

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING**  
**January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 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 – 4 guests

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 6:01 pm.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** After review of the minutes from the special meeting on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and the regular board meeting on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting, a motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Kent Fredeen

<b>Receipts: \$502.10</b>			
<b>Revenues:</b>		<b>First National Bank – Interest</b>	
Canister site tickets sold	\$375.00	First National Bank Dec. 2020 Interest – MET	\$19.59
Life insurance reimbursed	\$44.99	First National Bank – Dec 2020 Interest – Community Center	\$5.84
Community center rent	\$40.00	First National Bank – Dec 2020 Interest – Building Projects	\$0.71
Filing fees for township office	\$4.00	First National Bank – Dec 2020 Interest – Covid-19	\$1.02
Copy machine used by resident	\$1.00	First National Bank – Dec 2020 Interest – Checking	\$9.95

<b>First National Bank - Account Balances</b>	
Checking Account	<b>\$213,356.31</b>
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$135,792.17
Community Center Account	\$40,589.99
Building Project Account	\$4,956.84
COVID -19 account	\$5,101.68
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$399,796.99</b>

**Debit Card usage: 12/29/20 – Overhead Door – 5 remotes and 1 receiver replaced - \$305.00**

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski and supported by Supervisor Strgar to rename the Building Projects (money market) fund to the Capital Expenditures money market fund. The balance in the Capital Expenditures (in CTAS) fund will be combined with the current balance in the Building Projects money market account. The motion carried unanimously.

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

**Transfers completed: \$1022.50 was transferred from the general fund to the Capital expenditures fund in CTAS.**

**Recommended transfers: A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski and supported by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the recommended transfer of \$80.00 from the general fund to the Community Center account, for Nov. 2020 and Dec. 2020 Community Center rent. Motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to approve the bills for payment on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and ordered paid in the amount of \$9,321.01. Motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to accept the payroll for January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (payroll period 12/27/2020 – January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021), in the amount of \$5,319.87. Motion carried unanimously.**

## **REPORTS:**

### **1. Clerks Report:**

- a. The Payment in lieu of Taxes report was finalized and mailed on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- b. The MATIT workers' compensation report was finished and mailed Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- c. The PERA exclusion report has been transmitted to PERA and accepted on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- d. The treasurer filed the annual sales and use tax and the report of indebtedness on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- e. CTAS 2021 was installed and updated on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- f. The clerk attended a CARES Act reporting webinar on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. As the media now has the reports from all townships and cities that received CARES Act money (and finalized their reports), Director Amy Jorgenson, with Minnesota Management and Budget said to be prepared to answer questions from the media. Audits are required for cities and towns that received over \$750,000.00. Balkan received \$20,725.00, so no audit is necessary for our township.
- g. The clerk received a request to report about township roads on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. The clerk called the state to ask what is required for this report. Kim Delarosa, said to contact our county public works to ask about the report. Russell Peterson, St. Louis County – Public Works, called back to say that we don't need to fill out the form. However, Mr. Peterson said he would like any information Balkan has about the roads we maintain. He said the records hadn't been updated for more than 15 years by St Louis County. He asked if the clerk had road names and miles maintained by the township. The clerk asked the foreman, who produced the information. The clerk remitted the information to Mr. Peterson.
- h. Ballots for the township election on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 were ordered from St. Louis County – Elections after the filing period was done on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 5:00 PM. Brad Strgar and Garth Wilson filed for the supervisor position and Kent Fredeen filed for the treasurer's position.
- i. 2021 meeting dates have been posted to all posting locations.
- j. Dave Pajunen and Supervisor VerSteeg suggested the clerk post the canister site attendant position at posting locations on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021. It was also suggested that Balkan run an ad in the Chisholm Tribune on a Wednesday advertising the open position to get more candidates.

### **2. Shop & Road Report:**

- a. Dec. 28, 2020, the canister site was plowed, sanded and shoveled out where necessary. The roads were inspected for missing or damaged signs. A list was made to update these signs.
- b. The door opener to the shop quit working. The full-time employees inspected it and found half of the receiver was not working. The foreman purchased 5 new remotes and a receiver to replace the old one. The garage door is working well now.
- c. Maintenance was done on the trucks that needed greasing. Window glass on the vehicles was cleaned also.
- d. On December 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the roads and driveways were plowed on the west and east side of Balkan. The canister site and community center were plowed and sanded as well.
- e. A blown hydraulic hose was repaired on the T-26 on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.
- f. The full-time operator "brushed" the west side of Balkan from Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> to Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>.
- g. The foreman plowed the canister site, refilled the sand container, and shoveled all walkways and door openings. He repaired the posting sign at the canister site. Also, the strike plate on the office door was repaired. It was sticking.
- h. The foreman met with Frank Sever, from St Louis County, who handles the signage in the county. A sign list was given to Mr. Sever of what Balkan needs to replace. Mr. Sever said the signs will be installed and replaced for Balkan for an additional charge.

If St Louis County installs the signs (including replacing the posts and hardware), it may be cheaper than what it would take Balkan to replace the posts, hardware, labor and signs. The foreman will provide pricing information at the next meeting.

