

Mission Township Operating Policies

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Version 2.0 Adopted: February 7, 2022

This document lists the Policies of Mission Township for its employees, Town Board Supervisors, Clerk & Treasurer, service contractors, and volunteers of Mission Township.

This is ***not*** a comprehensive document covering all laws or regulations affecting Mission Township. Please refer to the Town Law Manual for more complete documentation of Township rules and laws.

Mission Township elected officials, employees, and contractors will comply with all Federal, State, and County laws, statutes, ordinances and Mission Township ordinances, resolutions, and policies.

Violation of Mission Township Operating Policies by employees may result in disciplinary action up to and including employment termination by the Town Board.

All township business shall be conducted at the regular monthly Township meetings, duly noticed special meetings, or emergency meetings called when necessary.

Policy 1 - Rules of Order for Conducting Town Board Meetings

- A. Agenda items can be placed on the agenda by elected Township Officials or requested by the public. The Town Board may add or remove items from the agenda at any time during its meetings.
- B. Pre-meeting information requirement:
All financial records and pertinent documents for the regular Township monthly meeting shall be posted and available to the Township Officers at least three days prior to the scheduled monthly meeting date.

The documents required to be available are:

- Financial reports from Treasurer
 - Claims
 - Department reports
 - Committee reports
 - Other documentation for agenda items
 - Previous month's minutes
 - Current month's meeting agenda
- C. During the meeting, the Chair will recognize agenda items and yields the floor to those requesting to speak on the item. The Chair reserves the right to limit the time any speaker may have to speak on any issue.
 - D. Once recognized by the Chair, there is time for discussion of the item by the Board.
 - E. At any time, once the item is recognized, there can be a motion offered on the item by any voting Board member. If none is offered, the Chair will call for a motion.
 - The Chair can either recognize the motion or decline by reason of violation of law or Mission Township policy.

- F. The Chair then calls for a second to the Motion.
- G. The Chair calls for further discussion. At this time, the main motion may be or amended, withdrawn, or tabled for a later meeting by vote of the Supervisors.
- H. The motion, including maker and second, and vote will be recorded by the Clerk and reflected in the minutes.
- I. The Board shall follow Roberts Rules of Order, or applicable Minnesota Statutes, in conducting its meetings.

Policy 2 – Financial Management

- 1. **Audit.** An independent audit of Township finances will be conducted by either the State Auditor's office or a private accounting firm as required by law, and when not required by law, at the discretion of the Town Board.
- 2. **Claims.** Claims are expected to be submitted on a timely basis after completion of the work performed. All expenses submitted to the Town Clerk must include a receipt from the vendor, identifying the vendor, a description of the item, cost per unit, date, the total amount, and the purchaser. The expense item will not be paid by the Township without the proper documentation. The claims must be submitted by the 20th day of each month, for payment approval at the next regular Board meeting, unless an exception is approved by the Town Board.
- 3. **Invoices.** All invoices received will have the date received noted on the invoice by the Clerk.
- 4. **Claim Approvals.** The Town Clerk cannot submit claims for payment to the Town Board without receiving the proper documentation as described in #2 above. Written (or email) notification is sent by the Clerk to the responsible person if all proper documentation is not received for a claim.
- 5. **Purchasing.** Vendor accounts, reimbursable expenses with Department or Supervisor approval, or monthly billing invoices from the vendor are the preferred methods of claim payments by Mission Township.
- 6. **Credit Cards.** Refer to Policy 12, Credit Card Use Policy.
- 7. **Sales Tax.** Purchasers should present our tax ID, when possible, to exempt Mission Township from sales tax.
- 8. **Capital Projects.** The Town Board shall annually revise and adopt a Capital Plan to guide future township improvements. All capital projects over \$125,000 require a financial analysis as directed by the Town Board. At a minimum, the analysis should include:
 - a) Goals/objective and description of the project
 - b) Items or materials required to complete project and their estimated costs
 - c) Alternatives to the project with a cost comparison
 - d) Summary and recommendation to the Town Board

9. **Expense Authorization.** The usual method for expense authorization is submission of the item for approval by the Town Board. Minnesota statutes delegate power to the Town Board as a group and not to individuals, for the exercise of township business. The Town Board has some discretion to redelegate authority provided exclusively to the Town Board in limited cases involving operational issues only. It is understood in redelegating such authority the Town Board retains the authority for all policy issues/decisions. The Town Board shall annually adopt a resolution establishing delegated spending authority positions and levels for Mission Township.
10. **Budget limit.** Expenses may not exceed the Budgeted amount for the major fund categories (i.e., General, Fire, Road & Bridge, Park & Rec) without Town Board approval.
11. **Reimbursed expenses.** Expenses incurred in the service of approved Mission Township business are reimbursed only with proper documentation (as described in #2-Claims). Mileage is paid at the current IRS allowable rate.
12. **Signing Authority.** Signing authority or authorization for contracts, assignments, leases, grants, or legally binding documents shall only be authorized by vote of the Town Board.
13. **Grants.** Grant applications and grant writing expenses must have prior Town Board approval before applying for the grant.
14. **Public Financial Data.** All data, documents, historical records, bids, contracts, and information related to the Township are property of Mission Township. The public may request this information in accordance with existing laws or state statutes unless prohibited by the same (Examples are personnel information or pending litigation). The Town Clerk shall initially determine what information will be released to the public and may propose a fee that is based on the estimated cost for the Township to locate, produce and copy such documentation. The request and proposed fee will be presented to the Town Board for approval.
15. **Surcharges, Fees, and Overruns.** Mission Township shall not be subject to fees, charges, or penalties incurred on claims paid later than the vendor's payment due date because of the payment cycle Mission Township is subject to for all claims. Arrangements for timely payments are made by the Mission Township purchaser, at the time of purchase, to relieve any such charges. The Town Board may vote to approve late fees or overruns at its discretion.

Policy 3 - Township Equipment and Assets

1. Equipment owned or leased by the Township, cannot be purchased, acquired, disposed, or sold without prior Town Board approval.
2. Equipment owned or leased by the Township may not be operated or used outside the Township, or for purposes other than Township business, without prior Town Board approval.

Exceptions:

- Mutual aid by Mission Township Fire Department (MTFD) to surrounding Fire Departments in emergencies.
 - Limited short-term use outside the township for miscellaneous items. Examples are supplies, gas, and maintenance.
 - Fire Department training outside the Township with prior approval from the Board Liaison.
 - Mission Town Hall tables and chairs are available to Mission Township residents for limited time personal use. The tables and chairs must be checked out & in by a Mission Township Officer. Damage to the tables and chairs will be charged a replacement cost to the user.
3. It is the responsibility of the Department Manager or Board Liaison assigned to the Township asset, to ensure all equipment is maintained in a safe and working condition.
 4. Only personnel qualified and properly trained, as determined by the Town Board, the Department Manager, or Board Liaison, may operate Mission Township equipment.
 5. The Department Manager or Board Liaison assigned to the Township asset are required to ensure that all Township equipment has adequate property, casualty, & liability insurance, permits, safety inspections (if required), and licenses as required by law.
 6. The Treasurer will develop and maintain an equipment inventory to be used as a guide in the budgeting process. Board Liaisons, working with Department Managers and Committee Chairs, shall develop equipment replacement plans as needed for submission to the Town Board by November 1st of each year so that the Town Board may consider such items when setting the proposed budget and levy.
 7. Once per year, supervisory personnel shall verify the inventory audit for each department and provide the Treasurer with any updates.
 8. Use of Mission Township assets, including the Town Hall, Township Land, Cemetery, Transfer Station, and Mission Park, must have prior approval from the Town Board or its designated representative.

Policy 4 – Personnel Management

1. Safety is a priority for Mission Township. Any employee or contracted vendor acting in an unsafe manner shall be subject to disciplinary measures up to termination or cancellation of vendor contract with Mission Township.
2. Personnel determined to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while in the employment of the Township, a contracted service, operating on Mission Township property, or operating Mission Township equipment, will be dismissed from the Township position or suspension of the contracted service.

3. Board Supervisors shall avoid conflicts of interest in the exercise of their responsibility. The Township Supervisor should abstain from participating in votes or motions of the Town Board affecting their area of conflict. In cases where a Town Board Supervisor is contracting with the Township, no such contract shall be entered into unless a conflict-of-interest resolution as required by Minn. Stat. § 471.89 has been unanimously passed by the Town Board with the interested Supervisor abstaining from such vote.

Any Supervisor may abstain from any vote for any reason. Supervisors are encouraged to abstain from voting where there is an appearance of a conflict of interest on the part of such Supervisor.

4. It is not permissible to store, promote, or display any personal materials on Mission Township property or use personal equipment in the service of a Mission Township contract without prior Town Board approval. Current proof of insurance for personal property or equipment used in Township service must be on file with the Town Clerk.
5. It shall not be permissible for a Town Officer, employee, or volunteer to use Township equipment for personal use.
6. Employees and elected officials are expected to submit their time reporting monthly unless another arrangement has been approved by the Town Board. All work wage documentation or time sheets must be submitted to the Treasurer at least 5 business days before the regular monthly meeting to be eligible for authorization of payment at the meeting. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Treasurer but must be noted with written documentation submitted to the Town Board.

Department/Committee Managers must verify and reconcile employee hours of work with documentation and their signature.

Wage claim documents (time sheets, etc.) without Supervisor signature or supporting documents can be refused payment or payment delayed by the Town Board.

7. Employees of Mission Township are expected to act in a professional manner and maintain high ethical standards, not engage in malicious acts towards the Township or its assets and follow the Mission Township Operating Policies.

Employees are expected to report incidences of violations of these policies, unlawful acts, or unsafe practices to the Town Board.

8. Employees who violate these policies or who engage in acts of insubordination may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.
9. The Town Clerk's role is vital to Township business for legal reasons and accurate recording of Township business. The Town Clerk may appoint a Deputy Clerk who will serve in their absence, subject to approval of the Town Board. The Deputy Clerk does not have residency requirements and the wage rate is set by the Town Board.
10. The Liaison role of a Town Supervisor is primarily to implement actions of the Town Board, provide oversight of the Department or Committees and their employees, inspection and verification of

vendor contracts, and expense and time sheet approval prior to submitting to the Clerk. Supervisors shall be assigned Liaison duties by vote of the Town Board.

11. This set of Township policies shall not be deemed to be terms of an employment contract between Township employees and the Town Board.

Policy 5 - Budgeting

1. The Township Budget is a planning tool and not an approval of expenses. Expenditures are approved per the guidelines as described in Policy 2 – Financial Management.
2. At the annual Budget meeting to determine the subsequent year's budget, the Department Manager or Committee Chair are required to have financial information for each account available for review by the Town Board.
3. The Town Board must adopt a budget for the Township annually.

Policy 6 – Levy

1. The special account funds [Fire, Roads, Park] are levied to bring their balance to zero each year. Excesses or deficits in special account funds are transferred to or from the General Fund, or Capital Projects Reserve Funds.
2. Future capital project reserve funds are held in the General fund or can be assigned to each special fund for the project by approval of the Town Board.
3. The Reserve cash balance requirement is six (6) months of the total annual total Operating Budget Disbursements, not including assigned or committed capital project funds.

Policy 7 - Annual Meeting & Special Board Meetings

The procedure for conducting the Annual Meeting shall be as follows:

1. The first order of business is to accept nominations for a Meeting Moderator who is selected by a majority of the electors attending.
2. The previous year's minutes must be approved by the electors.
3. The purpose of the annual meeting is for the Electors to vote on the proposed Levy & discuss other items. Regular Township business is not conducted at the Annual Township Meeting. Please refer to document TM6000 in the MAT information Library for more information on this topic.
4. At the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, a motion to recess to a date specific or adjourn is required.

The procedure for calling 'special' meetings of the Town Board shall be as follows:

1. The normal procedure for calling a 'special' board meeting is to schedule the meeting at a regular meeting of the Town Board.
2. The meeting shall be called with a specific topic(s) stated in the scheduling motion and the meeting notice, and the agenda shall be limited to that purpose alone.
3. If the need arises to call a special board meeting outside of a regular meeting, any supervisor may notify the clerk of their request to schedule a special meeting and the topic to be discussed.
4. Once a request is received, the clerk will determine that at least one other supervisor supports the calling of the meeting and will schedule the meeting following the normal noticing requirements. This is necessary to ensure there will be a quorum for the special meeting.
5. If the clerk determines no additional supervisor supports calling the special meeting, none will be scheduled and the requesting supervisor will be so advised.

Policy 8 - Fire Department

1. All Fire Department personnel are required to know and follow The Standard Operating Guidelines for the Mission Township Fire Department (MTFD). The Fire Chief shall periodically review said policies and submit any updates to the Town Board for approval. These policies are considered an extension of these Mission Township Operating Policies.
2. The Fire Dept. may conduct a maximum of Four (4) meetings or training sessions per month (excluding live burn training).
3. The Fire Chief is responsible to inform the Town Board of any involvement by the MTFD in a public activity at the regular monthly meeting prior to the date of the activity.
4. The Fire service contract with other townships is negotiated and approved by the Town Board with assistance from the Fire Chief.
5. The Fire Chief will annually submit to the Town Board the Mission Fire Service Requirement report for approval.

Policy 9 - Contracted Services

1. All services provided by vendors will have a signed contract and must comply with the contract requirements (insurances, permits, licenses, etc.) before any work can begin in performance of the contract.
2. Vendor contracts will include:
 - A description of the service/equipment/materials being provided by the vendor to Mission Township
 - Indemnification and hold harmless statements where applicable by the Town Board.
 - Dates(s) when service is provided and completed.

- Non -Performance clauses and liquidated damages when deemed necessary by the Town Board.
 - Rate per unit, lump sum price, or total cost.
 - Insurance requirements and bonding if deemed necessary by the Town Board.
 - Adherence to safety procedures in accordance with Federal, State, local, or OSHA regulations or the pertinent governing body.
3. While routine contract documents may be prepared by Township personnel, the Town Board should refer to the Township Attorney those contract formats that have not previously been reviewed and approved by the Township Attorney.
 4. Bid requirements of contracted services in Mission Township will follow contracting guidelines as described in State Statute 365.37, 471.345 and Town Law Manual Chapter 9.

Policy 10 – Township Committees

1. The Town Board may establish committees to advise the Board on matters relating to the planning and operation of key areas of Mission Township. Each established committee shall have a written charter stating it's purpose, membership, role and responsibility and reporting requirements.
2. Membership shall typically consist of 3-5 members, appointed by the Board of Supervisors, open to a combination of residents and taxpayer nonresidents with a variety of interest and backgrounds relevant to the purpose of the committee. Members will be appointed to 2-year terms, with members eligible for re-appointment by the Board. Elected officials and township employees are ineligible to serve, however, the assigned Board liaison and employees may serve as ad-hoc, non-voting members.
3. The Board of Supervisors shall designate one member for each committee to serve as the Chair, and they will serve in this role until a new chair is designated by the Board.
4. Committees shall conduct regular meetings following a schedule to be determined by the committee and published by the Township Clerk. Members will be notified of all meetings by the Chair. Public notice of all meetings shall be provided by the Township Clerk through the usual means and meetings are open to the public in conformance with Minnesota's Open Meeting Law.
5. Committees shall provide for the recording of minutes to be sent to the Township Clerk for publication to the Board of Supervisors and on the township website. Additionally, the Chair shall be responsible to report to the Board of Supervisors all items requiring Board review or approval.
6. Compensation for meeting attendance may be provided as determined by the Town Board when adopting the annual 'Resolution establishing Compensation, Meeting Attendance Rates, Hourly Compensation Rates, Mileage Reimbursement and Delegated Spending Authority'.

Policy 11 – Policies, Procedures and Fees

1. The Town Board shall annually review the Mission Township Operating Policies, adopted procedures (i.e., budget and capital planning), and guidelines for operation of the Cemetery and Transfer Station.
2. The Town Board shall annually prepare and adopt a resolution establishing compensation, meeting attendance rates, hourly compensation rates, mileage reimbursement, and delegated spending authority for Mission Township.
3. The Town Board shall annually prepare and adopt a resolution establishing a Fee Schedule for Mission Township.

Policy 12 – Credit Card Use Policy

1.0 - Purpose. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that credit cards issued in the name of Mission Township are used appropriately by township officers and employees. The use of a credit card is an alternate means of payment and must not circumvent the use of contracts, quotes, purchasing laws or Mission Township Operating Policies or Procedures.

2.0 – Policy. The following policy requirements apply to the issuance and use of credit cards in the name of Mission Township.

1. Credit cards are assigned or issued to cardholders under the authority of the Town Board. No cards may be issued without the approval of the Board.
2. Cardholders are required to sign a statement acknowledging their receipt and understanding of the Credit Card Policy prior to issuance of the card. The signed agreements are to be held by the Treasurer.
3. Credit cards are a method of payment for permitted goods and services only.
4. No personal use of the credit card is permitted.
5. Credit card purchases may not exceed the authorized spending limits as adopted by the Town Board in their annual 'Resolution establishing compensation, meeting attendance rates, hourly compensation rates, mileage reimbursement and delegated spending authority' for Mission Township. Splitting a purchase into more than one transaction to avoid exceeding an established spending limit is expressly prohibited.
6. Permissible purchases include general operating expenses such as fuel, replacement equipment, office supplies, EMS supplies, and payment for allowable services if approved by the Town Board.
7. The cardholder is responsible to obtain original receipts for all purchases showing the item(s) description, quantity, and price, and to submit such receipts as a claim to the Clerk for payment by the Township following the card's monthly billing cycle.
8. Claims for credit card purchases without original receipts will be referred to the Town Board for resolution.
9. The Treasurer is designated to perform an annual audit of credit card purchases and corresponding documentation and report their findings to the Town Board.

3.0 – Contrary Use. Cards used in violation of this policy may result in consequences up to and including discipline or termination of employment for township employees. If the violation is by an elected official, the violation will be reviewed by the Town Board for appropriate action. In the case

of a prohibited purchase, the authorized card holder may be required to immediately reimburse the township for the prohibited purchase.

Policy 13 – Roads – Sign Policy

It is the stated objective of Mission Township, Crow Wing County, MN to maintain its town roads in a safe but cost-effective manner. As part of its maintenance efforts, Mission Township recognizes that regulatory, warning, and directional road signs (commonly referred to collectively as safety signs), including but not limited to stop signs, yield signs and other similar traffic control signage, need to be properly inventoried, assessed for compliance with applicable retro-reflectivity standards, maintained, and replaced from time to time. Mission Township further recognizes that when signs are installed within town road rights- of-way they must comply with state and federal regulations as primarily outlined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. As part of its efforts to comply with applicable regulations, the Town Board of Mission Township shall be guided by the following plan adopted in accordance with Section 2A.08 of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices:

1. **Inventory.** In recognition of the importance of knowing the number, type, and location of road signs situated in township road rights-of-way, it is the intent of the Town Board to have an inventory of all town road signs completed by December 31, 2021. The completed inventory shall be maintained using paper records and shall be updated each time a sign is installed, replaced, or removed but not less than on an annual basis. The inventory shall indicate the type of sign, the number of each type of sign, the location of each sign including the direction the sign faces, the date of installation (when known for pre-existing signs), type of material used on sign face (when known), a general statement on the condition of the sign, a record of any maintenance performed on the sign, and the date of sign removal if applicable.
2. **Removal of Excess Signs.** In recognition of the fact that excess road signs have been shown to reduce the effectiveness of signage, as well as impose an unnecessary financial burden on the road authority, it shall be the policy of Mission Township to remove signs determined to be unnecessary for safety purposes and which are not otherwise required to comply with an applicable state or federal statute or regulation. The removal of signs shall be based on sound judgement and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Particular attention shall be paid to recommendations on signage for roads considered to be “low-volume” under the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as adopted by the State.
3. **Retro reflectivity Evaluation.** In recognition of retro-reflectivity standards adopted into the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices by the Federal Highway Administration, the town board shall arrange to have all town road signs not removed under section 2 above evaluated for compliance with the applicable retro-reflectivity standards. It shall be the intent of the township to conduct this evaluation using the blanket replacement method as authorized by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. It shall be the intent of the town board to have this evaluation completed by April 1, 2022. The board reserves the right to change which evaluation method will be utilized as expressly found necessary by the board due to budgetary constraints or other practical difficulties in completing this process.

4. **Sign Replacement.** After completion of the inventory, removal of unnecessary signs, and proper retro-reflectivity evaluation, the town board hereby establishes the following priority order in which road signs will be replaced:
 - a. First priority shall be given to replacing all missing or damaged signs determined to be of a priority for safety purposes.
 - b. Second priority shall be given to signs determined to not be in compliance with proper retro-reflectivity standards, and a priority for safety purposes such as stop or yield signs.
 - c. Third priority shall be given to all remaining signs as they come to the end of their anticipated service life, become damaged, etc.

In addition, within each category above, further priority shall be given to warning and regulatory signs on roads with higher vehicle usage.

The Roads Committee shall prepare a plan for the orderly replacement of non-compliant township signs, considering the above stated priorities, budgetary constraints or other practical difficulties in completing this process, for review and adoption by the town board.

5. **On going Maintenance.** The town shall include a general inspection of road signs in township rights-of- way as part of its annual road inspections. The town shall update its sign inventory as provided in section 1. After the initial replacement of signs as provided for in Section 4, the town shall, for the purpose of complying with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices to maintain minimum retro-reflectivity standards, shall, as budgetary factors allow, replace signs as they reach the end of the latter of their (a) warranty period; (b) expected life expectancy for the facing material used on the sign; or (c) expected life as determined by an authorized engineering study. Damaged, stolen, or missing signs may be replaced as needed.

Policy 14 – Roads – Mailbox Supports

It is the goal of Mission Township to provide public rights-of-way for the traveling public that are safe, efficient, and free of unnecessary hazards, while providing minimum inconvenience to property owners. Minnesota law declares certain mailbox installations to be a public nuisance, a road hazard, and a danger to the health and safety of the traveling public (Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818) and authorizes the road authority to remove and replace such a support (Minnesota Statute 169.072). Further, conforming mailbox supports enable the safe and efficient plowing of snow since snow is plowed as close as practicable to mailboxes located in the road right-of-way. To achieve this goal, Mission Township encourages the use of swing-away mailbox supports across the township since such supports provide for ease of plowing while minimizing damage to township and personal property.

To accomplish this objective, the township adopts the following policy.

1. Whenever a township road is reclaimed/reconstructed, the township shall install swing-away mailbox supports on the reclaimed road at the township's expense.
2. Property owners remain responsible for providing their individual mailbox, and for ongoing maintenance.
3. Mailboxes must conform to the standards established by Minnesota Rules Chapter 8818. Mailboxes that do not conform to the established standards are considered a public nuisance and are prohibited by law (Minn. Stat. § 169.072)
4. The important features of an approved, conforming mailbox design for rural roadways include the following:
 - The post located a minimum of 3 feet from the edge of the road shoulder
 - The front of the mailbox located above the edge of the shoulder
 - The bottom of the box at the proper height (normally 38-inch minimum to 42 inch maximum-check with the mail carrier)
 - An installation that will pivot or rotate in some fashion when a snowplow hits the mailbox
5. Newspaper boxes or other accessory boxes shall not be installed underneath the mailbox, whether attached to the mailbox support or on a separate post. The area underneath the mailbox must be free of obstruction to allow passage of the snowplow's wing blade.
6. The mailbox owner assumes all risk of damage including damage from third parties, pushed or piled snow thrown from plows during snowplowing, or acts of Mother Nature.
7. In the event of damage from direct contact with snowplowing vehicles, the township will pay to repair or replace any conforming mailbox. The township will not pay to repair or replace any mailbox that does not substantially comply with the established standards.

(Adopted by the Town Board on April 4, 2022. Revised to delete opt-out option on June 6, 2022.)