

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
December 29th, 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 6:02 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: After review of the minutes from the December 15th, 2020 meeting, a motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the December 15th, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Kent Fredeen

Receipts: \$30,068.18			
Revenues:		First National Bank – Interest	
MN Revenue – Disparity Reduction Aid	\$26,226.00		
MN Revenue – Township Aid	\$1,022.50		
MN Revenue Market Value Credit – Ag	\$334.38		
Royalty Reimbursement – Sunset Pit	\$1,728.00		
Copy machine and Fax use for 2020	\$5.30		
Filing Fee – Treasurer	\$2.00		

First National Bank - Account Balances	
Checking Account	\$227,837.20
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$135,772.58
Community Center Account	\$40,589.99
Building Project Account	\$4,956.84
COVID -19 account	\$5,101.68
Total	\$414,258.29

The Treasurer gave an update on how Balkan is doing financially in 2020 compared to 2019. He said that at the end of 2019, Balkan had around \$459,000 at the end of the year compared to 2020 being behind at about \$414,000. This was helpful for supervisors because Balkan had two full-time employees for the entire year as compared with 2019, only one employee was paid all year, except November 2019 when the new foreman was hired.

Debit Card usage: Staples – Sullivan’s Candy – hole puncher for canister site - \$4.50

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski and seconded by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the treasurer's report as read. Motion carried unanimously.

Transfers completed: none

Recommended transfers: Transfer \$1,022.50 from the checking into the Capital Expenditures account for future machinery repairs.

A motion was made to approve the transfer of the township aid funds (\$1,022.50) to the Capital Expenditures account by Supervisor Tarnowski and supported by Supervisor VerSteeg. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to approve the bills for payment on December 29th, 2020, and ordered paid in the amount of \$7,246.80. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to accept the payroll for December 29th, 2020 (payroll period 12/13 – 12/26/2020), in the amount of \$9,549.41. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

1. Clerks Report:

- a. The Paul Bunyon broadband survey is on the website. **A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar to approve a \$500 budget for promoting the survey to the community which may include newspaper ads and a drawing. This motion was supported by Supervisor VerSteeg and carried unanimously.**
- b. The newsletters went out in the mail Tuesday, December 22nd, 2020. 365 were printed and 26 were returned to the clerk as extras. In a separate mailing, the clerk sent newsletters to the outlying areas of Balkan township such as Barrett Road – Britt, MN, any known PO Boxes, and Maturi Road – Hibbing, MN to ensure they received the newsletters.
- c. After the last snow fall on December 23rd, 2020, we received many phone calls regarding snow plowing.

2. Shop & Road Report:

- a. The roads off of highway 73, the west side and the east side of Balkan were plowed on Dec. 14th. The roads were sanded the next day.
- b. The posting sign at the canister site fell off of its moorings. It was fixed and placed in the proper place.
- c. The truck box that will be fitted was put in the garage.
- d. Roadside brushing was done throughout the month of December.
- e. The Case loader's tire was repaired by Pomp's on Dec. 15th.
- f. Driveways were plowed December 21st and 22nd throughout Balkan.
- g. More snow plowing of the roads and driveways were done on Dec. 23rd and 24th, due to the blizzard.
- h. Cable chains were put on the snow plows to help with traction.
- i. MNDOT has its own sign shop. It was brought up that maybe they can make some signs for us that need replacing. Currently, the employees are looking for signs in the Balkan area that need replacing.
- j. The overhead doors to the shop are controlled by remotes. Only one remote works. The foreman went to Overhead Door in Hibbing to ask about replacing the current ones that aren't working so that all of the trucks have a remote to open/close the

overhead door to prevent heat loss. The counter person at Overhead Door said the current remote controls could be replaced at \$70 each for 4 vehicles. For \$305, Balkan could purchase a new receiver and get 5 remotes for about the same price. It was suggested by the treasurer to pay for this out of the Mining Effects Tax account, as it is infrastructure that is being fixed.

3. Community Center Report

- a. Due to the governor's executive order, rentals at the community center have been put on hold indefinitely.
- b. Minnesota Power bills for the Community Center have increased significantly. The clerk brought this up to the supervisors. They suggested we keep an eye on the bill and maybe change from the electric heating to the propane heating as this is the cheaper option. Shoveling and keeping the propane tank cleared at the community center was added to the Work Priority Sheet.

4. Canister Site Report

- a. The snowblower was used by William Marino at the canister site on Dec. 26th.
- b. It was suggested that the blue bins be moved closer to the shack. The canister site needs a better layout for the attendants to watch for proper recycling. The layout will be tweaked to better serve the customers and attendants. Also, a pamphlet is being made to input into the utility bills Chisholm sends out to their residents describing proper recycling. Supervisor Tarnowski and Strgar will work on this project.
- c. The Balkan Supervisors discussed the canister site costs for 2020. They believe that actual costs of the canister site for 2020 reflect it costing Balkan \$31,200 annually. The amount Chisholm will pay will be half of the annual cost, paid monthly at \$1,300 or \$15,600 annually. This information was given to Chisholm for their meeting on December 30th. The increased bill for the canister site is expected to be approved on December 30th, 2020 at the City of Chisholm's board meeting.

5. Other Reports

1. A letter from Tax Tyme, Jeff Kukowski, was received and read at the meeting. It thanked Balkan for over 15 years of using their services. They will help with a smooth transition to in-house accounting and payroll. Tax Tyme will perform all year end reporting before their last day of January 31st, 2021.

CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: none

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Township election is March 9th, 2021. The clerk received a packet from the Secretary of State to build a ballot after the filing period ends on January 12th, 2021.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. The Balkan/Chisholm shared services were discussed. **A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar and supported by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the Fire/Ambulance agreement for 2021-2023 to Chisholm. This motion was carried unanimously.**
2. Is there any benefit to Balkan regarding membership in the Range Association of Municipalities and schools (RAMS)? The dues for 2021 is \$300.00. RAMS pays for a lobbyist that advocates for issues affecting our area. It was decided that Balkan pay the dues for 2021 on a trial basis for one year to keep informed about our area.
A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar to pay the dues for 2021 at \$300. This was supported by Supervisor Tarnowski and carried unanimously.

3. Saturdays are very busy at the canister site. The supervisors believe that a second attendant on Saturdays would make the canister site safer and easier to transverse. There is more area to cover now that the area has been expanded.
4. Charlie Leustek paid for 1152 cubic feet at \$1.50 per cubic foot of pit run out of Sunset pit. Supervisor Strgar suggested Mr. Leustek pay Balkan and Balkan will pay Hibbing Taconite for royalties for material out of Sunset Pit, as the township has a conditional use permit with Hibbing Taconite.
5. The outsourced accounting and payroll for Balkan will end January 31st, 2021. The clerk will take on these duties starting January 1st, 2021. A resolution to establish compensation for town employees will be made on January 12th, 2021, to reflect the increased pay for new duties for the clerk. **A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar and supported by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the clerk's pay increase to take effect in January. This motion carried unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS:

1. The work priority sheet has been updated.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:

NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on January 12th, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

(Board Chair) Brad Strgar