

# **Town of Crystal Bay**

## **Annual Meeting**

### **Minutes**

**March 19th, 2024**

- I. Attendance: 35 residents, 7 non-residents, 2 non-residents via Zoom
- II. Call To Order: Stacy
  - A. Stacy Breden, Town Clerk, called the 2024 Crystal Bay Township Annual meeting to order at the Finland Community Center at 7:05pm with the pledge of allegiance.
- III. Selection of Moderator: Stacy
  - A. Paul Deaner was selected to moderate the 2024 Crystal Bay Township Annual Meeting by unanimous consent.
- IV. Reading of the 2023 Minutes
  - A. MOTION: to waive the reading of and place on file the minutes of the last Annual Meeting as copies had been supplied to those in attendance. Motioned by Dave Geist , Seconded by , Nancy Olson Passed by voice vote.
- V. Reports
  - A. Clerk Report: Stacy (See Attached Report)
  - B. Treasurer Report: Danielle
    - Reports were shared in paper form and the Treasurer gave an overview of what the information in the reports means.
    - MOTION: to accept the treasurer's report as shared in written form and explained.
    - Motioned by: BJ Kohlstedt , Seconded by Dave Geist , Passed by voice vote.
  - C. Community Center: Honor (See Attached Report)
  - D. Cemetery: Vaughn
    - 1. History: The first person buried in Crystal Bay Cemetery was Esaia Mantari in September 1912. The design of the cemetery has Lots which contain 8 Blocks. Blocks may contain more than one cremation. Blocks are sold for \$100 to Crystal Bay residents and \$200 to non-residents. As of today, 358 people are buried in the cemetery with 71 being Military Veterans. The Plat of the Crystal Bay Cemetery has 216 Lots, of which 116 Lots have been developed. This leaves approximately 100 Lots that could be developed in the future. This would require tree removal, leveling and survey/marker designations completed. In 2023 there were 13 burials, in 2022 there were 6 burials and in 2021 there were 7 burials. In 2023 there were 19 blocks sold, in 2022 there were 5 blocks sold and in 2021 there was 1 block sold.
    - 2. The Solar lighted flag pole has been installed with new flags. The old flag pole and lighting will be removed this Spring. The Arch at the entrance is going to be relocated to sit between the two entrances. This will make it easier for equipment to enter the cemetery, as needed. The Veterans/Information Center area needs to be updated completely. A storage shed needs to be built to contain equipment.
  - E. Housing Project: Mike (Finn)
    - 1. Up and rolling on the housing project, the 1st chapter is to get information. We are new

and the info needs to get out for the public. Resources hrs, commissioners the meetings are getting larger and transparent. A Lot of questions asked at meetings, are we doing vacation rentals and airbnb? No. If you build a house, who gets to live in it? Our group is excited and looking to secure some land and grants, we have a good team and you are all welcome to join it. We also have soup!

#### F. Road and Bridge: Doug

1. Wonderful winter, he appreciates it. 8 culverts need work. 5 replaced 3 lowered Klinker Rd, Laurel Lane and Menace (Heffelfinger) Silver Hill, Leskinen and Park Hill. Some ditches have to be cleaned on Heffelfinger. Power poles on Silver Hill were removed last fall and CLPmade a mess in the ditches. Heffelfinger's new culvert kinda damaged some ditches. I'd like to get gravel hauled on some roads. Next week's meeting Trout Unlimited will attend and plan to put a fish friendly culvert in this summer on Silver Hill Drive.
2. Question, why don't we abandon roads? Well, we get money from Lake County and if we don't maintain them they take the money away from us. Gary Olsen asked if the cost to keep the roads greater than the amount we spend to keep it? Group Discussion was had.

#### G. Supervisors: Paul

1. This July-Aug A new bridge on Cooper Road over Lindstrom Creek was installed
2. This fall we winterized the Septic System Capping Tank three
3. Installing 2 trough heaters and pumping the tanks when they reach a certain level
4. In January we received a redesign from Scott Robinson for the Septic and are currently working with the County on Funding. More information will be available at the end of April. Come to our monthly meetings to stay updated.
5. Due to Russ' heavier load with his job he decided it was best to step back in January of this year leaving an open seat on the board.
6. We are interviewing for the open Supervisor seat this week and plan to appoint at our March Regular Meeting next Tuesday.
7. We also have an interested Treasurer to take Danielle's place this Spring.
8. We have some special meetings coming up:
  - a. Tuesday April 16th, 2024 @ 6pm Meeting of the Whole with Lake County Commissioners here at Clair Nelson before our regularly scheduled 7pm meeting.
  - b. Thursday May 16th, 2024 @ 1pm Value & Classification Equalization Meeting

### VI. New Business

#### A. Annual Donation Recommendations:

Silver Bay Library: Shannon Walz

- a) Last year Crystal Bay Township gave \$2500, with the tightening of spending this year whatever the Township could give would be appreciated.

North Shore Area Partners: Lise Abazs

In the past Crystal Bay Township has given 5,000.00 annually any donation will be much appreciated.

