

2020 Annual Meeting  
Jim Berg, Supervisor

Roads

2019 was another active year for township roads. In January we encountered icy conditions on several roads. In order to cut down the travel risk we had the Aitkin County Highway Department use their specialized equipment to scrape off the ice. We also applied a sand/salt mix to the roads to make safer travel. We do two road checks – spring and fall, and both checks have seen an improvement in the roads. One problem that we had in the spring of 2019 was frost boils on Grouse Street. We did some excavation and ditching along with rock fill to reduce the risk of the problem happening this year.

The class 5 gravel costs have increased and are approaching nearly \$20.00 per cubic yard. In 2019 we used a little more than 150 cubic yards and expect to use the same amount in 2020.

We were able to add nearly one mile of road in the township which will cause an increase in our gas tax revenue. We anticipate adding some additional roads in 2020.

In 2020 we will continue to improve roads, culverts, right-of-way as necessary. While FEMA was able to add about \$250,000 to our township roads over a number of years we will hopefully anticipate not working with FEMA and the stacks of paperwork required

One area that we felt progress was made in 2019 was the purchase of a used snowplow truck from the Minnesota Highway Department. Our board spent considerable time reviewing the pros and cons of having our own equipment and operator. While this is an observation, not criticism, independent contractors are out to make a profit of snowplowing and sometimes are in a hurry and cut corners. They also have a number of accounts so we are not snowplowed in the order we would like. I feel that our first year of snowplowing our roads with our equipment and operator was a success. Our equipment, while used, worked perfectly and our operator was ready on short notice to begin plowing.

The Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation Department has been in contact with our township and this summer we will work together to locate, measure, and determine quality of all township culverts. The township will also do the same for all traffic signs. We will use GPS and record all sites.

Questions and concerns about our township roads are always welcomed