

Minutes
Town of New Hope Regular Board Meeting
Tuesday December 17, 2024 6:00 p.m.
North New Hope Church, 845 County Road T North
Members Present: Todd Knepfel (Chair), Timm Raddatz
Also Present: Dorene Stolpa, Pat Zellmer
Guest: Rhonda Fechter

1. **Call to order:** The Regular December Town Board meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Review/Approval of regular minutes from November 25, 2024:** Minutes were circulated to the Board via email prior to the meeting. Supervisor Raddatz made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Chair Knepfel. Motion carried. Minutes are posted on the town website.
3. **Review/Approval of Plan Commission minutes from December 11, 2024:** Minutes were circulated to the Board via email prior to the meeting. Guest Rhonda Fechter asked that the phrase 'petitioned for rezoning' be reconsidered, as Portage County Planning and Zoning initiated the process. Supervisor Raddatz made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Chair Knepfel. Motion carried. Minutes are posted on the town website. The Planning Commission will reconvene upon the request of the Fechtters.
4. **Road Improvement Report:** Chair Knepfel noted that because of a mild winter thus far, some money remains in the 2024 budget for road work. Discussion ensued. Swenson Tree Service will be hired for early 2025 to continue brushing, targeting several roads where encroaching trees reduced visibility. Treasurer Stolpa reassured the Board that funds remaining at the end of the year are carried over with no penalty.
5. **Storage Space for Voting Equipment:** The Board and Clerk looked at options for constructing a simple lockable wire cage with shelving to store the DS200 Tabulator, ExpressVote Equipment, Badger Books, and miscellaneous voting equipment. Supervisor Raddatz suggested that we plan for additional storage that could house files. American Fence has been contacted for an estimate, with planned construction prior to the April elections.
6. **Town of New Hope Emergency Plan:** Clerk Zellmer posted the New Hope Disaster and Emergency Plan, and submitted copies to the Board and to Portage County Emergency Manager Bob Weinert. A request was posted on the website for residents to review and comment on the plan, and for those interested in being listed in the plan as Special Resources to contact Clerk Zellmer.
7. **Ordinances and Resolutions:**
 - a. **Town fire number placement Ordinance** (Ordinance 2024-02). After discussion, the Board agreed that this duty should be delegated to Portage County Planning and Zoning, making the ordinance unnecessary. Clerk Zellmer will email that request to Rod Sutter (P&Z) and Brad Cummings (Register of Deeds), and request that any future fire number changes be shared with the New Hope Chair and Clerk to maintain the master refuse/recycling list and property mapping.
 - b. **Resolution 2024-06** to amend posting locations for public notifications: Official documents are posted at North New Hope Church, Sunset Lake, and on the town website, with that change updated in the resolution. Supervisor Raddatz made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Chair Knepfel. Motion passed. The resolution was signed, and will be posted on the website.
8. **Upcoming 2025 Spring Elections:** The 2025 spring election caucus will be held at North New Hope Church on Thursday, January 2, at 6:00 pm. Documents for incumbents were distributed.

9. **Budget and reserve account:** The line item for Reserve will be deleted from the Budget. Shared and Shared Supplemental Revenue will be split out under Revenues. 2% Fire Dues were included in the 2024 fourth quarter payment to Iola, with corresponding documentation. Future 2% fire dues should not be included in a quarterly payment, with a separate check written following the August Settlement per recommendation from the State Department of Safety and Professional Services.
10. **New Business and Announcements.**
- a. **Harter's Disposal** contacted Clerk Zellmer in mid-December regarding an additional 2% increase in garbage and recycling above the 4% increase incorporated in the 2025 budget and included as special assessments on the 2024 property tax bills. That 2% increase of \$3.48 per household (from \$18.08 to \$18.37 per month, or \$216.96 to \$220.44 annual per household) will result in a shortfall of \$1385 in 2025. The increase is due to unexpected increases in landfill charges.
 - b. **The 2025-2026 contract with BA Pauls and Associate**s was signed and witnessed; property reassessments will begin in 2025. Maintenance is included in the 2025 and 2026 totals (not stated for 2026 in contract but clarified via phone conversation with Pauls and Associates).
11. **Payment of Bills:** The bills for December totaled \$12,023.53. Supervisor Raddatz made a motion to pay the bills, seconded by Chair Knepfel. Motion passed.
12. **Dates for Upcoming Events:**
- a. **The Annual Audit for Town of New Hope** will be held at 6:00 pm Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at North New Hope Church.
 - b. **The Regular January Board Meeting** will be held at 6:00 pm Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at North New Hope Church.
Both meetings have been posted on the Town website homepage.
13. Supervisor Raddatz made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chair Knepfel. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm.