

June 17, 2003

This statement is in response to the many questions raised about the Eureka Township Envisioning Task Force at the May 20, 2003 Eureka Town Board meeting, which members of the Task Force were unable to attend.

### **1) Two-year time limit and August 2003 end date**

At its May 20 meeting, the Town Board voted to set a deadline of August 11, 2003 for the completion of our written report and to officially dissolve the Envisioning Task Force at that time. The basis for this decision was that there was an implied two-year time limit on our work, and that since the first meeting of the Task Force occurred on July 25th 2001, the two-years would be up this August.

Clearly it is within the powers of the Town Board to place a sunset date on our Task Force. However, we would like to clarify that, for the record, a two-year time limit on our work was *never* previously created or implied. The original motion creating the Envisioning Task Force, which was made on May 14, 2001 and is included in the attached Town Board minutes (Attachment #1), established no such time limit. Since that time, neither the Task Force nor the Board has ever suggested the work of the Task Force was limited to two years. Our assumption has been that our group would be dissolved once our task had been completed. We have made a good-faith effort to complete the tasks we were initially charged with as expediently as possible and we have continued to make steady progress toward that goal throughout the last two years.

Our specific tasks were clearly stated—and implicitly approved by the Town Board—when they were published in the September 2001 issue of *Eureka! The News*. They are as follows:

- formulate and discuss a variety of growth scenarios for the Township;
- learn about the potential impact of each growth scenario on such things as water quality, agriculture, wildlife, Township infrastructure, and resident quality of life;
- inform the citizens of Eureka about their findings at the conclusion of their work.

The completion of our written report will accomplish the first two tasks. In our progress report memo to the Board last month, we said we hoped to hold one or two additional public open houses. The purpose of these open houses is to complete our third task, to “inform the citizens of Eureka about our findings at the conclusion of our work.” This is consistent with our annual meeting progress report, which was presented to the Town Board in February 2003 and which they accepted. This progress report, which was presented at the annual meeting, promised citizens one or two open houses after our report was completed.

By dissolving the Envisioning Task Force upon completion of our written report but before we have an opportunity to inform citizens of our conclusions, the Town Board is essentially changing our original charge after two years and preventing us from completing one of our three central tasks. Although several Board members suggested we are free to continue our work “on our own” after the Task Force is dissolved, holding open houses without the Town Board’s

sanction and without being able to use the name “Eureka Envisioning Task Force” would only confuse citizens and hinder our ability to inform them about our work.

We expect to have our written report completed by the August 11, 2003 Board meeting and intend to present it to the Board at that time. However, we would respectfully ask the Board to reconsider its decision to dissolve the Task Force before we have had the opportunity to hold public open houses and complete our originally assigned tasks.

## **2) The Town Board “lost control” of the Task Force**

At the May 20th meeting, it was suggested that the Town Board “lost control” of the Task Force—specifically that the Board had no role in the appointment of members and that one Board member “took the Task Force and ran with it.”

As with all other citizen task forces, the creation of this Task Force was announced through a public notice in the official Township newspaper. Nine citizens ultimately applied for the Task Force. As noted at your meeting last month, at its July 9th, 2001 meeting, the Town Board voted to appoint all members who had applied since the limit of 10 Task Force members had not been reached. Supervisor Miller was appointed to the Task Force as liaison to the Board. At that time, the Board also scheduled an organizational meeting for July 25, 2001 to meet with members and officially appoint them. Although this was an official Town Board meeting, apparently official minutes were not taken. However, minutes from this meeting were taken by the Task Force recorder, Amy Nielsen, and have been posted on the website since last year (see Attachment #2). They show that a quorum of four Board members was present (Supervisors Anderson, Miller, Smith, and Topp) and that Chairperson Topp explained the Board’s decision, at its July 9 meeting, to appoint as members all those who had applied.

During the last two years, minutes of all Envisioning Task Force meetings have been sent to the Board on a regular basis and posted on the website. The chair of the Envisioning Task Force has attended every Board meeting he has been asked to attend and has regularly updated the Board and the public on the group’s progress. All Task Force presentations and reports have been brought before the Board for their prior approval. In short, the work of the Task Force has been *entirely* under the Board’s control. If they believed otherwise, any Board member had the ability to attend Task Force meetings and observe our work or to request our presence at Town Board meetings to account for ourselves.

## **3) Concerns about the “Next Steps and Recommendations” section of the report**

Board members expressed concern that the Task Force is going to make specific recommendations for how the Township should develop, or that this section of the report will mean the document is perceived as a “plan” for the Township.

In every public statement we have made, our Task Force has consistently emphasized to the public that we are NOT a planning commission and that we have NO decision making authority. Those Board members who attended our open house last November know that in presenting the scenarios we had studied, we did not recommend or choose one scenario over another. Instead,

we tried to present the range of growth options available and to show, as objectively as possible, the potential impacts of each growth scenario on the Township. One Board member who attended the open house and who was initially skeptical of our work even made a point of speaking to several members of the Task Force after the open house, congratulating the group on what he called the “very fair, unbiased” nature of our presentation, the quality of our research, and our clear attempt to explain that our work was not planning.

We think you will find that our report is written in precisely that spirit. During the course of our work, many issues have been raised that were either beyond the scope of our mission or that we simply did not have enough time to research. The purpose of the final section of our report is NOT to make recommendations to the Board concerning whether or how the Township should develop, but rather to recommend issues that need further consideration or study and to suggest next steps to carry forward the work of the Envisioning Task Force. We would encourage the Board to read our report before prematurely passing judgment on its contents.

#### **4) Board’s decision what to do with the report**

There was some disagreement at your May 20 meeting about what the Board would do with our report once it was complete. Some Board members suggested filing it away to accumulate dust on the shelf, while others said the Board had a responsibility to notify the public of its availability or even to disseminate the report to interested citizens.

Because the Task Force was created by the Town Board, it is our understanding that once the Board officially accepts the report, it is a matter of public record and the Board has an obligation to notify, and make it available to, the public. How it does so is obviously at the discretion of the Board. As a joint project with 1000 Friends, that organization also has the right to disseminate the report as it sees fit.

We believe making the report available to the public is the *minimum* obligation of the Board. The eight remaining members of our group have volunteered a tremendous amount of time and effort to this Task Force and this Township. There is clearly a widespread interest in the community in the outcome of our work, as indicated by attendance at our first open house and the many questions raised at the annual meeting. If our hard work will only be met with a simple “thank you” and our report filed away and never considered again, then this has been a pointless exercise and not a genuine opportunity for citizen input. We believe the Board has an obligation to the members of this Task Force and to the citizens of Eureka Township to formally respond to our report, particularly to the recommendations for further study and the suggested next steps to carry our work forward.

#### **5) Meeting place for May 20th Envisioning meeting not posted on calendar**

As Mike Greco informed the Board at its May 12 meeting, the Envisioning Task Force already had a meeting scheduled for the Town Hall for May 20, the date the Town Board chose to continue its May 12 meeting. Consequently, our Task Force had to find another meeting place. When Mike left the Board meeting on May 12, he wrote “location TBA” on the calendar under the Envisioning meeting notice. Once another meeting place was chosen, it was immediately

posted on the website, one of the recognized posting places for the Township. As can be seen from the printout of the website events calendar (see Attachment #3), that location was posted on the website on May 15, five days prior to our May 20 meeting (the Town Clerk has on file a signed and notarized affidavit of this website posting). It was an oversight on our part not to note the new location on the town calendar, for which we apologize.

However, we take offense at the implication that the failure to post the location of our May 20 meeting on the calendar indicates an intent to create a “private club” or to hide our work from the public. This is the *first* and *only* time the Envisioning Task Force has neglected to post notice of a meeting on the calendar outside the town hall. The fact that the meeting itself was posted on the calendar and that the location of the meeting was posted on a public website clearly show our intent was not to hide the meeting from the public. We also question why no other Task Force has been singled out for failure to post meetings on the town hall calendar. The Town Hall Task Force, for example, stopped posting the date and location of its meetings on the calendar after the first few months it met, even though meetings frequently took place in Task Force members’ private homes. Likewise, the Nonconforming Commercial Task Force has not posted on the calendar the date or location of a single one of its four meetings to date, including the last two meetings which occurred at locations other than the town hall.

