

Biwabik Township Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Teleconference
Monday, May 11, 2020

Call to Order: 5:32 PM by Chairman Soderling

Present by roll call: Supervisors Hautala, Paris, and Soderling, Clerk Highland and Treasurer Hines
No guests

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

Designation of New Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Township Attorney: Tabled

Discussion – Supervisor Paris explained the Road and Bridge liaison has had a pay cut for a year and a month. Past practice was the Chairperson was also the Road and Bridge liaison due to the work load. Chairman Soderling suggested talking about this during agenda item: Supervisor Pay.

Special Agenda Request: None

Minutes: Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve the April 9, 2020 Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting minutes and the April 13, 2020 Monthly Board Meeting minutes. Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

Financial Report: Treasurer Hines went over the April Financial Report with the Board.

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|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Opening Balance 04/01/2020 | \$ 546,513.19 |
| Receipts | \$ 1,429.60 |
| Disbursements | \$ 38,570.67 |
| Ending Balance 04/30/2020 | \$ 509,372.12 |
| Deposits in Transit | \$ 500.00 |
| Outstanding Checks | \$ 3,660.88 |
| Petty Cash | \$ - 100.00 |
| Total Checking Acct. | \$ 512,433.00 |
| Total Investments | \$ 98,453.55 |

The Clerk and Treasurer are in balance with the bank.

Motion by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the financial report for April 2020 and file it for audit. Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

Claims: Clerk Highland reviewed the claims with the board. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to pay claims as presented for \$79,643.75.

Discussion – Supervisor Paris asked the Board if they should withhold partial payment from Skubic Brothers. The new truck was delivered without cutting edges for the snowplow blades. Foreman Merritt has been in contact with Skubic about this and they are supposed to get us blades at no cost. Chairman

Soderling feels the cutting edges were overlooked and either way Skubic will get the contracted amount. Paris explained if we purchase edges outright they may be more expensive. Supervisor Hautala agreed with Soderling and doesn't feel Skubic is going to cheat us.

Motion carried upon the following vote: Supervisor Hautala Aye
Supervisor Paris Aye
Chairman Soderling Aye

Reports:

Road & Equipment-

Dust Control – A quote was received from Edwards Oil for dust control. It is cheaper, however the application rate is more. Another concern is our equipment wouldn't apply it properly. In the future we may need to assess the method we currently apply it by. We have already gotten a load from Envirotech.

Cutting Edges – Discussed earlier

Supervisor Hautala reported we can get class 5 from Jacobsen if they crush in time for the season. Mesabi Bituminous said it would be about \$10,000.00 to re-do the parking lot.

Fire- No report.

First Responders- No report.

Recreation-

Memorial Day – Supervisor Hautala reported Aurora, Biwabik, and Gilbert have all canceled their Memorial Day service, but will be placing flags at the gravesides. Biwabik is undecided, but Aurora and Gilbert have canceled Fourth of July events. Hautala would like to see both canceled at this time. Chairman Soderling thinks each event should be addressed one at a time. **Motion** by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by Supervisor Paris to cancel the Memorial Day service, but display flags.

Discussion- The avenue of flags will be raised and flags placed individually at veteran gravesides.

Motion carried upon the following vote: Supervisor Hautala Aye
Supervisor Paris Aye
Chairman Soderling Aye

Chairman Soderling feels it is too early to close Fourth of July. Hautala feels that if surrounding cities are canceling, we should too. Soderling believes that is because the cities pull in larger crowds. He doesn't think people come to the town hall's event from far distances. Clerk Highland explained that many people come from out of the area to visit family and come back to the hall for the festivities. **Motion** by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by Supervisor Paris to cancel the Fourth of July event for 2020.

Discussion – Supervisor Paris would like to have the ability to re-visit this issue in June if conditions are bettered.

Motion carried upon the following vote: Supervisor Hautala Aye
Supervisor Paris Aye
Chairman Soderling Nay

Open House – Tabled

Recreation Trail – Supervisor Hautala reported he and Kevin have marked out the trail. The next step is know how much material will be needed. Mesabi Bituminous said it would cost about \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00 to get elevation and materials figured out. Chairman Soderling feels this is a good investment. Hautala would like to see it done this summer because in hopes that there will be grant money available through IRRRB. Everything is unknown due to the virus. **Motion** by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by

Supervisor Paris to hire Mesabi Bituminous to figure elevation and materials for the recreation trail so a bid for the whole project can be established. Motion carried upon the following vote:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

There is a hole in the tube slide. It should be filled with epoxy. Playgrounds were opened on May 4th. The tennis nets are up. Hautala will contact Audrey Licari about crack sealing the courts. Paris reminded Hautala that Commissioner McDonald suggested using crack sealing that the county uses on roads. Clerk Highland asked about when the volleyball nets could go up. She has seen people coming with volleyballs.

Cemetery-

Flower Purchase/Volunteer/Black Dirt – Clerk Highland reported Pat Undeland has been contacted and is willing and interested in caring for the flower beds in the cemetery. Undeland has requested black dirt for filling some of the beds. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to spend up to \$200.00 on flowers for the cemetery.

Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

Oja Plot Purchase –Supervisor Hautala reported Phil Oja’s family has contacted the office and would like to bury him and his wife Karen. The only issue is that Phil had never purchased a plot when he was living. He lived and died in the township. His daughter still has property here too. There was discussion about placement and lot price. Oja was also a veteran. Chairman Soderling feels the family should not get charged for the veteran lot because Phil was a resident at the time of death. The Board agreed to treat the Oja family as residents when they decided what area in the cemetery they would like to place Phil and Karen.

