

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
August 24th, 2021, 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center

In attendance: Chairman – Brad Strgar
 Supervisor – Jennifer Tarnowski
 Supervisor – Dirk VerSteeg
 Treasurer - Kent Fredeen
 Clerk – Misty Hendrickson
 Visitors – 7 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 board meeting on August 10th, 2021, a motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the August 10th, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Kent Fredeen

Receipts: \$2,199.11			
Revenues:		First National Bank – Interest	
St Louis County – 2021 MN DNR PILT	\$1,316.39		
Chisholm Canister site tickets sold	\$750.00		
Community Center Rent	\$100.00		
Life Insurance reimbursed	\$32.72		

First National Bank - Account Balances	
Checking Account	\$174,797.28
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$166,244.04
Community Center Account	\$44,745.04
Building Project Account	\$4,961.82
COVID -19 account	\$43,808.25
Total	\$434,556.43

Debit Card usage: \$57.42 Staples for copy paper and clasp envelopes

Voided checks: Cancelled check # 62086 1/26/21 for \$138.00 to the Post office for the PO Box.

Supervisor Tarnowski moved to approve the treasurer’s report as read. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteeg. Motion carried unanimously.

Transfers completed: \$200.32 from the community center account to the general account.

Recommended transfers: \$27,304.63 from MET to Road and Bridge fund for 2021 chloride for the roads.

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the transfer of \$27,304.63 from the MET account to the Road and Bridge account. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteeg and passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to approve the bills for payment on August 24th, 2021, and ordered paid in the amount of \$15,348.66. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to accept the payroll for August 24th, 2021 (payroll period August 8th – August 21st, 2021), in the amount of \$9,898.85. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

1. Clerks Report: Misty Hendrickson

- a. The clerk, Shari Fisher, Brad Strgar, Jennifer Tarnowski, Whitney Ridlon from IRRRB, and Steve Howard from Paul Bunyan Communications met August 17th at the community center to discuss the next steps Balkan should take regarding broadband. Steve Howard gave a preliminary cost estimate of \$4.2 million to do all of Balkan with fiber, excluding the RDOLF areas. (This amount will expire in a few months if Balkan doesn't get funding.) Paul Bunyan Communications will furnish the RDOLF areas with fiber at their cost, roughly \$.5 million. Paul Bunyan Communications does not have data caps and is a local company. They would make a good partner in broadband for Balkan Township. Steve and Whitney advised us to call the senators issuing direct congressional spending and put our titles behind the call telling the senators how much this funding would help people and businesses in our rural area. The clerk wrote a letter to Senator Klobuchar and received a call back from Matt in her office asking if we had any questions about the congressional spending. The clerk called him back but had to leave a message. Supervisor Tarnowski asked if Balkan should apply for St Louis County's Broadband planning grant, which is a 1:1 matching grant. Steve said this would be a good place to start.

2. Shop & Road Report:

- a. The oil/water separator project was asked about at the meeting. A steel tank is needed for the project. This steel tank could have a long lead time. It was decided that the steel tank be ordered, in case the tank price goes up again.
- b. Supervisor VerSteeg suggested Balkan purchase a rotary grass mower for the John Deere tractor from Lamere Company. He says it will be more efficient to put on and take off, than what we currently have. A cost estimate is needed.
- c. Road projects are being finalized on Laitala road. Next, they will tackle the culverts on Salo Road then move on to Briski road to repair the soft spots. Balkan will need to use some part time help to grade. Richard Startk will be contacted to ask if he is interested.
- d. A second main boom cylinder was replaced on the brusher on August 9th, 2021.
- e. Mowing and brushing was done on Laitala Road August 9th, 2021.
- f. Calcium chloride was sprayed on the east side of Balkan roads and Korpi Road on August 10th, 2021.

- g. The mirror bracket was replaced on the 2018 International truck.
 - h. Cemetery road was brushed for the city of Chisholm.
 - i. Cooper Road, Latick Road, Hyvarinen Road, Long Lake Road, Krogerus Road, Haiskanen Road, Sever Road and Cemetery Road and all intersections were graded August 12th, 2021.
 - j. Brushing was done on Laitala and Salo roads on August 13th, 2021. Brushing was done on French Road on August 16th, 2021.
 - k. The double ditch on Laitala Road was cut out and smoothed on August 17th. More ditching was done on Laitala Road on August 18th and 19th.
 - l. Brushing was done on Salo and Bicanich Roads on August 20th.
3. Community Center Report
- a. Dave Pajunen asked the supervisors at the August 10th, 2021 meeting if they would accept a donation of basketball hoops for the community center. They supported this. Dave asked Paul Forti, Sunrise Bakery owner, if he would donate the hoops if Balkan was able to remove the hoops from the Jefferson School in Hibbing and put them up at the community center in Balkan. Thanks Dave and Paul Forti!
4. Canister Site Report
- a. Dave Pajunen asked for help lifting some oil in the canister site someone left.
5. Other Reports:
- a. Regarding the proposed public access to Long Lake, Supervisor Tarnowski called the DNR asking about grant money available to acquire the proposed property on North Long Lake Road. The DNR said there wasn't any grant money available for that purpose. Balkan will need to get the property valued and surveyed. Supervisor Tarnowski will inquire into the right route for Balkan to take here.

CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: none

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1. There is a rate increase on Couri and Ruppe, PLLP that was received. Their current rate is \$250/hr. for development work, \$230/hr. for general legal work.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. The supervisors were asked if they think Balkan should get a subscription to the weekly Chisholm Tribune to support our official publication. This will be discussed in more depth later.
- 2. Salo road will have two culverts replaced. The clerk will have to post and publish the road closure. The project hasn't been scheduled yet, however, when they know, they will let the clerk know when to post and publish the road closure. Supervisor Strgar offered to deliver letters to the residents informing them of the road closure.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. The work priority sheets were provided for the supervisors and reviewed.
- 2. The clerk asked if the supervisors thought the rug service for the community center should be stopped. Balkan could save up to \$778.20 per year by cutting out this monthly bill. The clerk was asked to call Aramark to ask about reducing our need to get the rugs replaced every other month. The clerk was cautioned to look at the contract to see if this is possible. Also, coveralls are provided by Aramark to the full-time employees. They don't need weekly cleaning. The clerk was asked to call about monthly coverall cleaning.
- 3. The clerk has been watching the Century Link monthly phone bills. The office has long distance on their service. This is unnecessary as the clerk and the treasurer have cell phones that don't charge long distance and can use those instead of the land line. This was supported by the supervisors in order to save money.

4. Bryce Urich's last day at the canister site was August 14th, 2021. A new canister site attendant started on August 18th, 2021, James Lamke.
5. The canister site attendants have been calling to have the tires picked up. They were told they would be picked up at the end of July. First State Tire Recycling picked up half of the tires on August 21st, 2021.
6. Laurel Fredeen suggested Balkan offer an Animal and Harvest Fair on the first Saturday of October at the community center. She asked if she could put together a committee to work on this event. She will call interested volunteers to ask if they would be interested in helping with the proposed event.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:

1. **August 28th, 2021 – Pancake Breakfast** – more sausage will be ordered so as not to run out.

NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:

1. It was suggested that the clerk put an article in the newsletter explaining that the Balkan community wide rummage sales were a success and we plan on putting them on again in 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Supervisor VerSteeg, supported by Supervisor Tarnowski, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on September 7th, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

(Board Chair) Brad Strgar