

**SHAMROCK TOWNSHIP
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday August 27, 2024**

Board Chairman Ron Flatten called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were: Supervisor Ernie Darlow; Supervisor Tom Meyer; Supervisor Bruce Johnson; Supervisor Brock Hayes; Treasurer Jack Brula; Clerk Candace Kral; and two property owners in person.

Ron Flatten began by congratulating and welcoming Bruce Johnson and Brock Hayes on their election to the town board as supervisors. He then outlined the purpose of the special meeting, which was to administer the Oath of Office to the new supervisors, discuss the township's policies and requirements for accepting roads as township-maintained roads, and review the procedure/policy as outlined in a resolution for processing road improvements as a Subordinate Services District.

Bruce Johnson and Brock Hayes were sworn into office by the town clerk by reciting and signing their Oath of Office of Supervisor.

Ron Flatten then turned the floor over to Tom Meyer stating this meeting was by request of Tom Meyer.

Tom Meyer raised concerns regarding road specifications, stating that although the topic was discussed at the previous regular board meeting, it remained unresolved. He emphasized that many roads currently maintained by the township do not meet the specifications outlined in the township's policy, despite residents being required to adhere to those standards when requesting township maintenance of their roads. He expressed that this inconsistency was problematic, especially as some township roads cannot feasibly be upgraded to meet the required specifications. Meyer urged the township to consider revising the road specifications to make them more realistic and achievable for residents, while still serving the best interests of the community.

During the discussion, it was noted that many of the township roads that fail to meet current standards were constructed during a time when the area was primarily made up of seasonal cabins and saw much lighter traffic. At that time, roads were designed for smaller vehicles and less frequent use, but as the township grows and becomes more active, the demand for larger roads capable of handling increased traffic has risen. It was also argued that just because something was suitable in the past doesn't mean it remains appropriate today, as larger vehicles and heavier use have become the norm. Some board members expressed that building roads to outdated standards is no longer practical, especially since roads built for minimum maintenance often evolve into needing full-service maintenance over time. It was also stated that the township's policy was created to maintain a certain road standard to accommodate the years to come, and moving forward, the board needs to consider how these standards should adapt to meet the growing needs of the community.

It was suggested that the township consider approving roads on a case-by-case basis. However, another board member raised concerns that doing so could lead the township into a situation that would not be in its best interest, questioning the feasibility of such an approach.

The board then revisited instances where residents had requested township maintenance of their roads in the past, but were denied because the roads did not meet township specifications. It was noted that, for some, the task of upgrading their roads to meet the required standards is too overwhelming, leading to inaction. An example was mentioned of a road that was successfully brought up to spec by its adjacent property owners for acceptance and is now maintained by the township. The question was raised about whether the current specifications are too stringent for residents, especially in certain cases. It was reiterated, as discussed in the previous meeting, that the very minimum workable road width should be at least 18 to 20 feet. However, it was also noted that the township must be cautious in moving forward, as accepting substandard roads could set a problematic precedent. The board continued to weigh the pros and cons of the current road specifications, considering factors such as human challenges, future use, cost to both township and residents, and the safety and the long-term feasibility of maintaining these roads. The policy was approved and signed in 2008 and that it is believed that the road specification requirements were obtained from and made to mimic the county standards.

It was then suggested that the township consult with the county and comparative townships to review their policies and procedures regarding road specifications and the criteria for accepting roads for maintenance.

Tom Meyer informed the board that the topic of property assessments was added to the agenda in light of upcoming petitions for road asphaltting. He emphasized the importance of establishing a clear policy to guide the board in handling these requests.

The board was provided with a copy of the Subordinate Service District Resolution. A question was raised regarding how adjacent properties would be assessed for road improvements—whether by parcel, footage, or another method. The clerk will consult with the attorney for clarification. It was also noted that in the past, when a road is upgraded with a blacktop surface, the property owners are responsible for covering the full cost of the initial blacktopping, while the township assumes responsibility for ongoing maintenance, including any future relaying. There was further discussion about whether, in the case of future improvement project petitions, the township could assess property owners for the cost of a future relay. The clerk will verify this with the attorney as well.

Meeting adjourned 7:55 p.m.

Candace Kral
Clerk

Ron Flatten
Board Chairman

MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2024, REGULAR BOARD MEETING