Bench Donation Update - There has been an issue finding someone to make a concrete slab for the bench. Once a slab is poured the bench will be placed.

Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve the reports as presented.

Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

Old Business:

New Town Hall Building –

Chairman Soderling reported we will still wait. JK Mechanical will need to take legal action. We are following the prompt payment act. They chose not to cash the payment we sent and have not regarded the letter from our attorney.

Supervisor Hautala would like to see part time employee Imberg work on the family bath during hours that the Clerk and Treasurer are not in the hall. Floor to Ceiling is currently closed.

Sign Retro-reflectivity – No update

Breakaway Posts – Foreman Merritt has informed Clerk Highland that all the signs are on breakaway posts.

Culvert Policy – No update

Supervisor Pay – **Tabled** for re-org meeting. Paris spoke his concerns earlier.

Broadband Info – Chairman Soderling requested everyone to take the speed test to show interest and need for broadband internet.

ATV trail (letter of concern) – No update. Supervisor Paris received a letter from Nick Riley, land owner along the Maple Drive, explaining why he doesn't approve of placing the trail on Maple Drive. Paris explained to the Board he would like to see the trail follow the right of way of Hwy 135 till the road that leads to the sewer ponds.

Fire Engine Fund Use – Supervisor Paris is not for giving the money back to the fire department. Chairman Soderling would still like to see a communal fund for equipment made. The loan was forgiven and now the decision on where to place it is needed. Paris explained if we make a new fund, the money will never go back to where it originally came from. He would like to see it go back to the General and Reserve Funds. Paris has a breakdown that will be given to the supervisors for next meeting. **Tabled**

AWAIR – Chairman Soderling has reviewed the AWAIR with Foreman Merritt. **Motion** by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by Chairman Soderling to approve the AWAIR for 2020. Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

New Business:

Landlocked Access- Supervisor Paris described the concern of getting access to landlocked property. The owners involved have many lawsuits under their belt. Paris feels we should only approach this cartway issue by using attorneys and have them contact the property owners. Chairman Soderling agreed Couri & Ruppe should be contacted.

Spending Concerns – Due to Covid-19 shutdowns, Supervisor Paris is concerned about when we will get payments i.e. mining effects/taconite production tax. Chairman Soderling explained everything should be paid in full by the end of the year. He agreed tightening purse strings for the summer would be a good idea.

Part time employees- Supervisor Paris feels the part time employees should be contacted to make sure they are still interested in lawn care.

RAMS enrollment- Through the broadband project Chairman Soderling has been working with Steve Giorgi, executive director for RAMS (Range Association of Municipalities and Schools). He feels it would be beneficial for the township if we were members. Supervisor Hautala also agreed that RAMS is a good program. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to enroll in RAMS for \$300.00. Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

Other Concerns – Supervisor Paris has been in contact with Dan Manick (Local 49 BA). There is a memo of understanding available to withhold \$0.10 - \$0.15 per hour from the Road and Bridge crew for training at the training center in Hinckley. Paris’ concern is sending our guys to train on equipment that we don’t have (CAT vs Case). Chairman Soderling likes offering training on our equipment as needed. Jonathan will get trained in on the grader once social distancing measures are reduced.

Correspondence: Clerk Highland reviewed correspondence with the Board.

- Lake Country Power – Bill date change (from 5th to 30th)
- Edward’s Oil – Dust control quote
- St. Louis County email – Public Health Emergency Communications (weekly email to clerk)
- RAMS – Membership Invite
- Jim Paris – Letter of concern from Nick Riley
- Colvin Township – Letter to MAT from Jim Hofsommer
- Email – St. Louis River watershed comment period
- MN Revenue – Mineral Hearing (virtually)

Hall Rentals:

Discussion on holding or canceling the following events -

These Hall Rentals have been amended to a new date

- Mark Kwiatkowski – Sunday, June 7, 2020
- Joe Leoni – Friday and Saturday, June 26 & 27 2020
- Becca Levander – Still deciding
- EMR Training – Second Wednesday of every month
- Fire Training – Third Wednesday and Fourth Monday of every month

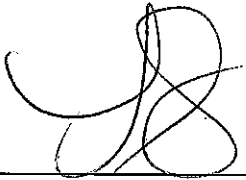
The hall will open once groups larger than 10 can meet. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve rentals, pending Governor’s orders. Motion carried upon the following vote:

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|--------------------|-----|
| Supervisor Hautala | Aye |
| Supervisor Paris | Aye |
| Chairman Soderling | Aye |

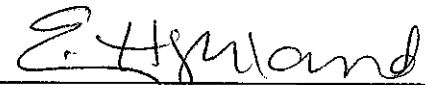
Comments from the Audience: None

Set May Monthly Board Meeting: The next meeting will be Monday, June 8, 2020 at 5:30 PM held via tele-conference and will be posted accordingly.

Adjourn: Chairman Soderling adjourned the meeting at 7:31 P.M.

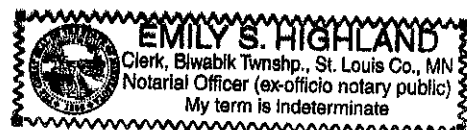


Chairperson:

6-8-20 

Date:

Attest by Clerk:



1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice G. D. Ritchie, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province of Ontario" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice G. D. Ritchie, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province of Ontario".