#### **6) 1000 Friends abandoned the project after they got what they wanted from Eureka**

At the May 20 meeting, one Board member claimed that after the first year, when it had gotten what it needed to fulfill its grant obligations, 1000 Friends gave only “lip-service” to the project and that the Township therefore did not benefit.

This is entirely untrue. 1000 Friends’ original commitment to Eureka Township was indeed for one year, but they have far exceeded that commitment in time and effort dedicated to this project. 1000 Friends received a two-year grant to work with two communities in Minnesota on envisioning projects. Originally they intended to work with Eureka for the first year of the grant (until July 2002) and then work with the other community, Franconia, for the second year. After fulfilling the original grant requirements during the first six months, Matt Mega and Gina Mitteco from 1000 Friends have continued to work tirelessly with our Task Force and have far exceeded the one-year commitment they originally made to us. Matt and Gina have attended every meeting of the Task Force they have been asked to attend, making the trip from their offices in downtown St. Paul. Both have spent literally hundreds of hours continuing to work with us on this project, despite that their original commitment to us has been fulfilled. In addition, 1000 Friends made a matching contribution to this project of **\$50,000**; the Township has contributed **less than \$300** to the project to date.

Eureka Township owes a huge debt of gratitude to 1000 Friends of Minnesota for financially supporting our work and for continuing to work with our Township beyond their original obligation.

#### **7) The “unwashed” e-mail**

There is one final issue that was not raised at the May 20 meeting but that we feel needs to be addressed publicly: the so-called “unwashed” e-mail that was circulated to the community during the recent Township election. The e-mail in question was generated during last fall’s preparation for the Envisioning Open House. It has become clear that the content of the e-mail and the attribution of the e-mail message to all members of the Task Force has unfairly created a climate of hostility toward us and our work, a situation we would like to rectify.

During our preparation for the public open house, Task Force members exchanged more than 140 e-mails during a 3-week period to comment on and review materials for the open house. One of those items was a questionnaire asking attendees to evaluate our work to date. Bob Papke wrote a draft of the questionnaire. His original e-mail and a copy of the questionnaire are reproduced on the first and second page of the attached handout (Attachment #4). Mike Greco gave his feedback on the questionnaire in a subsequent e-mail (page 3). Bob Papke then responded to his comments in another e-mail (page 4).

It is important to note that the “unwashed” comment that some have found offensive was made by *one* individual on the Task Force—Bob Papke. Read out of context, it appears from Bob’s e-mail that he is merely repeating a comment about the “unwashed” that Mike Greco had made in his previous e-mail. Read in context, however, this is clearly not the case. Mike’s e-mail makes no reference to “the unwashed”—he refers only to “some of the critics in the Township,” a statement that is not meant to show disrespect, only to acknowledge that not all Eureka citizens are supportive of our work. Bob’s decision to refer to our “critics” as “the unwashed” was a regrettable choice of words, and our intention is not to defend or explain his comment. However, the entire Task Force should not be punished or held accountable for a statement made by one individual. To do so is both unreasonable and unfair.

An examination of the remaining 140+ e-mails exchanged by the group (which are available to the Board upon request) would show that there is not a *single* other comment that indicates disrespect for or prejudice against the citizens of Eureka Township. What you will find instead is a group of nine hardworking volunteers who spent hundreds of hours designing an open house that encouraged input from citizens. If the members of the Task Force are an elite club or are disrespectful of citizens of the Township as some have suggested, we surely would not have spent so much time and effort creating a forum that invited those very same citizens to review and comment on our work, nor would we have spent the last six months incorporating their comments and responding to their feedback in our report. We think the record will show that our work has been done with the utmost respect for all citizens and all points of view.

Finally, we believe that when this e-mail came to the attention of any Board member who had concerns about its content, the appropriate course of action was for that Board member to immediately ask members of the Task Force to report before the Town Board and explain ourselves. Instead, the e-mail was circulated through the community beginning last November without the consent of the people whose names appear on it, without any regard for the effect it would have on those people or their reputations, and without an opportunity for those individuals to defend themselves.

In conclusion, we would like to say that all members of this Task Force joined the group out of a genuine desire to participate in our community and to have a voice in the future of our Township. We realize that not all of you supported the creation of this Task Force two years ago. However, it was our sincere hope that the fears some of you had about our Task Force would be allayed by our hard work, our genuine effort to remain open-minded and balanced in our approach, and our attempts to encourage and respond to citizen input on our work. Those hopes were dampened by the discussion of the Envisioning Task Force that ensued at last month's Town Board meeting.

In the wake of an extremely divisive election and annual meeting, we have heard much about the need to heal our community. Genuine healing requires putting differences aside for the sake of the larger community, including and listening respectfully to the opinions of those with whom you disagree, and making decisions in the best interest of all citizens. These are principles we have tried hard to uphold in our work on the Envisioning Task Force. It is our hope the Town Board will show its commitment to healing the Township by continuing to support our work, by allowing us the time necessary to complete our originally assigned tasks, and by treating our work and our report with the consideration and respect it deserves.

Respectfully,

The Members of the Eureka Township Envisioning Task Force

Jody Arman-Jones  
Mike Greco  
Ray Kaufenberg  
Amy Nielsen  
Robert Papke  
Patricia Steege  
Beverly Topp  
Randy Wood

***Eureka Township***  
*Dakota County*  
*State of Minnesota*



Motion by supervisor Connie Anderson: Eureka Township board will develop an envisioning task force, for Eureka Township. Motion seconded by Supervisor Donald Pflaum, carried.

Board discussed 1000 Friends of Minnesota community study. Motion by Supervisor Clark Smith: Eureka Township will empower the task force to cooperate and work with 1000 friends of Minnesota and Dakota County in studying various growth scenarios. (Impacts of township) The committee will be empowered to make a recommendation to the board to leave the study, if they have any cause for concerns. The Board requests maximum anonymity and requests notification of public data publication. Motion seconded by Supervisor Kenny Miller, carried. An advertisement will be put in the paper for people interested in being on the envisioning committee

Discussion on the newsletter 11"x14" printed 4 sides including: Town board members phone numbers, not addresses, and an introduction of members. Will bring for approval June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Bulk mail fees were discussed.

Supervisor Connie Anderson motioned to continue meeting. Seconded by Supervisor Clark Smith, carried. Meeting will continue Tuesday May 15, 2001.  
Meeting adjourned 10:35



## **Eureka Township Envisioning Committee Minutes from 7/25/01**

Bev Topp called the meeting to order. Present were committee members Jody Arman-Jones, Mike Greco, Ray Kaufenberg, Kenny Miller, Amy Nielsen, Bob Papke, Pat Steege, Jerry Swedin, Bev Topp, Randy Wood; and observers Connie Anderson, Chris Nielsen, and Clark Smith.

Bev reported that the township supervisors will not conduct interviews to choose members for the committee because nine people expressed interest, and 1000 Friends suggested a committee of no more than ten. Those individuals present will serve on the committee.

**1. Introductions.** Each member told the group about their background, their reason for wanting to be on the committee, and their goals with respect to the committee.

**2. Selection of Chair.** Volunteers were called for to serve as chair. Bob nominated Mike, Bev seconded, and Mike was elected chair.

**3. Selection of Recorder.** Volunteers were called for to serve as recorder. Amy volunteered, and she was elected recorder.

**4. Process.** Members discussed the following processes and procedures for the committee:

- give everyone the opportunity to express their opinion (size of group could make this difficult)
- cap membership on committee at ten members present (members agreed)
- make all meetings open to public
- break into smaller groups to allow everyone to participate
- have clear agenda for each meeting. The chair will reserve time at end of each meeting to discuss next meeting's agenda, and will distribute agenda via e-mail a few days before each meeting.
- options were discussed for handling visitors: (1) ask visitors who want to speak to submit to chair their names and topic they want to address, and reserve 15 minutes for this purpose at the end of each meeting; (2) schedule meetings specifically designated for public input; and (3) leave the matter to the chair's discretion.
- form subcommittees to investigate issues relevant to envisioning; have them report back to group.
- invite speakers to address important issues or present viewpoints not represented on committee (for example, a developer, a Met Council member, etc.).
- read or distribute procedures for public participation at beginning of each meeting
- the committee is an "idea group," not a policy making group
- our mission is to envision what the future of Eureka Township might look like, not to create a "plan"

- meetings designated for public input should be announced in township newsletter, and be held soon after the announcement. The next newsletter is due out in September.
- Mike will post meeting announcements on township bulletin board
- be courteous to others by not cutting them off when they're speaking. If this occurs, Mike will intervene to remind people to let others finish.
- periodically set aside meeting time to assess/reevaluate group's procedures, progress, and direction
- duration of study may be shortened somewhat. Matt Mega will address this when he meets with us. Committee needs to schedule a time to meet with Matt.
- meetings will last from 7-9 pm
- should discuss a budget for supplies with the township board

**5. Meeting Place and Time.** No day always works for everyone, so committee agreed to schedule each meeting individually. The next meeting is August 2 at 7 pm at the town hall. Other meeting places were discussed (Mt. Olivet, Dakota County Extension Office, local highschools, the Lakeville Cultural Center), but town hall is most convenient for everyone.

#### **6. Possible Agenda Items for Next Meeting:**

- How to work with visitors/observers
- What product will we present to the board (put off until after we meet with Matt Mega)
- Discuss common goals or vision, draft a mission or vision statement. The motion by the Eureka Township Board to create the committee reads:

Eureka Township will empower the [community study] task force to cooperate and work with 1000 Friends of Minnesota and Dakota County in studying various growth scenarios, and their impact on the township. The committee will be empowered to make a recommendation to the board to leave the study, if they have any cause for concerns. The Board requests maximum anonymity and requests notification of public data publication.

- Create a list of issues to study that affect envisioning the future of Eureka (e.g., culture, environment, boundaries like MUSA, existing state and local rules and regulations, experiences of other townships, history of Eureka, etc.)
- Create a list of resources available to the committee (e.g., Don Pflaum who is a rep on the Dan Patch Corridor committee, Wisconsin activist who opposed WalMart, plans for highway/road reconstruction, light-rail, the Met Council, University of Minnesota resources, etc.)

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.



# Eureka Township

...your home town

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## Events Calendar

This calendar lists events in Eureka Township, as well as selected events in surrounding communities. However, special township meetings may not be listed here. For a complete schedule of township meetings, consult the calendar outside the [Eureka Town Hall](#).

Unless otherwise noted, all events listed here are held at the [Eureka Town Hall](#). To request that an event be added to the calendar, contact [Nanett Leine](#).

### May 2003

May 20 (Tuesday): [Board of Supervisors](#), Continuation of May 12 Regular Meeting, 7:00 pm (tentative agenda—requires Adobe Acrobat Reader to read or print)

May 20 (Tuesday): [Nonconforming Commercial Task Force](#), location and time TBA

May 20 (Tuesday): [Envisioning Task Force](#), 7:30 pm, 26045 Ipava Ave.

May 26 (Monday): Eureka Township Memorial Day Picnic, 12:00 pm. Potluck with coffee/lemonade provided. All current and former residents and friends are invited. For more information call the Eureka Township Office at 952-469-3736.

Events calendars for surrounding communities:

- [Apple Valley](#)
- [Farmington](#)
- [Lakeville](#)
- [Northfield](#)
- [Rosemount](#)

### June 2003

June 2 (Monday): [Planning Commission](#), Regular Meeting, 7:00 pm (Note: Possible Town Board Supervisor quorum)

June 9 (Monday): [Board of Supervisors](#), Regular Meeting, 7:00



**From:** Carolyn and/or Robert Papke  
**To:** Randy Wood, Bev Topp, Kenny Miller, Pat Steege, Amy Nielsen, Jody Arman-Jones, Ray Kaufenberg, Jerry Swedin, Mike Greco  
**Date:** Monday, November 4, 2002 6:09 AM  
**Subject:** Questionnaire

Gang of Nine

An oversight. ! Here is the proposed substitute questionnaire.

Bob

> **From:** Carolyn and/or Robert Papke  
> **To:** Mike Greco  
> **Cc:** Gina Mitteco, Jody Arman-Jones, Matt Mega, Pat Steege, Ray Kaufenberg, Bev Topp, Amy Nielsen, Jerry Swedin, Randy Wood  
> **Date:** Monday, November 4, 2002 6:03 AM  
> **Subject:** Re: Evaluation questionnaire  
>  
> Gang of Nine:  
>  
> I felt that the proposed questionnaire was one way to look at what we think we  
> want from participants . However, there is another way, so I started from scratch and I  
> am offering it for your consideration. I asked some questions: what feedback do we really  
> need, are we respectful of participant time, if we get information how will we use it. is  
> the information received a fair assessment from the community, etc. etc. Further,  
> some of the above thoughts resonate from our friendly critics comments at the rehearsal.  
> As you can tell from the language I tend to use simple, plain words (folksy, you might say).  
>  
> I do not understand why we would ask about participant responses to  
> information provided at 6 stations, when by the time I get to station 6, I've forgot what each  
> station contained. It seems to me, that we will not use the station approach again, and  
> therefore there is no value added by asking for responses concerning them. I would further  
> remove the reference to the town's web page and add it to a handout; the questionnaire stays  
> with us.  
  
> Lastly, I would give out the questionnaire with appropriate briefing at the 1st station. This I  
> believe helps participants prepare their responses as they go through the stations.  
>  
> Bob

## **A brief questionnaire**

1. Was it worth your time to attend and participate in the open house? (Please explain)
2. What do you think are the important challenges that we face as a township?
3. What additional information would be helpful for you to understand the challenges and options that we face in the township?
4. Are there any alternative growth scenarios the task force should investigate?
5. What do you think are the next steps we should take as a township?

**From:** Mike Greco

**To:** Carolyn and/or Robert Papke, Randy Wood, Bev Topp, Kenny Miller, Pat Steege, Amy Nielsen, Jody Arman-Jones, Ray Kaufenberg, Jerry Swedin

**Date:** Monday, November 4, 2002 12:38 PM

**Subject:** Re: Questionnaire

Bob,

I like the questions you propose. I would suggest adding a few others to help us assess how our work is perceived:

1) Based on the information presented tonight, do you think the Envisioning Task Force's participation in this study was worthwhile? Why or why not?

2) Was the information presented tonight understandable? If not, please identify specific issues or concepts that require clearer explanation or more information.

The first is important to understanding how the public perceives our work. A positive response helps to bolster our effort against some of the critics in the township. The second helps us identify places where we may need to be clearer or provide more background information in our report.

Mike

> **From:** Carolyn and/or Robert Papke

> **To:** Randy Wood, Bev Topp, Kenny Miller, Pat Steege, Amy Nielsen, Jody Arman-Jones,  
> Ray Kaufenberg, Jerry Swedin, Mike Greco

> **Date:** Monday, November 4, 2002 6:09 AM

> **Subject:** Questionnaire

>

> Gang of Nine

>

> An oversight. ! Here is the proposed substitute questionnaire.

>

> Bob

>

**From:** Carolyn and/or Robert Papke

**To:** Mike Greco

**Cc:** Randy Wood, Bev Topp, Kenny Miller, Pat Steege, Amy Nielsen, Jody Arman-Jones, Ray Kaufenberg, Jerry Swedin

**Date:** Monday, November 4, 2002 11:18 AM

**Subject:** Re: Questionnaire

Mike:

I think that new question 1 is not needed since **we were asked by the town board to do the work**. The quality question is - did we do the job!!?? I thought of asking that but that opened the door to fulsome praise or thoughtless criticism. Your point on keeping the unwashed at bay is timely. The second question is very good and should be included.

Bob

Mike Greco wrote:

> Bob,

>

> I like the questions you propose. I would suggest adding a few others to  
> help us assess how our work is perceived:

>

> 1) Based on the information presented tonight, do you think the Envisioning  
> Task Force's participation in this study was worthwhile? Why or why not?

>

> 2) Was the information presented tonight understandable? If not, please  
> identify specific issues or concepts that require clearer explanation or  
> more information.

>

> The first is important to understanding how the public perceives our work A  
> positive response helps to bolster our effort against some of the critics in  
> the township. The second helps us identify places where we may need to be  
> clearer or provide more background information in our report.

>

> Mike