

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
October 20th, 2020, 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center**

In attendance: Chairman – Brad Strgar
 Supervisor – Jennifer Tarnowski
 Supervisor – Dirk VerSteeg
 Clerk – Misty Hendrickson
 Treasurer – Kent Fredeen
 Visitors – 3 guests

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 5:58 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: After review of the minutes from the October 6th, 2020 meeting, a motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the October 6th, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Kent Fredeen

Receipts: \$513.16			
Revenues:		First National Bank – Interest	
Garbage tickets sold	\$375.00		
Life Insurance reimbursed	\$98.16		
Community Center Rent	\$40.00		

First National Bank - Account Balances	
Checking Account	\$145,714.45
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$136,740.11
Community Center Account	\$40,850.73
Building Project Account	\$4,955.70
COVID -19 account (restricted)	\$20,730.36
Total	\$348,431.35
Balkan Funds available	\$327,700.39

Debit Card usage: office supplies from Staples \$47.71

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski and seconded by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the treasurer’s report as read. Motion carried unanimously. The treasurer included some information on interest bearing accounts First National Bank of Chisholm and the American bank offer.

Transfer completed: \$440.00 from checking to the community center fund for August & September’s community center rent.

Recommended transfers: none

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to approve the bills for payment on October 20th, 2020, and ordered paid in the amount of \$17,746.68. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to accept the payroll for October 20th, 2020 (payroll period 10/4 – 10/17/20), in the amount of \$9,406.69. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

1. Clerks Report:

- a. The Public Accuracy Test is scheduled for October 26th, 2020 at 1:00 P.M. at the community center. This test is open to the public.
 - b. The election judges have been notified of their schedule for the November 3rd, 2020 Presidential election.
 - c. October 19th, 2020, the notice of the general election was posted at the posting sites. The sample ballot is posted at the office, community center and on Balkan's website.
 - d. New keys were made for the pavilion (2) and community center garbage canister (2). One pavilion key was given to Supervisor VerSteeg and one community center garbage canister key was given to Supervisor Tarnowski to replace their unusable keys.
 - e. Letters were sent to all Balkan employees informing them of the Wage Theft Law with notice of their wages to be signed and returned to the office to be put in their employment files. The letter also explained about the Social Security Tax Deferment offered by the president, is available to anyone who would like to defer their tax and opt to pay it back in double social security deductions from January 1st – April 30th, 2021. These letters were sent out on October 14th, 2020. There has been no one that would like to defer their social security tax, as yet.
 - f. The CARES Act reporting has been completed for September. The final report is due November 10th, 2020 along with any unused CARES Act money which is due on November 15th, 2020.
 - g. Deputy clerk, Lisa Smith, and the clerk went over CTAS payroll on Monday 10/12/20.
 - h. The clerk asked Supervisor VerSteeg for the application for employment from our newest hire for the canister site to put in his file.
2. Shop & Road Report:
- a. The East Balkan roads were graded October 5th & 6th, 2020.
 - b. The West Balkan roads were graded October 7th, 2020.
 - c. Supervisor VerSteeg backfilled the drainage ditch on the new driveway.
 - d. Material (class 5) was brought in to fix Labarge Road.
 - e. The rubber tire backhoe was put in the garage for winter.
 - f. An existing "bridge" was removed, the Simon's provided two culverts to install in the crick on his property.
 - g. After the storm on October 11th, trees were on Johnson road, Long Lake road, and Krogerus road on October 12th, 2020. The trees were cut down and cleared from the roads.
 - h. Employees hauled class five from the pit to stock pile at the garage.
 - i. Ditching was done on Long Lake Road.
 - j. Plows, picks for ice grooving, sanders and wings need to be put on the trucks to prepare for the winter season.
3. Community Center Report
- a. The pavilion at the community center has been winterized for the season.
 - b. The remaining ball field lime was put into the west bocce ball court and it will be leveled and compacted in the spring.
 - c. Floor heat was put on October 20th, 2020 at the community center.
4. Canister Site Report
- a. An employee fell at the canister site due to the icy grounds. A report of first injury was filled out and sent to MATIT's Dawn Zimmerman on the day of the accident. Supervisor VerSteeg sanded the canister site after the incident.
 - b. Ron Marinaro, from St Louis County recycling, says there is always an issue with the 5-hole container being filled with garbage and not the correct recycled material that is supposed to be in there. Dave Pajunen suggested to eliminate that container and get a new style one. Mr. Marinaro would like to meet with Balkan canister site attendants to discuss this issue.
 - c. To make snow removal between the canisters easier during the winter, Dave Pajunen suggested Balkan purchase a small snowblower. Else the canister site attendants will have to shovel between the canisters. This is difficult to remove when customers walk on the snow and pack it down.
 - d. Some citizens expressed interest to Supervisor VerSteeg to open up the canister site early at 7:30 a.m. for those residents who would like to drop off their garbage before work. Dave Pajunen said to do it the week of November 2nd, 2020 during his shift. The supervisors agreed we can open early to accommodate residents, for a trial basis.
5. Other Reports
- a. none

CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

- b. Judy Briski believes the supervisors should be more involved with elections. She believes they should all complete the election judge training; in case an alternate is needed for any election. Supervisor VerSteege volunteered to check into this. Mrs. Briski doesn't like the idea of using election judges from Chisholm instead of Balkan election judges. However, there was no interest shown from any existing Balkan residents to work the election. She suggested we ask residents for any interest in becoming an election judge in the newsletter. There was an article looking for election judges in the Fall Balkan newsletter that just went out in the beginning of October. The supervisors hope all is moving smoothly with the election. The town board approves the election judges 25 days before the election, as per statute, and the clerk gives the board pertinent information when asked. The election duties of the town board are structured through the Association of MN townships.
- c. Judy Briski asked about the endowment from the Heikkila family to purchase trees for the community center. She claims the Heikkila's specified spruce trees to be planted, however, on inspection of the letter the Heikkila's sent to Balkan, no specific type of tree was asked to be planted. The trees were planted in 2019 by Supervisor Tarnowski in memory of Russell Heikkila.
Jeff Hendrickson offered free spruce trees, from his back yard, if Mrs. Briski would like to plant them along Highway 73 closer to the road, as per her idea for a tree-lined path.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. John Briski called the office October 8th, 2020 to ask about replacing his fire numbers. He said his are peeling off. Supervisor Strgar will call Mr. Briski to let him know we discussed his issue.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Supervisor Tarnowski suggested we look into investing some money we have on hand on October 6th, 2020. She contacted Michael Furlong, from Ameriprise. He said their Active Diversified Funds Conservative portfolio averages an annual return of 5.8%, a five-year annual return of 5.3%, and a ten-year annual return of 5.2% less 1.25% fees per annum. However, he stated that due to current economic forecasts, all returns will most likely be lower than expected. The supervisors suggested we ask the MAT attorneys what kind of investments are towns allowed to have. Treasurer Fredeen volunteered to call the MAT attorneys.
2. The light by the pavilion at the community center is not working and the parking lot is dark. Jeff, from North American Electric, is working on the problem.
3. In regards to the oil separator at the garage, Charlie Leustek spoke with Supervisor VerSteege and said it would be expensive to fix, in the range of \$15,000. The floor will need to be jackhammered to find and fix the issue regarding the clay tile.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. The work priority sheet has been updated.
2. The new driveway to the Balkan garage is hard to see when there is snow on the ground. After the first snow of the year, a vehicle drove off of the driveway and got stuck. The town board discussed the issue, concluding that snowbanks will soon be on the sides of the driveway making it clear where you can drive.
3. Steve Johnson had his six-month employee review October 20th at 5 p.m. at the community center. Steve has successfully completed his review and the supervisors told him he will receive full pay starting November 5th, 2020 payroll. Steve received excellent marks by the supervisors during his review.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:

1. Darlene Hodge holds an exercise class at the community center twice per week. She is planning on presenting her pupils for the public on November 9th, 2020. She is proud of what her pupils have accomplished and is grooming them to take over the class in the future.
2. The Public Accuracy Test will be held at the community center on October 26th at 1 p.m.
3. December 5th, 2020 a holiday craft fair will be offered at the community center. This will be posted on Balkan's Facebook page by Nancee Strgar.

NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:

1. Some residents on Maturi and Barrett roads in Balkan haven't received the newsletter and snow plow agreement. When they call, the clerk sends them the newsletter with the snow plow agreement. We believe since these residents have different cities (Hibbing, Britt, respectively) for their address and the newsletters say Chisholm, this is the reason they aren't included in the mailing. In the future, the clerk will mail newsletters to these addresses separately.
2. The supervisors plan on inspecting driveways soon. Supervisor VerSteege plans on bringing Steve Johnson with him on inspections to get Steve acquainted with the different driveways and what to expect.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on November 5th, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

(Board Chair) Brad Strgar