

**Minutes of Sugar Grove Township
Annual Town Meeting
Tuesday, April 9, 2024**

Call to Order: Clerk Bond called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Sherriff Hain.

Elected Officials and Other Electors Present: Tom Rowe, Marion Bond, Jon Bobbe, Jerry Elliott, Lewis Medina, Phil Silagi, Curt Karas, Bill Collins, Doug Musser, Clarice Dillard, Karen Pritchard and Sherriff Hain.

Election of Moderator: Karen Pritchard motioned the election of Jon Bobbe as Moderator. The Clerk asked if there were further nominations, there being none Clerk called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved. The clerk administered the Oath of Moderator to Mr. Bobbe.

Set Moderator's Salary: The clerk entertained a motion to set the Moderator's salary: Clarice Dillard motioned and Curt Karas seconded that the Moderator be paid \$50.00 as compensation. Motion passed by voice vote.

Approval of Annual Town Meeting 2023 Minutes: Moderator Bobbe asked for a motion to approve the April 11, 2023 minutes. Bill Collins motioned and Phil Silagi seconded that the minutes of the previous Annual Town Meeting be approved as read. Motion unanimously carried by voice vote of electors.

Annual 2022/2023 Financial Reports: Moderator Bobbe directed Clerk Bond to present for approval the following financial reports:

Town Fund: Clerk Bond read the Annual Financial Report relative to the Town Fund. Clerk Bond reported Revenue of \$592,450, Expenditures & Compensation of \$350,843 and an ending fund balance on March 31, 2024 of \$748,873.

Road & Bridge Fund: Clerk Bond read the Annual Financial Report relative to the Road & Bridge Fund. Clerk Bond reported Revenue of

\$1,192,747, Expenditures & Compensation of \$897,696 and an ending fund balance on March 31, 2024 of \$1,214,356.

General Assistance Fund: Clerk Bond read the Annual Financial Report relative to the General Assistance Fund. Clerk Bond reported Revenue of \$6376, Expenditures & Compensation of \$4471 and an ending fund balance on March 31, 2024 of \$171,954.

Mental Health Fund: Clerk Bond read the Annual Financial Report relative to the Town Fund. Clerk Bond reported a beginning fund balance of \$0, Revenue of \$137,283, Expenditures & Compensation of \$137,283 and an ending fund balance on March 31, 2024 of \$0.

Community Building Fund: Clerk Bond read the Annual Financial Report relative to the Community Building Fund. Clerk Bond reported Revenue of \$173,887, Expenditures & Compensation of \$104,772 and an ending fund balance on March 31, 2024 of \$656,658.

Moderator Bobbe asked for a motion to approve the financials reports.

Motion by Phil Silagi, second by Jerry Elliott. Motion unanimously carried by voice vote of electors.

The Moderator asked Sherriff Ron Hain to give the Keynote address. He spoke about the "state of the county" regarding public safety. He mentioned a number of significant incidents that had occurred as he took office 6 years ago: The Covid-19 Pandemic, the shooting of George Floyd and resulting riots, and the Pratt Shooting in Aurora. His three main jobs are Public Safety, Prisons and Court Security. He has implemented programs at the jail to reduce recidivism including drug rehab for opoid addiction resulting in decreasing OD deaths after release by 89% and reducing recidivism from 49% to 18%. He also mentioned a documentary on Amazon Prime called A Prisoner's Path that is about the reforms at the county jail. He has a pursuit policy in the county to pursue until stopped and gives deputies pursuit driving training twice a year. In 2019 his office had 19 pursuits, in 2020 there were 40. The squad cars are now equipped with spike strips that eject from the side of the car to disable the chased vehicle. This policy has stopped gangs coming to Kane county

from Chicago. He was asked if the no-cash bail has hurt his budget. He said that his budget was not affected, but it has hurt community safety. In the Illinois' Pre-Trial Fairness Act there are numerous offences that are considered non-detainable. This includes DUI and reckless homicide. He was asked about squatters. He said that because they serve eviction notices, the ones they see are part of the "sovereign citizen" group who refuse to pay rent on properties. He was asked about felons being able to get jobs. He said they have an internet posting of jobs from 49 employers willing to hire felons on the Sherriff's website.

Consideration & Potential Approval of Bliss House Leases: Moderator Silagi explained that the Bliss House has office space behind the Historical Society and asked Supervisor Rowe to summarize the current leases. Rowe explained that the leases of property are required to be approved by electors at the Annual Town Meeting. The lease for the upstairs office is to Melissa Joseph who provides counseling to those suffering from anxiety and PTSD. The downstairs lease is to Ellen Violet Svehla of Ellen Violet Designs. The upstairs space leases for \$525/mo. And the downstairs space leases for \$315/mo. Both are one-year leases beginning June 1, 2023 and ending May 31, 2024. Moderator Silagi asked for a motion to approve the leases for 2023-2024. Lewis Medina motioned and Jerry Elliott seconded approval of both leases, motion carried.

Reports:

Community Building: Debbie reported that they power-washed the Gazebo, sanded it and stained it and noticed that all the wood at the foundation was rotted so they replaced that. They added plastic walls. Had two community events; they partnered with the park district for a children's fun fair in the basement on the first night of Corn Boil including games and face-painting which was a big hit. This year they plan on having two face painters. On December 30th they had a program called Make 2024 Magical with a magician and balloon artist and games. They had 214 people sign up. Someone said the gym rental was a little

expensive for kids to just shoot hoops, could they lower the price? Debbie spoke with Scott Stalcup asking him if with the Park District they could do a program that allowed kids to shoot baskets for \$5.00/hr. The Park district has software that allows rental for \$5.00 and tracks the number of kids so they can do five kids for each hoop for an hour. They will be doing this open gym on Saturday mornings with the Park District. They are currently running Pickleball on Monday mornings. They have 2 new AC units in the dining room, their most used room. They started a Facebook page to give word of their events. A resident told Debbie that they brought their grandkids and they had the most fun they've ever had and the Community building "did it right." They also installed a new water heater and took down a tree on the north side of building due to rotting. They installed a drop box in the lobby for people to deposit forms and checks. She said the building is about 98% converted to LED. She said the building is saving about \$2,000 a year. Wire Wizard installed a digital bridge to replace the required land line in the elevator for emergencies.

Road & Bridge: Commissioner Musser reported that the highway department did annual road maintenance including striping, painting and brush pick up. Truck, equipment and building maintenance, road sign maintenance has been done. They have a camera system in the southwest where people take down chevrons which cost about \$3 Clarice Dillard has a camera system on Denny & Norris and has been able to get license plates there. They have a camera system in the southwest where people have taken down Chevron signs that cost about \$360 a sign. They have recouped some signs.

They overlayed west Prairie for 2 + miles. They paved their section of Norris with the Village.

Got a new Freightliner plow truck with wing, salt spreader and shouldering conveyor, so they now have two shouldering conveyors on their newest trucks. Used 600 tons of salt. Had ordered 1200 tons. Now down to 800 tons. Sided the salt shed and put in oversized gutters. Major tree trimming and removal due to two major storms and tornados.

Maintained the bioswale in Prestbury. Participated in Sugar Grove Water Authority monitoring program. Participated in NEPDS state & federal program.