Finland Historical Society: Bonnie Tikkaneen

- a) We are thankful for donations and appreciate of anything Crystal Bay Township can give.

Lake County Rescue: Jesse Walters

- a) Jesse is representing the Lake County Rescue Squad.

LCRS is mainly funded through the Lake County Sheriff's office. Annual Report: 19 members in the North Section (Silver Bay & Finland). Responding to 130 911 calls, any medical calls they are paged for averages one every three days. A lot of weekend calls are typically 11pm to 2am.

Total of 468 hrs of 911 time equal 26% of the calls were in Crystal Bay, of those calls 68% were medical or trauma, 8% of calls were hwy traffic responses.

Off road searches & trail typically take more hours on scene sometimes days.

Additionally 5% fire response and 5% water response. Critical Aspect= due to hiring issues faced across the State when Two Harbors is paged so is Silver Bay.

Nature Childcare: Elli King

- a) Please consider supporting our program with \$500.00. It will make a difference in our program, and therefore our children, this year.

MOTION: Michelle Duhant to increase Nature Day Care donation to \$1000.00

Motioned by: Michelle Duhant , Seconded by Suzie From , Passed by voice vote.

MOTION: to allocate \$1000.00 each to Silver Bay Library, North Shore Area Partners, Finland Historical Society and Lake County Rescue

Motioned by: Lise Abazs, Seconded by Gary Olson , Passed by voice vote.

#### B. Set Tax Levy - Board Recommendation: Danielle

The Treasurer walked through the Board recommendation in the context of past years. Based on adjusting wages closer to cost of living for the area and increasing town capacity comparable with surrounding townships, the Town Board recommends the levy increase to maintain a sustainable budget. to approve the 2025 Town levy as outlined below. This includes an increase in the #100 General Fund \$25,000 to \$60,000, #110 Town Hall Building Fund \$2,000 to \$27,000, and #120 Community Projects DECREASE \$-2,000 to \$3,000.

#100 General Fund	\$60,000
#110 Town Hall Building	\$27,000
#120 Community Projects	\$3,000
#201 Road & Bridge	\$70,000
#225 Emergency Services	\$22,500
#226 Cemetery	\$2,000

#401 Capital Buildings	\$10,000
#406 Capital Equipment	\$25,000
<b>Total Levy</b>	<b>\$219,500</b>

Motioned by Colby Abazs, MOTION to recommend that the board finds creative ways to reduce the expenses to fit our available levy dollars. Relevant whether we pass the expanded levy or not. Second, Dave Geist, MOTION FAILED.

Town Discussion around the levy, is it possible to sell equipment, or how to fundraise to help instead of raising the levy. Further discussion around raising Capital Equipment fund \$25,000 feels like a lot. How can we keep the budget in check so we aren't raising the fund yearly? Are there plans in place to spend conservatively?

MOTIONED to approve Levy as board recommends by: Colby Abazs Seconded by: Michelle Duhant, passed by voice vote.

## VII. Other Business:

### A. Finland Fire: Carrie Walters

Carrie is an active member and secretary of the Finland Fire Department. Currently there are 14 active members. 27 calls in 2023 that the department responded to, only one of the 14 members needed firefighter 1 and 2, so we are in a good spot. 5 calls in Beaver Bay, 10 in Crystal Bay and 10 in Stony River.

Finland Fire built an additional garage structure and installed water tanks to help fill trucks. The older building installed a shower and furnace, did a roof repair and flooring, and reduced the size of the office to accommodate the shower.

Installed a new garage door opener for the rescue side of things. New air packs were purchased with grants. We have 8 new packs equipped same as Two Harbors and Silver Bay so we can aid each other on calls with quick connection. This is beneficial for everyone we are on calls with.

Relief association side of things, we moved all money to PERA for retirement not individual funds anymore. Crystal Bay Township gives 20,000 annually and although it helps a lot we would like to ask if Crystal Bay Township could increase their donation to \$24,000 in 2025. Paul Deaner question: is there going to be any special meetings regarding this (2024) fire season since we had such a low snowfall. Carrie responded; It's possible the DNR heads that up and hasn't heard anything. Hoping everyone is careful with Spring Camping. We might have bans as soon as this coming weekend.

Motion: to let the board decide on the Finland Fire Department contract. Motioned by: Michelle Duhant, Seconded by Doug Perfetto, Passed by voice vote.

## VIII. Adjourn:

### A. MOTION: to adjourn at 9:13pm. Motioned by Lori Walewski, Seconded by Doug Perfetto, Passed by voice vote.

Chair – Kurt Mead

Vice Chair – Danielle Hefferan

Secretary – Kathy Chumley

At Large – Randy Duke

At Large - Terry Miller

At Large - Shelby Roback

At Large - Elaine Loeffler

At Large - Kim Wolfgram-Salz

**Director/Program Lead** - Honor Schauland

**Operations Lead** - Kyle Flack

**Communications Lead** - Kaare Melby

**Finance Lead** - Jennifer Yandrasits

We also have 17 other staff people: 10 Youth Program, 5 Food Chain, 1 Cleaning person, and 1 office assistant - all are part-time.

