

EUREKA TOWNSHIP
Dakota County, State of Minnesota

SPECIAL TOWN BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
March 7, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

The Special Town Board Public Hearing was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Lu Barfknecht and the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Supervisors Present: Lu Barfknecht, Donovan Palmquist, Ralph Fredlund, Nancy Sauber, and Kathleen Kauffman.

Others Present: Brian Ahern, Vincent Mako, Beth Eilers, Pat Mahowald.

Zoom Attendance: Julie Larson, Kelly Brosseth, Tom Gossler, Andrew Wojtowicz.

Purpose of the Public Hearing

Chair Barfknecht announced that the purpose of the public hearing is to consider the establishment of the Eureka Township Redevelopment Agency.

Supervisor Kauffman provided that some time ago the Board voted to use some of the ARPA funds, the uses of which are severely restricted, on a grant to install fiber optic in the Township. The State of Minnesota is contributing \$113,76, the broadband provider is contributing \$56,538 and the Township would be matching the amount of \$56,538, to start providing broadband access in Eureka Township. The State awarded the grant and now we must put in place a mechanism for funding our portion of those funds. Our attorney has advised that under State law we must establish this agency, the sole function of which in Eureka is to be a conduit for administering a contract between the Township and the broadband provider. The State strictly controls the transfer of its money to the broadband provider and hires its own expert to inspect the project along the way to ensure the installation has been completed and is functioning. The Township Attorney has provided a contract stating that when the State provides installments to the internet provider, the Township will also put out a portion of its money. The Redevelopment Agency has a small life and limited role to approve the contract which will then be the control mechanism for the Township. The Town Board expressed concerns about the title of this agency and stressed that it is strictly for the broadband project.

Public Comment

Chair Barfknecht opened the floor for public comment.

Vincent Mako - 27580 Iberia Ave

What is the density, will it be every street?

Supervisor Kauffman responded that this is a very small, starter project. The grant amount will allow for only a limited amount of fiber optic installation. The Town Board chose one of the denser areas of the Township for this project with the intent to expand from the

initial installation when other grant opportunities become available. Our goal is to cover as much of the Township as possible with the remaining ARPA funds we have.

Supervisor Fredlund added that the ARPA funds are not part of the property tax levy with no direct cost to our citizens.

Pat Mahowald – 6441 265th St W

Thank you for doing this project. I like the idea of getting the most bang for your buck. I am fortunate to have internet through JTN and I think they have wonderful service and they quickly respond to my questions.

Tom Gossler – 23734 Dodd Blvd

1. Will there be an access map published showing the areas which will be included in this project?

Once all of the funding areas have been put in place, JTN is planning a publicity campaign to the homes within the footprint of installation. The Township, in its matching fund, is paying for the drop to the homes. The State has a Line Extension Program which provides some support to residents requesting an extension of an existing fiber optic line to their home.

2. How can I get information on where to go on the State website for the Line Extension information?

The Clerk will provide a link to the information on the Township website.

Chair Barfknecht asked if any others in attendance would like to make comment. Hearing none, the floor was closed.

Town Board discussion

Resolution 2023-05

Supervisor Kauffman noted that, in addition to Bill Clancy, Deb Burkhardt, Randy Wood and Beth Eilers, Brian Ahern has volunteered to be the fifth committee member. In addition, the meeting date and time has been changed from the first Tuesday of the month to the last Monday of the month a 6:00 p.m.

Motion: Supervisor Kauffman moved to adopt Resolution 2023-05 establishing the Eureka Township Redevelopment Agency as amended. Supervisor Sauber seconded. *Motion carried 5-0.*

Adjournment

Motion: Supervisor Kauffman moved to adjourn. Vice Chair Palmquist seconded. *Motion carried 5-0.*

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Atwater
Liz Atwater, Town Clerk

Minutes Officially Approved by: Paul Hertz on: 5/23/23
Town Board Chair Date