Assessor's Report: Assessor Karas presented a worksheet to each participant. He spoke about Solar Farms and the three methods of assessing them; the cost approach, the income approach, and the sales comparison/market approach. The Illinois Department of Revenue developed the megawatt approach. The cash value of a megawatt is \$218,000. Then a factor based on the amount of CPI increase since 2017 and then depreciate it by 33.3 to arrive at assessed value. The proposed solar field in Sugar Grove by the airport would produce 6.2 megawatts. would produce about \$53,000/year in assessments. The current AG assessment is about \$2,000/year. He went on to explain that even as the facility aged it could not fall below 30% of the fair cash value. The assessor was asked what did it matter if the field had corn, soybeans or solar panels? He explained that the soil production as determined by the Illinois Department of Revenue and U of I ag school determined the assessment value of agricultural land, and 57% of the township acreage is agricultural which produces 1.9% of tax revenue. There was discussion of the dangers of damaged solar fields leaking chemicals into the water supply, which Jerry Elliott said is a problem as the field sits on a 55 square mile watershed for Blackberry Creek.

Supervisor's Report: Supervisor Rowe reported that the township continued the Senior Lunch program average about 60 seniors each month, co-sponsored by Community Building and Park District; and the Fire Department attends and gives blood pressure readings. Transportation program continues to grow and have given over 4700 rides with 147 residents registered; township provided \$10,000 in social service funding: \$5,000 to A.I.D. and \$5,000 to Kane County CASA. Eleven years of no increase in Township or Road & Bridge tax levy; completed first year of partnership with Conley Outreach to administer township

General Assistance fund which helped one resident qualify for rental assistance; continue to sponsor Groovin' in the Grove at Library with concerts in June, July, & August. Completed 6th season of Senior Mowing for 15 households, and 3rd season of snow removal also for 14 households. The Township, Village, Park District and Kane County Forest There has been a lot of progress on the pedestrian bridge over Blackberry Creek to connect with Gilman Trail with Park Avenue. Worked with Community Building, Fire District and Park District to set up Ice Rink behind the Community Building, and working with Community Building to publish a four-page newsletter to be mailed to all households and businesses within the Township. Formed a Decennial Committee for both Township and Road District, which will be turned in to the County after final report. The Food Pantry needs to relocate and looking at remodeling 2 west bays of Bus Barn. Financial support will come from EEI and the Township. EEI wants the space in their building back.

Review and Potential Approval of Bliss House Leases

Copies of Leases are available for review. Moderator asked for a motion, Motion by Jerry Elliott, second by Phil Silagi. Voice vote carried.

Fire Chief Report

Thanked Township Road District for bush and tree cleaning. The district sponsors Goovin' in the Grove partner with Township and other sponsors. Food Truck Friday and Open House on June 21st. Senior Luncheon blood pressure checks. Have 12 Cadets from Fox Valley Career Center who are getting hands on experience with blood pressure checks. Just hired Janelle from Fox Valley Career Center on a part-time basis as an EMT. Just hired 3 Full Time people. Remodeling station and received a grant from Home Depot and their in-kind donation was painting the station. Working on doing more community events. Have a goal of doing three quarterly CPR classes through the year. First week of October will have a free CPR Training event. Obtained an EMS grant from IDPH for training kits and should get that in July.

Public Comments:

Jerry Elliott spoke about water shallow and deep-water aquifers. He said within our township we have an abundance of water. We have 5 monitoring stations. He mentioned Aurora well 101 which pumps 700,000 gallons whenever it pumps, and drops the level of nearby wells by 4 feet or more but within a day and a half the wells are Back to normal. One area of township in northwestern area shows a slight problem with arsenic. Otherwise the quality of water in our area is very good. He said we have completed our four-year contract, but now will loan our equipment to Kane County and they will continue the program the township started. A resident asked if a data center is put in, will there be enough water for that? Elliott said that would be okay, and we can support more residential development also. Elliott said the Village has eight wells and they are at the same level now as when they were first drilled.

Resident at corner of Denny and Norris said there are lots of accidents at her corner, that people disregard signs and run into yards. One driver hit the fire hydrant and took it out.

Date of Next Town Meeting:

Moderator asked for a Motion to set the date of Next Annual Town meeting as April 8, 2025. Motion by Doug Musser, second by Lewis Medina. Voice vote carried.

Motion to Adjourn; Curt Karas motioned, Doug Musser seconded, voice vote unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.