## **Summary of 2023**

1. We served over 14,000 people with activities at the Center in 2023.
2. We brought in \$249,000 in grants from private foundations in 2023 for programs and specific projects. This is how we pay most of our staff people as well.
3. Supported community events, such as the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, St Urho's Celebration, Spring Runoff Variety Show, Whitetails Unlimited Banquet, Finland Fireman's Softball Tournament, Town Annual Meeting, Harvest Booya, the Finland Co-op Annual Meeting, FMHS Pikka Joulu and other classes and community events.
4. Hosted many successful community activities and programs, including Youth Night, Bonebuilders, Monthly Community Potlucks, Monday evening AA, evening basketball, summer softball and tennis, Monday and Wednesday yoga, meditation, pickleball, conscious movement, flow group and Tuesday crafts.
5. Hosted people who use the internet regularly and/or use the public computer. We have a Zoom account that is used not only by our staff, but also by multiple other community groups for meetings. We have also trained a number of community groups on the teleconferencing equipment, and we are available to do training on Google Documents, Slack and Zoom for any group that needs it.
6. Provided services and information for all types of trail users, especially hikers, ATVers, and snowmobilers. We also monitor the RV Dump as a service for campers in the area.

7. Continued work to develop the economic potential of our commercial kitchen facility as a food business incubator and our Center overall as a business incubator and resource. Our kitchen is currently available for a small business kitchen renter. We also provide resources and assistance to developing businesses.
8. Our Youth Program is growing back to pre-COVID levels. In 2023, we received funding from North Shore Collaborative, Northland Foundation, Cliffs Foundation and Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation as well as private donations. Participation continues to grow, and activities continue to evolve. The Youth Program served over 120 kids in 2023, with an average of 25-30 participants each week at Youth Night.
9. Summer programming in 2023 was a success – although it was somewhat different than past years due to staffing issues. We took 10 teenagers on a BWCA day trip, and Kids Camp was all about learning to cook for 15 younger kids. Camp Finland will be back in 2024 in full force.
10. Our grant funded food systems project, the Finland Food Chain, had a number of successes. The Finland Wild Rice House was able to process over 15,000 lbs of rice and had a very successful mentorship season. 5 new mentors and 15 new mentees participated and at least 14 mentees from previous years got out to rice on their own! The Finland Farmers Market had record attendance and a growing number of vendors, and is consistently offering monthly winter markets this year.
11. We continue to strengthen our collaborative structure and practices, broadening our organization's capacity to meet community needs.

### **Upcoming Projects in 2024 and near future.**

1. Work with the Township and County to raise funds and complete the repairs on the septic system for the Center
2. Install wood-fired oven in the new timber frame and awnings on both pavilions.
3. Support the Finland Home Solutions committee in their efforts to begin to address access to housing for residents in our community.
4. Fix dugouts and other improvements to the ball field area if possible.

### **Current Goals**

1. To continue the current work on the structure of the Friends of the Finland organization to better accommodate all of the work that we do together, and that we plan to do in the future.
2. to continue to work with community groups to create programming and activities in the Community Center facility, including but not limited to job creation, community education, small business support, community health clinics, veterinary clinics, support for seniors, youth activities, community events, etc.
3. to continue to furnish the Center with furniture and equipment that will allow for the most community use and activities of the building.
4. to continue to draw and create social and civic activities such as meetings, dinners, dances and community events to the Center.

5. to continue to work with Crystal Bay Township to oversee mowing and upkeep of the Clair Nelson Center site, ball field and community triangle.
6. to continue to support community events like the John Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon, St Urho's Celebration, Booya Fest, among others.

**In addition**, it's pretty clear that costs for upkeep of the Center are higher than the money that comes in from the County, the Township, and rentals. The amount FoF gets from the Township hasn't increased since 2015, and the amount levied by the Town for maintenance hasn't increased since then either. We have been able to make it up from donations we get but other needs in our bigger organizational budget have grown as well. There is also no long term maintenance plan for the site and we don't have funds to cover more than what we are doing. Other than snowblowing and mowing that the township does, the ball field, tennis court, and playground are maintained by volunteers. We get complaints and requests about the grounds and outdoor equipment all the time. We have been able to scrape together funds to fix things up here and there, but grants don't really cover regular maintenance items that just need to happen on a regular basis. Right now some basic maintenance is needed for the tennis court and the dugouts in order for those areas to continue to be usable. We know it's a bad time for the Township budget and also that taxpayers are feeling pinched already, but we feel that there needs to be a levy increase this year or next to give us all some options to address these issues properly. We'll keep working on our numbers and other ways to pay for this stuff, but we have been talking to the Township and wanted to bring this up here so folks understand why this part of the levy is increasing. Our income and expenses specifically related to the building, grounds, and maintenance is attached.

We appreciate your continued support for community activities in the Finland area!

Thanks,

Honor Schauland

Director, Friends of the Finland Community