

## In this issue

Township Election .....	1
Annual Meeting .....	1
Ero Wallin.....	2
Proposed 2022 Budget/Levy	2
New Technology Policy .....	2
Stewart River Project News ..	2
HWY 61 Bridge Repair .....	3
Road Report.....	3
Castle Danger Sewer News..	3
Property Tax Appeal.....	3
Building/Improving Property..	4

March  
2021



Quarterly Newsletter of the Town of Silver Creek

# SILVER CREEK SOURCE

## Township Election March 9

### Hull and Pellman Run Unopposed

On the ballot this year is Board Chairman Greg Hull, who is up for re-election for another three-year term, and Treasurer Jamie Pellman, up for reelection for a two-year term. Both are running unopposed. Township Elections are held on Township Day, which is always the second Tuesday of March by statute. Because of historically small voter turnout, the Election will be held in the Board Meeting room and not in the Garage space used last fall. Distancing between voters will be maintained and masks are required. Polls will be open noon to 8 p.m. at 1924 Town Road. Call the Clerk if you would like absentee materials mailed to you.

Welcome to the *SILVER CREEK SOURCE* If you have ideas or would like to contribute a story, please reach out to Alison Oftedahl, Clerk at [silvercreek@frontiernet.net](mailto:silvercreek@frontiernet.net) or 834-5255.

## Creative Problem Solving

### Reineccius in his Mini-Ice Maintenance Machine

Town Operations and Facilities Manager Jody Reineccius is very good with repair (and creation) of equipment. He is shown at right in his personal mini "Zamboni" that he shares with the Town for the Silver Creek Skating Rink.



## Enjoy Township Day in June in the Pavilion

### Annual March 9 Town Meeting will be Recessed and then Reconvened on June 22

In response to the COVID-19 situation and to encourage in-person attendance, this year's Annual Meeting will be called to order on March 9, but then immediately recessed until June 22nd. The Annual meeting is the people's meeting, which means that the Board of Supervisors cannot complete the work of the Annual Meeting without you, the citizens. Specifically, the Board cannot approve the budget and levy (amount you will be taxed). This is the only meeting all year that requires a citizen moderator and approval via motion by residents of the Township. While normally this business is completed in March, the law does allow for recessing and reconvening the meeting at a later time prior to finalizing the levy. The difference this year is that very little will take place in March. Silver Creek residents who show up on March 9 can attend the proceedings but will experience an extremely short meeting with a call to order followed by a motion to recess. Please mark your calendars for Tuesday night June 22 at 6:30 p.m. and plan to come to Silver Creek Pavilion for the Annual Meeting because we can't complete business without you! The Pavilion is a much larger space with open-air capabilities to allow in-person attendance with plenty of distancing. The proposed levy is shown on the next page as a preview. Citizens can be thinking about two donation requests received: Lake County Ambulance Service and Northshore Area Partners have both requested donations from the Town. Any requests for the Annual Meeting can be emailed or called (contact info above).

## Planning an Event this Year?

### Hall and Pavilion Rates held to 2020 Levels

The Historic Town Hall and the Pavilion will be open for your events this year. There are just a few things to keep in mind. If you are planning a spring event, the Pavilion does not become available until May. We had a few inquiries on winter events. The Historic Hall may be rented in winter but an extra “winter fee” is being charged for propane as the old furnace lacks efficiency. The pavilion is a great “open air” venue and the old Hall is also spacious. View the rental agreement on the website at [ttosc.org](http://ttosc.org) or call the Clerk.

## Proposed Budget & Levy

### Levy held To Prior Year Level

The budget is the Town’s expected expenditures, and the Levy is the amount that citizens will be taxed. A slight increase in expenses is expected for next year. The proposed levy has not been increased, thanks to existing balance in multiple funds. Other income in addition to levy includes Taconite Production Tax, Gas Tax and Town Aid. The wastewater budget has been increased in order to build a fund for future infrastructure repairs. The Sewer Rate Hearing is April 13 at 6:30 – no increase in rates is planned this year.

<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
General	\$73,000	\$77,434
Road & Bridge	\$314,500	\$314,000
Road Enhancement	\$20,000	\$20,000
Building	\$37,750	\$31,750
Fire	\$50,000	\$50,000
Cemetery	\$10,500	\$10,500
General Debt Service	\$56,000	\$56,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$561,750</b>	<b>\$559,684</b>
<b>LEVY</b>	<b>Proposed 2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
General	\$42,500	\$42,500
Road & Bridge	\$246,500	\$206,500
Road Enhancement	\$20,000	\$20,000
Building	\$25,000	\$25,000
Fire	\$45,000	\$55,000
Cemetery	\$2,500	\$2,500
General Debt Service	\$28,500	\$58,500
<b>TOTAL LEVY</b>	<b>410,000</b>	<b>\$410,000</b>
Other Income including Taconite and Gas Tax	\$116,150	\$116,150
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$686,150</b>	<b>\$526,150</b>
<b>CASTLE DANGER BUDGET</b>	<b>WASTEWATER</b>	
Sewer Enterprise	\$114,100	\$98,100
Sewer Replacement	\$45,900	\$50,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>	<b>\$148,100</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME from Users</b>	Rates not set until 2022	Estimated \$160,000

## Silver Creek’s own Ero Wallin places 6<sup>th</sup> in Beargrease

Silver Creek is Proud of You!



Photo by Heidi Pinkerton, Root River Photography

## New Technology Policy

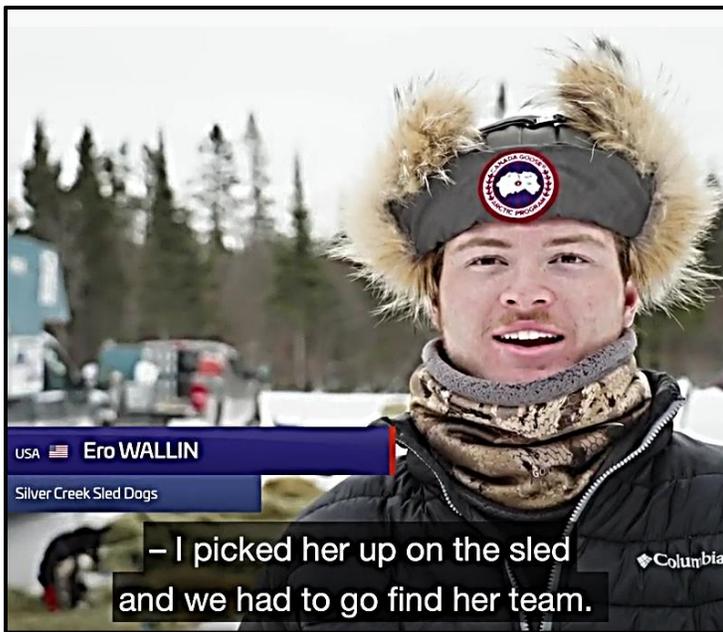
### Taking first step toward a paperless environment.

The Silver Creek Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution to provide inexpensive tablets to Supervisors and install a large monitor on the wall of the Board Meeting Room in a move to eliminate paper meeting packets and move towards electronic meeting capability. While paper is not a large expense, the toner costs from the office copier top \$1,000 per year. Having handouts in an electronic format will eliminate most of that cost. The audience at meetings can see the same materials that the Board is viewing. Packets will be available on the Silver Creek website at [ttosc.org](http://ttosc.org), click *Board Meeting Schedule*, and then *Meeting Handouts*. In addition, using electronic devices is extremely helpful when viewing maps because of the zooming capabilities. Often the Board will need to check maps regarding road or zoning questions that arise. The Treasurer and Clerk will be able to utilize laptops already on hand. While the Board prefers to hold in-person meetings and allow constituents to come to meetings in person, this technology creates the possibility of electronic meetings in the future, should they be mandated.

## Stewart River Project Update

### Lack of Funding Continues to be the Challenge

Supervisor Chuck Voss is persevering in his work on the Stewart River Wastewater project in spite of a lack of support for funding at the Legislature. It is always a good time to write your legislator to argue for the benefits of this project.



Ero Wallin, who received International coverage for his performance, is shown here explaining how he stopped to assist a fellow musher who had lost her team and was stranded on foot. He received the Sportsmanship Award for those actions.

## HWY 61 Bridge Repair

### Big Plans for Stewart River and Silver Creek Bridges

According to MNDOT, the *Hwy 61 Silver Creek and Stewart River Bridges Project* is scheduled for 2021-2022. The plan includes replacing the Silver Creek Bridge, rehabilitating the historic Stewart River Bridge and adding a new bridge inland. Highway 61 near Betty's Pies and near the Loop Road intersection are the affected areas. Supervisor Voss attended a meeting with MNDOT and was told that MNDOT does not plan on any detours. Site prep is planned for late summer and fall of 2021 with new bridge work in 2022. Once completed the project will provide a safer turning lane for Betty's Pies, new pedestrian crossing and trail by the lake near the Stewart River and better traffic flow for the entire area. More information at [www.dot.state.mn.us/d1/projects/hwy61-bridges/](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d1/projects/hwy61-bridges/)

## Castle Danger Wastewater News

### Wastewater Enterprise in Solid Financial Position

The Castle Danger Wastewater system ended the year with \$75,674 on hand as of 12/31/2020. All funds come from users of the system. Because major infrastructure can eventually fail, a balance must be carried in the *Enterprise Replacement Fund*.

### Did you know that the Castle Danger Wastewater System benefits the entire Township?

If you have a septic tank and maintain it as required, you are benefitting from the CDSSD Wastewater System because local septic pumping companies haul the septage to our treatment ponds. This saves the cost of trucking it to other plants in Duluth or Silver Bay. The cost of transportation is reduced and passed to the homeowner. CDSSD collects some revenue from treating this waste which in turn offsets a portion of the cost of running the system.

### Wastewater Customers – Are you ready to go paperless with your payment?

If you are tired of writing checks for your sewer payment, contact the Clerk to be set up for Autopay. Funds are then automatically withdrawn from your account four times a year to pay your bill.

### Let's All Work Together to Reduce Costly Repairs – Advice from Wastewater Operator Hoops

At this time of the year, many people leave for a few days or a month with their pump sitting in the corrosive material of the tank. While running many gallons of fresh clean water down the drain doesn't seem like something I would normally recommend, it makes sense to do so before a trip. The water dilutes effluent in the tank and makes it less corrosive. The best way to accomplish this is to run hot water down the drain until you run out of hot water. Doing so will dissolve oils and greases, dilute effluent, and warm up the temperature in the grinder station to prevent freezing while you're gone.

## Road Report

### Solid Financial Position

The Road and Bridge fund showed a balance of \$117,602 as of 12/31/2020. This represents several months of operating expenses. COVID, the dry summer, and the fact that the gravel ordered was not received until August meant that there were no major projects to finance. The crew was able to catch up on all maintenance and repairs. As of press time, this winter has not required as much plowing as some others.

### New this Winter - Rock Chip for Icy Roads

New this winter, the crew applied rock chips as well as salt sand to icy roads. The rock chip, which is used by the County on their roads, provides good traction and holds to the surface for a longer period than sand.

### Reineccius and Thompson Wish List

At the Budget and Levy Meeting, Operations Manager Reineccius' request that the Town consider adding a tandem axel plow truck to the fleet was considered. The main dump (and plow) truck is 14 years old. The backup is 31 years old with 130,000 miles and no plow on it. A second plow truck would enable more efficient plowing, provide a backup rig if the primary truck breaks down, and take some pressure off the road grader. Our road grader is 23 years old and Reineccius would prefer to save it primarily for summer grading to minimize wear and tear. The Town is currently paying only one machine loan, for the loader, which would be paid off if it weren't wrapped in with the building loan. Supervisors made preliminary plans to set aside an annual amount each year the Road and Bridge fund for vehicle purchase.

## Right to Appeal

### LBAE Currently Scheduled for May 4 at 1:00 p.m.

You have the right to appeal the valuation of your property used to calculate your property taxes. Step one is to call the Lake County Assessor to check for mistakes. Step two is to appear at the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization (LBAE) in Silver Creek on May 4, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

# *Building and Improving your Silver Creek Property*

## **Talk to Lake County Planning & Zoning before Construction**

Building has become a year-round activity in Lake County. It is important to know that Land Use Permits are required for many of the projects on your property. Whether putting in a driveway, clearing land, building an outhouse, setting up a vacation rental, or building your dream home; the best thing that you can do is to talk with the Lake County Planning and Zoning Department (P & Z) prior to doing any construction. By making one of your first calls to P & Z, you should be able to determine if your project will meet the appropriate setbacks and whether you will be required to have your septic system inspected. By contacting P & Z in the planning stage, many issues can be prevented. Land Use Application fees are relatively inexpensive in comparison to the cost of an “after-the-fact” fee, variance hearing, or possibly having to tear down the project of your dreams. Also, make sure you have the permit in hand prior to commencing any of the work. Completing the application is not the same as receiving the permit. Most of the time a site visit will be conducted to verify the application before the permit is issued. **For more information or if you have questions, Lake County Planning and Zoning may be reached at 218-834-8327.**

*Thank you to Mike Hoops and the Planning and Zoning Team for this story.*

Thank you to Dutton Foster for editing this newsletter.



**Grooming  
Trails on  
Silver Creek  
property-  
picture  
provided by  
Leon Pitzen**

## *SILVER CREEK SOURCE*

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