

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING**  
**March 23rd, 2021, 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center**

In attendance: Chairman – Brad Strgar  
 Supervisor – Jennifer Tarnowski  
 Supervisor – Dirk VerSteege  
 Clerk – Misty Hendrickson  
 Treasurer – Kent Fredeen  
 Visitors – 5 guests

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 6:00 pm.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

- After review of the minutes from the board meeting on March 11th, 2021, a motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteege to approve the March 11th, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.
- A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the minutes from March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 the annual budget meeting. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed.
- A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the minutes from the Annual Meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed.
- A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the employee review minutes from March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.

An error was discovered in the payables from the March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting, due to power outage at the office while inputting the bills. The PERA employer share for \$43.23 was missing from the claims. It was discovered March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and corrected. **A motion was made on March 23rd, 2021 to approve the correction to the payables for \$43.23 by Supervisor Strgar and supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.**

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Kent Fredeen

<b>Receipts: \$1,904.88</b>			
<b>Revenues:</b>		<b>First National Bank – Interest</b>	
St Louis Co. – Forfeit Land apportionment	\$921.92		
Life insurance reimbursed	\$163.60		
Community Center Rent	\$275.00		
Canister site tickets sold	\$375.00		
Ziegler Inc. overpayment refunded	\$169.36		

<b>First National Bank - Account Balances</b>	
Checking Account	<b>\$159,060.61</b>
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$166,141.43
Community Center Account	\$41,525.21

Building Project Account	\$4,958.69
COVID -19 account	\$5,103.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$376,789.82</b>

Debit Card usage: none

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

Transfers completed:

1. \$375.00 from Checking to the Community Center Account for Feb. 2021 Community Center rent
2. \$31,318.00 from checking to the MET Fund for 2021 Taconite Production Tax 1<sup>st</sup> stipend

Recommended transfers: none

Supervisor Tarnowski suggested the treasurer, Kent Fredeen, look through Balkan's expenses for 2020 to determine if some of the expenses could be paid for with MET money. The treasurer was asked to make a recommendation of what can be transferred from the MET fund to the Capital Expenditures fund. The MET fund money can be used for infrastructure and intercommunity projects, but no rolling equipment. Treasurer Fredeen suggested the cost to run the canister site Balkan paid in 2020 for \$34,499.48 plus the cost of the canister site expansion in 2020 of \$26,326.85 less \$22,000.00, the city of Chisholm reimburses Balkan for half of the costs for shared services of the recycling center equals \$38,826.33 that could be transferred to the Capital Expenditures fund. Also, costs for snow and ice removal for 2020-2021 winter could be transferred, plus the projected costs for running the canister site for 2021, putting a crown on the grounds of the canister site for water run-off, and the chloride that is applied to roads for 2021. As the projected costs are not final costs, the treasurer asked to look at the figures again and to present them to the board at the board meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Supervisor Tarnowski made a motion to transfer \$96,000.00 to the Capital Expenditures account. The issue was tabled for the treasurer to check the numbers.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to approve the bills for payment on March 23rd, 2021, and ordered paid in the amount of \$13,649.67. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to accept the payroll for March 23rd, 2021 (payroll period March 7<sup>th</sup> – March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021), in the amount of \$10,342.42, which includes election judge pay. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made to adjourn the regular board meeting at 6:06 PM, by Supervisor Strgar and supported by Supervisor VerSteeg. Motion carried unanimously.

**Call to order the Reorganization Meeting at 6:07 PM.**

The oath of office was given to newly re-elected Supervisor Strgar.  
The oath of office was given to newly re-elected Treasurer Fredeen.  
The oath of office was given to Deputy Treasurer, Gail Radotich.

A motion was made to appoint Supervisor Strgar as the chairman by Supervisor Tarnowski and supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed. Supervisor Tarnowski made a motion to appoint Supervisor VerSteege as the Vice-chairman. This was supported by Supervisor Strgar and passed.

Supervisor Tarnowski motioned to designate Chisholm Tribune Press, which is offered as an insert in the Mesabi Tribune, as the official publication for Balkan Township.

Supervisor Tarnowski motioned to appoint the First National Bank of Chisholm as the official depository of the township. The motion was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed.

Supervisor Tarnowski motioned to appoint:

- the canister site posting box
- the community center posting box
- and the Lucky Seven posting box

as the official posting places for 2021. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.

Supervisor Tarnowski made a motion to designate the board liaisons for:

1. The garage and shop – Supervisor Strgar
2. The road supervisor – Supervisor VerSteege
3. The Community center – Supervisor Tarnowski

Supervisor VerSteege supported this and passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski to accept the fire resolution that the electors voted to support at the Annual meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This motion was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski to accept the 2022 tax levy at \$331,500.00. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.

Treasurer Fredeen provided a hand-out suggesting the breakdown of the general fund's division of income for 2021 to include Capital expenditures, Fire protection, and PERA. **Supervisor Tarnowski motioned to track the different funds in the CTAS program. This was supported by Supervisor Strgar and passed unanimously.**

Treasurer Fredeen asked Deputy Treasurer, Gail Radotich, to sit in on the next meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, as the treasurer will be absent. Gail agreed.