- i. The lights were repaired on the T-22 on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
  - j. Canisters were moved to allow the attendants to see the recyclers and keep the recycling “clean” of contaminants (such as unrinsed peanut butter plastic jars). This has been brought to Balkan’s attention that the recycling materials collected are not being cleaned before disposal.
  - k. The ‘falling head liner’ on the L-66 vehicle was repaired.
  - l. Snow was removed from around the LP tanks in the Balkan garage yard.
  - m. The foreman was asked to move the snow away from the air conditioning unit for the office. This melts in the spring and creates an icy area when it freezes for the walkway to the office.
3. Community Center Report
- a. Due to the governor’s executive order, rentals at the community center have been put on hold indefinitely.
  - b. Rick Holland, the Primary Purpose Group that meets on Sunday nights, saw a leak under the sink in the kitchen and mentioned it to the office. The foreman tightened the connector to the drain pipes and will monitor if it leaks again.
4. Canister Site Report
- a. A St Louis County Public health nurse called the office on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, to inform us about a letter that was sent to them regarding the lack of mask wearing at the canister site that was witnessed by a consumer. The clerk forwarded the call on to Supervisor VerSteege. Supervisor VerSteege will inform all of the canister site attendants that they need to wear masks if they are within six feet of anyone else.
  - b. The oil/waste container needs to be drained and emptied of sludge. This will be looked into.
  - c. More high visibility vests are needed for the canister site attendants. The current vests available to the attendants may be too small to fit over their jackets. Supervisor VerSteege volunteered to purchase larger vests and some hooks to hang the vests in the canister site shack.
  - d. Supervisor Tarnowski made a pamphlet to be included in the city of Chisholm’s utility bills explaining proper recycling. The clerk was asked to forward the pamphlet to Margaret Gornick and carbon copy to Larry Folstad, Chisholm public works director.
5. Other Reports
1. It’s time to apply for a food license for the pancake feeds for 2021. **A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar and supported by Supervisor Tarnowski to apply for the food license and pay the fee.** For up to ten dates for 2021, the cost is \$95.00. The clerk will call Ann Palmquist about dates that work for her.

**CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: none**

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. St Louis County Environmental services (SLCES) sent Balkan a letter asking us to add their phone number to our website in case of closure of the canister site. The SLCES updates their site for closures daily. The clerk asked Nancee Strgar to also add the number to Balkan’s Facebook page.
2. Balkan received an email from Dan Manick, 49ers representative, asking to reinstate the employee’s used sick time, due to COVID-19. The Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) could cover the cost of paying the employee for their required quarantine due to COVID-19. However, Balkan is a municipality and would not be eligible for this “payback” because it is in the form of tax credits. Balkan does not file or pay taxes and therefore would not be eligible to be reimbursed through FFCRA. Public works employees are exempt from FFCRA due to being classified as essential workers. The supervisors are standing by their decision to have the employee use their sick time and Balkan will, generously, pay anything over used available sick time. This amounted to 34.5 hours of paid sick time the employee received. The clerk was asked to respond to Dan Manick’s email by saying that all parties are satisfied with the decision that was made. The clerk was asked to keep a record of how the township handled the COVID-19 quarantine and pay for an employee, in case another employee contracts the virus.
3. St Louis County sent Balkan a letter asking if we are interested in recently forfeited property to purchase. The supervisors viewed the land and decided Balkan is not interested.
4. The quilt camp has a tentative date of 1/21-1/25/21 to use the community center.

5. The local noxious weed inspector has a report to do due Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Pete Clevestine was the weed inspector for Balkan in the recent past. A new weed inspector will need to be decided on to complete the report. The Clerk was asked to provide the supervisors with a copy of last year's report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. The use of the debit card was discussed.
2. The supervisors asked the clerk to remind them about the one-year employee review that needs to be done. It was suggested for the end of December 2020. The employee review is now scheduled for February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 at 6 pm at the community center.
3. A resolution to change the compensation for the clerk to reflect the increased duties was made. **A motion by Supervisor Strgar and supported by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the amendment to the resolution to increase the pay for the clerk. The motion carried unanimously.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. The work priority sheet has been updated to include taking down a dead tree that is on Long Lake road closest to highway 84. This tree is in danger of falling on the road. The employees should contact the homeowner prior to taking down the tree.
2. The posting box by the canister site is damaged and may need to be replaced in the future. Supervisor Tarnowski researched prices for new posting boxes. She said it would be upwards of \$250.00 to replace the box.
3. The annual Board of Audit will be held at the Balkan office due to important records that need to be kept in the office. The Board of Audit is scheduled for Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6PM.
4. MAT suggests townships prepare now in case the Annual meeting needs to be held virtually. Townships are encouraged to use alternate methods of holding their annual meetings due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The supervisors discussed posting the Annual meeting paperwork on the website for residents to access along with the recommendation of the Board that there will be no levy increase for 2022, in an effort to be transparent and reach more residents.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:**

1. Employee Review - February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 at 6 PM
2. Board of Audit – February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6PM

**NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Supervisor Strgar, supported by Supervisor Tarnowski, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

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(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

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(Board Chair) Brad Strgar