girardtownship.us)

Chairman Blaine Larson opened the meeting at 6 p.m. with the pledge to the flag.

Present: Supervisors Larson, Peter Christianson, and Larry Estes, Treasurer Kathy Trites, Clerk Debbie Irmen, and Road Engineer Jeff Stabnow.

Absent: Road maintenance worker Will Luhnig

Supervisor Christianson relayed the road condition report in the absence of the road worker, who said all the township roads were in good driving condition, and that he would continue with cleanup work as the wind continued to blow.

Supervisor Estes moved to approve the minutes from the **regular monthly meeting** held **Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2026**, at the Town Hall as printed. Christianson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report

The treasurer presented the December Financials, which showed ending balances in the General Fund: \$125,195.56; Road and Bridge: \$427,845.49; Special Revenue: \$31,676.15; Fire Fund: \$6,395.02; Ambulance Fund: \$56,957.93; Special Assessment: \$24,094.26; Capital Projects: \$152,868.80; and Equipment: \$267,850.10; for a total of \$1,092,883.31.

The report will be filed for audit. The Board of Audit will verify the 2025 financials in February.

Larson moved to approve claims as presented/audited, totaling \$10,937.35; payroll for Estes, Irmen, Larson, Luhnig (2), Christianson, Jacobson, and K. Trites. Christianson seconded. Motion carried unanimously. No additional claims were presented at the meeting.

Reports/Information

Clerk's report – People who filed before the close of the filing period on Jan. 13, 2026, for the open positions in Girard Township were Supervisors Larson and Christianson, and Clerk Debbie Irmen. Clerk Irmen submitted a report to OTC County Commissioners for reimbursement of township pocket gopher management expenses and learned after the meeting that the commissioners voted to increase the reimbursement from \$1 to \$2, so I believe the township will receive \$1,810.00 of the \$4,525.00 spent. MATIT sent out its Workers' Compensation Certificate of Coverage (supervisors approved the premium payment with the claims) and the certificate is on file; The 2026 meeting dates was corrected, and the updated version was included in the meetings packets. Spring short course dates were announced in the MAT newsletter. The course is for supervisors, clerks and treasurers, and new officers. The closest one is in Alexandria. Cost is \$75/per person which covers meals and materials. Registration is onsite. I usually ask that it be billed to the township. Just a reminder, you will be auditing the accounts in February. The clerk suggested that the board consider furnace maintenance as she

doesn't remember the last time the furnace was serviced. The previous chairman changed the filter, but she doesn't remember when that was done. Upon agreement by the supervisors that the furnace should be maintained, the clerk will call All Seasons Heating and Cooling, the company that installed the furnace, to make an appointment. The Clerk also noted that she and several election judges will be going through the tubs of old documents on Jan. 26, to discard and organize the information according to a schedule of how to retain township records. She also noted that a new flag is on order.

Fire meeting – Blaine said the Battle Lake Fire and Rescue received free radios and firefighters are testing. He also noted he will be traveling south for a couple of months and won't be able to attend the January and February fire meetings. Larry will officially attend the meeting, though Peter mentioned he might also attend in an unofficial capacity.

New Business

The clerk presented the 2025 Supervisor's Report for the Road and Bridge fund only which shows how much money was spent over the year on maintaining township paved and gravel roads.

Supervisor Christianson moved to approve the increase of the Federal mileage rate to 72.5 cents per mile. Supervisor Larson seconded. Motion carried with a majority vote. Supervisor Estes voted against the motion.

Supervisor Estes moved to approve expenses for all supervisors and board officials who planned to attend the Minnesota Association of Townships Spring Short Course training. Christianson seconded. At this time, the clerk and Supervisor Larson expect to attend the training, the closest of which is March 27, at Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center in Alexandria. Supervisor Christianson and Treasurer Trites may consider attending. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

FYI Only: The clerk reported that she had sent the first electronic township newsletter on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026, to 23 individuals. According to analytics provided from the chosen program, 50 percent had opened the document within a few days of distribution. To date, two property owners have requested a subscription, and the clerk has added their names to the list for the next newsletter. She asked that everyone spread the word or forward their newsletter to others because word of mouth is how to grow the number of residents who receive the it. Her goal is to grow the list of owners to 250 subscribers of the roughly 700 property owners in the township. Property owners must make the request by sending me their email.

To date, Nate Bertelson hasn't sent payment for road vacation costs incurred by the township. The supervisors suggested the clerk send a gentle reminder that payment is due.

The supervisors all received a call regarding tree trimming requested by a property owner on Holiday Road. After discussion which indicated the road is technically a cartway, which is not

maintained by the township, the clerk was directed to send a letter to the property owner that says property owners are responsible for tree trimming on the roadway.

Christianson requested clarification of the funds on the township Cash Control report. The clerk explained that the Capital Fund is related to building projects, such as building a new town hall or the purchase of a road grader, or a larger than expected project and is typically a one-time expenditure. The Equipment Fund is specifically for the purchase of equipment, which could help cover the township's share of the new fire truck expected next year. The discussion ventured to work needed on the one mile of 440th Street, which could include 230th Street, too. Liberty Drive had extensive patching completed in 2025. The cost to rebuild the mentioned one mile of 440th is roughly \$1 million. Options were discussed, and supervisors requested Road Engineer Stabnow bring tentative plans and cost estimates to the February meeting. He was asked to separate repair on 440th St. and 230th St. which would perhaps allow for a multi-year plan to be developed.

Supervisor Christianson also said he would help the road maintenance worker get the shop cleaned and organized for better efficiency. During the discussion of shop organization, Supervisor Christianson suggested a plan to resurface the shop's concrete floor, which is deteriorating due to exposure to salt that melts off the plow truck upon return from snow removal. He proposed the township install a polymer surface over the existing concrete. This surface would be specifically chosen for its ability to resist the erosive effects of road salt, which has been the primary cause of the floor's degradation. Although the initial investment in a polymer surface would be significant, he said, it was noted that this option would be more cost-effective over time as well as preserve the township's facility investment over time. Frequent removal and replacement of the cement surface would incur higher long-term expenses compared to the durability and longevity offered by the polymer solution. Supervisors agreed more research and cost estimates are required before moving forward with the project. Christianson also suggested that the grader blade be repainted to maintain the life of that piece of equipment.

Once all these updates to the township's facilities is completed, Christianson suggested that the open house be planned to show how the township is spending some of the taxpayers' money and maintaining its investment in its facilities. He suggested it might be held by late summer.

Dates to remember

Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026 – Board of Audit, 5:30 p.m., followed by the Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Monday, Feb. 23, 2026 – Henning Fire Department annual meeting, 7:30 p.m., at the Henning Community Center/Fire Hall.

Tuesday, March 10, 2026 – Annual meeting, 2:30-4:30 p.m./Township Election 5 to 8 p.m./Board of Canvass at approximately 8:30 p.m., all at the Girard Town Hall

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 -- Organizational meeting 6 p.m./Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Friday, March 27, 2026 – MAT Spring Short Courses, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center, 2100 Arrowwood Lance, Alexandria, MN

Tuesday, April 21, 2026 -- Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Friday, April 24, 2026 -- Board of Equalization 9:30 a.m. at the Town Hall/Road Check Meeting to follow at approximately 10 a.m. (the first 4 hours are conducted on the roads, with a review of planned action to follow at the town hall)

With no further business to discuss, Christianson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Blaine Larson
Supervisor

Debbie Irmey
Clerk

Approved: