

Goodwill Township

St. Louis County, MN
8025 Oak Narrows Road
Cook, Minnesota 55723

Goodwill Township Organizational Meeting Minutes Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Fifty attendees signed in before the meeting by initialing on the St. Louis County generated list of registered voters or by name and address. Forty-two township registered voters signatures were obtained to vote during the meeting. Witnessed by William (Bill) L. Michaelson and John F. Jordan, IV. Attendee sign-in list is attached.

Minutes:

The Organizational Meeting of Goodwill Township was called to order by John Jordan IV, at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade Building, 8025 Oak Narrows Road, Cook, MN 55723.

- History of organizing the township reviewed.
 - Process began in 2019 by an interested group of property owners in Niles Bay.
 - Informational meetings were held with local road associations and groups during the summer and fall of 2023.
 - A petition to organize UT 63-17 was presented to each registered voter property owner in UT63-17 in 2023 to 2024. The petition with sixty plus signatures to organize UT 63-17 as a township was submitted to the St. Louis County Auditor and County Commissioners in Duluth, Minnesota on May 13, 2024.
 - The St. Louis County Auditor had to wait until after the November 2024 federal elections to work on the process and call a special election due to statutes.
 - The petition to organize UT 63-17 met the St. Louis County Auditor's Office requirements to hold a special election on May 13, 2025. (St. Louis County Board of Commissioners Resolution No. 24-637).
 - Voting residents in the township were notified by mail from the Ad-hoc Committee of the special election on May 13, St. Louis County mail/in person voting procedures and an informational meeting on April 10th 2025. Questions could be emailed to township6317@gmail.com.
 - An informational meeting was held at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade, 8025 Oak Narrows Road, Cook on April 10th. Maddie Cash, attorney from the Minnesota Township Association and Keith Nelson, SLC Commission, were in attendance to answer questions.
 - Voting residents of UT63-17 were mailed ballots around April 17th. Ballots were to be returned by mail or in person at the Auditor's Office in Duluth or Virginia before May 13, 2025. Vote on the question whether congressional township 63-17 should be organized as a town.
 - Election results: 80 ballots cast, 49 Yes 31 No
 - UT63-17 became the first organized St. Louis County township in 20 years.
- Madeline Cash, In-house Counsel, Minnesota Association of Townships introduced.
- Election for organizational meeting only moderator, clerk and two election judges held. John F. Jordan IV volunteered to be the moderator with no other nominations or volunteers. Hand vote, passed. Minnesota Secretary of State Oath for Organizational Meeting Moderator read by John Jordan and signed.

Margaret Ratai nominated by William Michaelson with no other nominations or volunteers. Hand vote, passed. Minnesota Secretary of State Oath for Organizational Meeting Clerk read by Margaret Ratai and signed.

Stephen (Steve) Bergwell and Wendy Jordan nominated for election judges with no other nominations or volunteers. Hand vote, passed. Minnesota Secretary of State Oath for Organizational Meeting Election Judge read and signed.

Signed Oaths will be kept on file.

- Selection of Township Name with discussion.
 - Names nominated: Goodwill by Joe Stanaway, Vermilion River by Rock (Rodney) Gillson, Waconda by John Jordan and withdrawn, Roughneck by Jill Scherer, Paddle by Stephen Bergwell.
 - Moderator called for a "Voice" Vote of 2 out of the four nominated. Show of hands: Goodwill: 26, Vermilion Township: 10, Roughneck:1, Paddles: 0
 - Motion by John Jordan and second by Joe Stanaway to name the township Goodwill. History of Mr. Goodwill, a logger, was one of the first to settle in the south Niles Bay area and owned a lot of land in the western area of the lake.
Raised hand vote: 32 yes, 1 no, 1 abstained with no reason given. 39 voters present.
- Nomination for Interim Supervisors: Motion by Jill Scherer, Second by Pam Towle to nominate William (Bill) Michaelson, Motion by Laura Prebarich, Second by Dwight Warkentin to nominate John F. Jordan, Motion by Wendy Jordan, Second by Victoria Lupica to nominate Laura Prebarich, Motion by Pam Towle, Second by Margaret Nicklow to nominate Rock (Rodney) Gillson.
- Forty two (42) paper ballots distributed to voting members. Slate of Supervisors to Vote for: William Michaelson, John Jordan, Laura Prebarich, Rock Gillson.
Moderator John Jordan instructed to vote for up to three on one ballot.

Voting results:	William Michaelson	27
	John Jordan	25
	Laura Prebarich	24
	<u>Rock (Rodney) Gillson</u>	<u>27</u>
		103 of 126 potential votes
		23 undervotes

- Nomination for Interim Clerk: Motion by William Mickelson, Second by Rock Gillson to nominate Pam Towle. No other nominations made or volunteers.
 - Raise of Hands Vote: 34 Yes out of 42, 0 No out of 42.
- Nomination for Interim Treasurer: Motion by Stephen Bergwell , Second by Marc Russell to nominate Ross Polley. No other nominations made or volunteers.
 - Raise of Hands Vote: 37 Yes out of 42, 0 No out of 42.

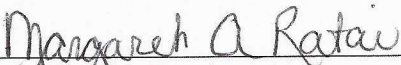
Election results will be signed by Organization Meeting Election Judges Wendy Jordan and Stephen Bergwell and Organizational Meeting Clerk Margaret Ratai at the next meeting, July 15th.

The Annual Township Meeting will be the second Tuesday in March per State of Minnesota Statute. Date will be March 10, 2026. At the annual meeting voting will be for a new slate of officers to include three supervisors initially votes for with staggered terms of one, two or three years and then three year term, rotation; plus clerk and treasurer for two year term opposite each other.

- Discussions have been held by the Ad-Hoc Committee prior to this meeting to use Plan B and hire the Clerk and Treasurer for a salary. The person would not have to live in the township. Could have more checks and balances with this system. The Treasurer if hired would be subject to an audit vs. if elected an internal review. Recommendation is if Treasurer is elected to have a yearly review with a Supervisor.
This option would need to be voted on by the registered township voters.

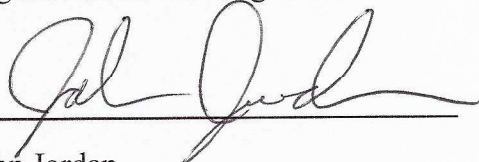
- Minnesota Association of Townships can provide training for elected and hired Clerks and Treasurer plus elected Supervisors.
- Inquiries are being made to determine if a special election for Goodwill Township clerk, treasurer and three supervisors can be made done in November, 2025 instead of at the March 10, 2026 initial Annual Meeting due to the low number of voting residents in the area in March.
- Use of absentee ballot for annual township meeting discussed. A request would need to be made to the St. Louis County Auditor. Absentee and mail in ballots were previously allowed in UT 63-17 for national and state elections. Include this item for future township business on the next agenda.
- Presentation by Cathy Rouleau, Fiscal Agent, Lake Vermilion Area Lodging Tax Power Board. The Board allocates lodging tax revenue collected within the Lake Vermilion area. The revenue generated from taxes imposed on short-term lodging rentals is primarily used toward promotion and related activities within the region by the Lake Vermilion Resort and Tourism Association.
- St. Louis County has done the 2026 tax levy including road maintenance. The Township will be able to levy for taxes in 2027. This will include Road Maintenance on 7 miles of township roads, Box 7 on the tax statement. Hwy 540 will revert back to St. Louis County. The Interim Township Supervisors will be meeting with St. Louis County officials to establish contracts and determine actual costs for road maintenance.
- Plans are to have Township business and meetings at the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade building. State Statute requires that the rent be at the fair market value. Estimated budget is \$14,000 per year including a 20% cost of living increase at this time. This will include rent, utilities, Wi-Fi, insurance, etc. The Interim Supervisors will meet with the Lake Vermilion Fire Brigade Board to establish a lease agreement. Quotes can be obtained from other venues but none are close in the area.
- Township meeting notices are published in the Timberjay and Cook News Herald.
- Township members can request to be on an email notice list by contacting Township6317@gmail.com and providing their name and email address.
- Questions about the township organization and business can be sent to township6317@gmail.com.
- Township meetings will be conducted on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:00 PM, at the Vermilion Fire Brigade, 8025 Oak Narrows Road, Cook, Minnesota 55723.
- **Next Goodwill Town Board meeting will be on July 15th at 6:00 PM, Vermilion Fire Brigade building.**
- Motion by Dwight Warkentin and Second by Jill Scherer to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Margaret A. Ratai

Organizational Meeting Clerk



John Jordan

Organizational Meeting Moderator