#### **REPORTS:**

1. Clerks Report:
  - a. The financial reports from CTAS have been sent in to the State Auditor's office on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
  - b. The clerk reset the beginning balance for the general account as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, with board approval.
  - c. The balances in the investments have been updated to reflect the current balances.
  - d. RAMS sent out an email stating an estimate on how much to expect from the American Rescue Act that was passed by congress in March 2021. Balkan can expect

about \$90,000.00 in two payments from the state of Minnesota. Balkan can expect to spend this money before September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

- e. The clerk believes that the residents of Balkan want an activity director. Residents are looking for something their children can join in and/or family activities in the community. Supervisor Tarnowski suggested a rough schedule of about two activities per month that could include a family game night, coffee social, bonfire, and outdoor dance.
  - f. Jon White suggested a pork and bean bags activity he could put on. He also suggested a hayride and a concession trailer for food as ideas to promote community involvement.
2. Shop & Road Report:
- a. On 10<sup>th</sup> Ave W and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Chisholm, culverts need to be changed. Chisholm would like to use Balkan's excavator and packer for the project. Chisholm wishes to pump the water to the ditch, which is in Balkan's jurisdiction, to control run-off.
  - b. Culverts were steamed on Colombe Road and on Long Lake Road.
  - c. An air leak on the CASE loader was repaired.
  - d. The old fence around the septic tank at the garage was removed and replaced with new yellow caution painted boards.
  - e. Road inspections are being done every other day.
  - f. The septic was pumped three times due to it being frozen.
  - g. The snow was plowed on March 11<sup>th</sup>, on all Balkan roads.
  - h. Shop maintenance, equipment greasing, wiper blade replacements and organizing the shop is being done.
  - i. The one-ton truck's front brake line had a leak. The front brake line was replaced.
  - j. Haiskanen road was brush-cut.
  - k. Roads were graded on Vlasich and Laitala roads.
3. Community Center Report
- a. Supervisor Tarnowski would like to schedule activities for Summer. She will put together an activity calendar, as an insert in the Spring Newsletter.
4. Canister Site Report
- a. Dave Pajunen was asked who picks up the scrap and appliances for Balkan. He said Quad City Recycling.
  - b. The clerk will make a new phone list to include John Strukel, Quad City recycling and G-Men's phone numbers.
  - c. The clerk will post the canister site attendant position on the MinnesotaWorks.net site to attract more applicants.
  - d. Oil has been spilled at the canister site oil area. The concrete slab needs to be power washed to remove the oil spilled.
5. Other Reports
- a. The DNR will drop off a new "Public Water Access" sign to put up on the Long Lake boat access area on Centa Road in 7-10 days.
  - b. There was some discussion about road signs that say children at play, slow down. A few of these signs are in Balkan on Latick Road and Baich Road. The board decided these should stay where they are and not be replaced.
  - c. Foreman, Jon White, suggested the pit behind the Balkan garage needs to be cleaned up. Rocks, microwave sized and larger, need to be removed and/or organized. Is there a market for this rock? He suggested Balkan sell the rocks to contractors in Minneapolis. All Balkan needs is a buyer who can transport the rocks. The transportation would be about 70% of the cost of becoming a rock contractor.

**CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:**

1. An annual safety check of the playground equipment needs to be done. Supervisor Strgar volunteered to perform a safety check.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. a. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 the City of Chisholm Summer Recreation Program sent Balkan a letter stating they will cash our check when and if they know they can safely host the program this year. If they are unable to host the summer rec. program, they will return Balkan's donation.
2. Mark Wilcox called to ask if we need a computer tune-up. The supervisors asked if the clerk thinks it is needed. The clerk will look into Mr. Wilcox's services.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Mr. Fredeen brought in a picture of a gazebo in Port Wing, WI that shows their town's old bell tower of their school from 1902 to 1977, memorialized. This could be used as an idea for a gazebo that could be installed at the community center to showcase Balkan's old school's cupola that was saved when demolition of the old "school" happened in 2010. Supervisor VerSteege said he knows of a company that can build a gazebo for us using our specifics. The board needs a plan and a cost estimate for this idea. The planned gazebo should be twelve feet by sixteen feet sized.
2. The batteries in the AED machines need to be checked.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. The work priority sheet has been updated.
2. American Rescue Act zoom meeting will be offered by RAMS on Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 11:45am to 1:30 pm.
3. The resolution for compensation of township employees was discussed. The board would like to implement a 2% increase to all employees except the clerk and the canister site attendants. It was proposed the pay for the canister site attendants needs to be increased to \$13.50/ hour in order to retain and draw applicants for the positions. The clerk will draw up the new compensation resolution to be approved at the next meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar to split the phone stipend that the foreman has received monthly to two stipends of \$20 each to the foreman and the operator. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.**

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:**

1. Short courses will be offered virtually again this year, due to COVID-19.
2. LBAE – 4/29/21 – 6/7 PM.

#### **NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:**

##### **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteege, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on April 6th, 2021.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

---

(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

---

(Board Chair) Brad Strgar

