

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
April 5th, 2022, 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center

In attendance: Chairman – Brad Strgar
 Supervisor - Dirk VerSteeg
 Supervisor - Garth Wilson
 Treasurer – Kent Fredeen
 Clerk – Misty Hendrickson
 Visitors – 4 guests

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 6:04 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

- After review of the minutes from the reorganization board meeting on March 22nd, 2022, a motion was made by Supervisor VerSteeg, supported by Supervisor Wilson to approve the March 22nd, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Kent Fredeen

Receipts: \$571.42			
Revenues:		First National Bank – Interest	
Community Center Rent	\$425.00	FNB-C MET 2022 March 2022 interest	\$3.52
Community Center Garbage fee	\$25.00	FNB-C Community Center March 2022 interest	\$6.28
Life Insurance reimbursed	\$110.45	FNB-C Capital Expenditures March 2022 interest	\$0.14
		FNB-C ARPA March 2022 interest	\$1.03

First National Bank - Account Balances	
Checking Account	\$160,910.75
MET (Mining Effects Tax) Account	\$32,182.26
Community Center Account	\$47,971.32
Building Project Account	\$1,065.75
COVID -19 account	\$6,494.36
Total	\$248,624.44

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

The treasurer submitted the newly re-signed signature card to First National Bank.

Debit Card usage:

1. \$111.66 to Staples for printer ink

Transfers completed:

1. A transfer from MET to checking for \$5,016.78 for the 2021 road signs purchase was completed.
2. A transfer from COVID-19/ARPA account for \$1,943.28 for lost COVID wages was completed.

Recommended transfers:

1. A motion to approve the transfer of \$765.00 from checking to the Community Center fund for the March 2022 Community Center Rent was made by Supervisor VerSteeg and supported by Supervisor Wilson. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Supervisor VerSteeg, supported by Supervisor Wilson, to approve the bills for payment on April 5th, 2022, and ordered paid in the amount of \$7,062.32. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Supervisor VerSteeg, supported by Supervisor Wilson, to accept the payroll for April 5th, 2022 (payroll period March 20th – April 2nd, 2022), in the amount of \$3,396.66. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS:

1. Clerks Report: Misty Hendrickson
 - a. More community center rentals coming up.
 - b. The quarterly reports have been completed as of 4/5/2022.
 - c. The clerk asked for any newsletter ideas and hopes to have a newsletter out by the end of April.
 - d. ARPA reporting is due April 30, 2022.
2. Shop & Road Report:
 - a. The icy patches were scraped off Cooper, Briski, Hyvarinen and Salonen Roads on March 22nd. A culvert was steamed on Cooper Road to get melting snow to run into the ditch.
 - b. All routes, the canister site, and the community center were snow plowed on March 23rd and 24th. Baich, Hyvarinen, Long Lake and Krogerus Roads were plowed of slush and graded on March 24th.
 - c. Leaning trees were cut on Briski, Cooper, Long lake, Baich and Hyvarinen Roads on March 25th.
 - d. Drifting snow was plowed on most roads in Balkan on March 28th and spot brushed on Johnson Road.
 - e. A culvert was steamed on Baich road on March 29th.
 - f. A battery was replaced in the culvert steamer and Sever Road was brush-cut on March 30th and 31st.
 - g. Some intersections on the east and west routes and hills were sanded due to icy conditions.
 - h. Culvert inspections on Johnson and Latick Roads resulted in steaming to promote proper drainage into ditches on March 31st.
 - i. Quotes for new tires were supplied by Supervisor VerSteeg. Iron Range Tire quoted \$2,016 for bias tires, \$4,378 for radial tires. Supervisor VerSteeg will call Pomp's for another quote on these tires to compare.
 - j. Three quotes for used rotary and disc mowers was supplied by Supervisor VerSteeg. The quotes range from \$10,900 - \$11,500.

3. Community Center Report:
 - a. The canister at the community center is full and will need to be dumped. Supervisor VerSteege will call General Waste to have this service done.
4. Canister Site Report :
 - a. A canister site attendant was scheduled to work on April 2nd, 2022 but didn't show up. This has been documented and signed by the supervisors. This employee is terminated.
 - b. A service provider called to ask if we need to schedule a pickup for the antifreeze barrel at the canister site. One attendant says there has been an antifreeze barrel at the canister site for years and it will need to be dumped soon.
5. Other Reports:
 - a. A resident wishes to write a letter to St Louis County about the amount of cars and blight in another resident's yard. This resident is asking for the board's support when they write the letter to county officials. The board will read the letter and reserve the support depending on the letter's contents.

CONCERNS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

- a. The roads have some bad pot holes that can't be avoided on many township roads. A resident suggested the township use tailings or "mill feed" to fill in the pot holes. This idea wasn't supported as "mill feed" is very expensive and may be sharp and possibly pop tires. Material will be added to the roads once crowns are reestablished.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Cook's Timber Days is looking for donations. Balkan Township doesn't use tax payer money to make donations and will not be able to donate this year.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Balkan's new Facebook page has been started. Lisa Smith, deputy clerk, will be updating the page.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. The work priority sheets were provided for the supervisors and reviewed.
2. Shari Fisher, broadband community advocate, gave an update for the board on the April 1st, 2022 broadband meeting attended by Rep. Lislegard, Whitney Ridlon, Ida Rukavina, Rep. Sandstede, Brad Gustafson (via zoom), Jennifer Tarnowski (via Zoom), Shari Fisher, and Kent Fredeen, treasurer. They discussed getting many townships together to increase our "voice" and attend another meeting Ida Rukavina will coordinate with Whitney Ridlon in the near future to host in Mountain Iron at the RAMS headquarters.
 - Currently the MN Border to Border program grant is a 1:1 match with a \$5 million cap. This is hard for townships to fund. This can be changed through legislation. Rep. Ecklund has introduced a bill to raise the cap to \$10 million with a 75%/25% match requirement.
 - The above attendees suggested anyone should prepare real-life examples of how fiber optic broadband could help our community. It could help ease the burden for residents that would otherwise have to travel to a larger city to get medical attention use the internet for telehealth visits. This may reduce health care costs going forward.
 - Broadband should be considered a utility, like electric and phone services, which will help smaller communities increase their property tax base, since this is a major selling point for new home buyers.
 - Eventually, the plan is to meet with MN's governor Walz to discuss using some of the \$9.25 billion surplus to supplement some rural broadband development.
3. A motion to approve an employee's vacation request on April 14th, 2022 was made by Supervisor Strgar, supported by Supervisor VerSteege and passed unanimously.

4. A new temporary stop sign was ordered from St Louis County's Sign Manager, Frank Sever, on April 4th, 2022. The board is in favor of having one on hand should a temporary stop sign be needed.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:

NEWSLETTERS & MEETING MINUTES:

1. Ideas for the April newsletter.
2. Pancake Breakfast schedule – next breakfast will be April 23rd, 2022.
3. Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meets April 28th, 2022 at 6-7 PM at the Balkan Community Center.
4. ARPA expense reporting is due April 30th, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Supervisor Strgar, supported by Supervisor VerSteeg, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM. The next board meeting will be held at 6:00 PM at the Balkan Community Center on April 19th, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Misty Hendrickson, Clerk

(Clerk) Misty Hendrickson

(Board Chair) Brad Strgar