

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING  
January 25th, 2022, 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center**

In attendance: Chairman – Brad Strgar  
 Supervisor - Dirk VerSteeg  
 Supervisor - Jennifer Tarnowski  
 Treasurer – Kent Fredeen  
 Clerk – Misty Hendrickson  
 Visitors – 5 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 board meeting on January 11th, 2022, a motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg to approve the January 11th, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Kent Fredeen

<b>Receipts: \$257.72</b>			
<b>Revenues:</b>		<b>First National Bank – Interest</b>	
Community Center Rent	\$200.00		
Life Insurance Reimbursed	\$32.72		
Community Center Garbage Fee	\$25.00		

<b>First National Bank - Account Balances</b>	
Checking Account	<b>\$145,880.10</b>
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$17,038.14
Community Center Account	\$46,241.34
Building Project Account	\$1,064.26
COVID -19 account	\$45,264.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$255,487.98</b>

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski to approve the treasurer’s report as read. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteeg and passed unanimously.

Debit Card usage: none

**Transfers completed:**

1. The transfer of \$35,446.20 from MET to CTAS Capital Expenditures for 2021 Fire Protection costs was completed.
2. The transfer of \$20,145.02 from MET to the CTAS Capital Expenditures account for Balkan’s portion of expenses for 2021 that is shared with Chisholm was completed.
3. The transfer of \$4,000.00 from the money market Capital Expenditures account to CTAS Capital Expenditures account for the new loader purchase was completed.

**Recommended transfers:**

1. A motion to approve the transfer of \$36,840.56 from the COVID-19/ARPA Money Market Fund to the CTAS Road and Bridge fund for the cost of the water/oil separator project was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg. This passed unanimously.

2. A motion to approve the transfer of \$365.00 from checking to the Community Center account for Dec. 2021 community center rent was made by Supervisor Tarnowski and supported by Supervisor VerSteeg. This passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to approve the bills for payment on January 25th, 2022, and ordered paid in the amount of \$40,063.52. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to accept the payroll for January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (payroll period January 9<sup>th</sup> – January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022), in the amount of \$8,095.73. Motion carried unanimously.

#### REPORTS:

1. Clerks Report: Misty Hendrickson
  - a. Minnesota Revenue responded back to the clerk's request for a refund of a double payment of \$191.00 for 2021 sales tax. Jan Beck said she will be sending the refund in a few weeks, per her email.
  - b. The Pay Equity Report was submitted on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
  - c. The Census Bureau's Boundary and Annexation Survey/Report was completed on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Friday.
  - d. The clerk took the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization training on January 14<sup>th</sup>, it took about 30 minutes to complete. Supervisor VerSteeg completed the training, also.
  - e. The Board of Audit notice was posted on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
2. Shop & Road Report:
  - a. An employee tested positive for COVID-19. **Supervisor Strgar made a motion to use COVID-19/ARPA money to pay the employee instead of the employee using sick time. This was supported by Supervisor VerSteeg and passed unanimously.**
  - b. Supervisor VerSteeg has volunteered many hours recently to the Road and Bridge department. Thank you, Supervisor VerSteeg!
  - c. Due to drifting, snow has accumulated in front of the fire station doors. Supervisor VerSteeg will address this.
  - d. Snow plowing, snow drifts and banks were pushed back on Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
  - e. Tires were picked up at Pomp's Tires on Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
  - f. Pot holes were cut out on Long Lake Road on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - g. The brush-cutter was greased before cutting leaning trees and brush on Cooper, Long Lake and Labarge Roads on Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - h. The canister site, community center and shop yard were snow plowed on Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, the oil and filter on the brush-cutter were changed.
  - i. Rear tires were replaced on the 1990 International on Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>. Sever Road was brush-cut.
  - j. Snow plowing of the east, west and Highway 73 routes was done on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> and driveways and the canister site were plowed on Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>.
  - k. The main hydraulic hose from the pump to the valve bank on the 1990 International Plow truck were replaced.
  - l. Roads and driveways were plowed on Barrett, Trap, Johnson, Baich Roads on Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - m. A new rear tire was put on the 2018 International Plow truck on Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>. The shop was cleaned and some tools put away.
  - n. All tires and rims have been replaced on vehicles that needed replacing.
  - o. The fill nozzle for the outdoor fuel oil tank was replaced and works well now.
3. Community Center Report:
  - a. To make it easier to plow, it was suggested the garbage canister be moved closer to the steps at the community center.
4. Canister Site Report :
  - a. A previous employee was asked to work some Saturdays in case of an absence.
5. Other Reports:
  - a. The treasurer, Kent Fredeen, gave a summary of what will be prepared for the supervisors for the Board of Audit on Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

#### CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

Sheri Fisher has been researching broadband funding for the township. She gave a summary of what she has found for funding options. Some cities and townships are using federal ARPA funds to finance their search for broadband funding and installation. Some funding is only for service providers to apply for. Minnesota will have \$100 million to fund broadband installation, however, those funds are not available yet. Sheri suggested contacting Steve Howard, from Paul Bunyan Communications, to ask about finding programs that would help Balkan and see what he would suggest.

The NTIA is working with the state to fund some broadband development.

Sheri spoke with Brad Gustafson, from St Louis County Planning department. He said funds are still available.

Supervisor Tarnowski suggested working together with Hibbing's new administrator to get broadband to South Balkan.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. St Louis County Association of Townships and Minnesota Association of Township dues are \$230.80 and \$598.56, respectively, for 2022. **A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar, and supported by Supervisor Tarnowski, to pay the MAT dues only for 2022. This passed unanimously.**
2. The City of Chisholm sent the revised Canister site shared services agreement for 2022 for signatures. The Balkan chairman and clerk signed the agreement in triplicate. It will be mailed back to the City of Chisholm this week.
3. The City of Chisholm sent a request to support the Chisholm Summer Recreation Program for 2022. There was some discussion about what this service provides for the youth in Chisholm. **Supervisor Tarnowski made a motion to provide the Chisholm Summer Recreation program \$1,500.00, paid by the MET fund for 2022. This was supported by Supervisor Strgar and passed unanimously.**
4. The Operating Engineers Local #49 Health and Welfare fund sent a letter informing of a rate increase to \$1,345.00 per month beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. This is an increase of \$20.00 from \$1,325.00 to \$1,345.00.
5. The Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) sent a letter saying they are holding in-person training for clerks and treasurers. The trainings will be offered at five locations. There will be a \$45 charge that will include training, refreshments and a light lunch. The closest training will be Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> at the Timberlake Lodge in Grand Rapids from 9am-1 or 2pm.
6. The bill for the oil/water separator project was reviewed. Mr. Leustek was asked to provide a breakdown of the charges, due to using ARPA money to fund the project. The bill was \$36,840.56.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. none

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. The work priority sheets were provided for the supervisors and reviewed.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:**

**NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:**

1. Newsletter suggestion: Ask about any EMT or First Responders in Balkan in the newsletter.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**A motion was made by Supervisor Tarnowski, supported by Supervisor Strgar, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:08 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

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(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

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(Board Chair) Brad Strgar