

Biwabik Township Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Biwabik Township Hall - 6555 Oak Drive, Gilbert, MN
Monday, July 13, 2020

Call to Order: 5:30 PM by Chairman Soderling

Present: Supervisors Hautala, Paris, and Soderling, Clerk Highland and Treasurer Hines, and 1 Guest; Kevin Merritt

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

Designation of New Chairperson, Vice Chair & Township Attorney:

Motion by Chairman Soderling to keep positions as they are. No second. Motion fails.

Discussion - Supervisor Paris would like to talk about compensation in conjunction with setting new positions. Soderling agreed and continued by saying he would like to see the Road and Bridge liaison get extra compensation. The current compensation for the supervisor that has Road and Bridge is not fair. He would also still like to see a pay frequency set for special projects. Supervisor Paris feels this should have been taken care of last year when Road and Bridge was split from the Chairman position. Supervisor Hautala explained he thought the Chairman position got a higher pay for running meetings and signing checks, not for being the liaison for Road and Bridge. Soderling understands that not all liaison work is equal and Road and Bridge is by far the hardest. Paris would like to see all supervisors receive the same compensation and rotate Chairmanship. Soderling feels the Chair has more responsibilities and needs the extra compensation. There was discussion about the best way to compensate the Road and Bridge liaison. Chairman Soderling proposed an increase to the Road and Bridge liaison position of \$200.00 - \$300.00 a month. Hautala had no response. Paris was concerned that the other departments would not be set fairly any more. Soderling replied the other departments are set fairly, it is only Road and Bridge that hasn't been. Further discussion on department liaisons and compensation was had. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to keep positions as status quo (Chairman Soderling, Vice-Chair Paris, Supervisor Hautala). Motion carried unanimously.

Designation of Department Liaison: A new designation this year is of all the building on the grounds. The buildings will go with each department i.e. township garage will be under the care of the Road and Bridge liaison, fire hall with the Public Safety liaison, ect. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to set the liaison list as the following:

Chairman Soderling's departments are Administration, Town Hall, Public Safety (Fire and EMR).

Supervisor Pairs' departments are Road and Bridge, Temporary Employees, Garages, Noxious Weed Inspector.

Supervisor Hautala's departments are Management Group (part time employees), Township Grounds, Cemetery, Recreation.

Motion carried unanimously.

Set Compensation for Town Officers, Employees, Election Judges, Mileage Reimbursement: **Motion** by Chairman Soderling to keep Chairperson and non-Road and Bridge liaison pay the same as 2019. No second. Motion Fails.

Discussion – Supervisor Paris feels the liaison disbursement is not the same as last year and everyone's rolls have increased by taking over buildings and Hautala's by getting the Management Group. Supervisor Hautala would like to see an increase of \$40.00 per month and free snowplowing. Paris would like to see all Supervisor rates set the same and rotate positions yearly. It is difficult to set a pay rate essentially for himself (Road and Bridge liaison position increase discussed earlier). Soderling would like to assume \$25.00 per hour and an additional 10 hours a month it takes to do the Road and Bridge liaison position. Clerk Highland reminded the Board our current compensation is set by salary and talking about pay by the hour gets hairy. Soderling is just using that as a discussion starter and feels it gives a good explanation for offering \$250.00 per month for the Road and Bridge liaison. Approved special projects for Supervisors in the future will be compensated at \$25.00 per hour. Clerk Highland noted she appreciates the flexibility and current time off due to Covid-19 and is not requesting a raise at this time. Soderling explained last year the Board discussed staying on track with COLA raises. He would like to stay on track setting a precedent with that and give the Clerk and Treasurer a 2.5% increase on their salaries. For ease of payroll purposes, Clerk Highland requested removing the training pay for Deputies and Election Judges. There was a lot of discussion on raising part-time employee rates. The office will make sure hours will not exceed the P.E.R.A threshold. The Board feels it is important that Public Safety gets a decent raise for

the runs they go on. **Motion** by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by Supervisor Paris to set pay rates based on discussion as seen on the attached pay rates sheet. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board will always follow the Federal Mileage Rate that gets set in January of each year.

Special Agenda Request: None

Minutes: **Motion** by Supervisor Hautala, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the June 8, 2020 Monthly Board Meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Opening Balance 06/01/2020	\$ 403,805.71
Receipts	\$ 143,122.80
Disbursements	\$ 43,713.56
Ending Balance 06/30/2020	\$ 503,214.95
Deposits in Transit	\$ 900.00
Outstanding Checks	\$ 4,284.51
Petty Cash	\$ - 100.00
Total Checking Acct.	\$ 506,499.46
Total Investments	\$ 98,544.85

The Clerk and Treasurer are in balance with the bank.

Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve the financial report for May 2020 and file it for audit. Motion carried unanimously.

Claims: Clerk Highland reviewed the claims with the board. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to pay claims as presented for \$18,079.17. Motion carried unanimously.

Adopt Schedule of Town Board Meetings: **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to hold in person meetings on the second Monday of every month at 5:30 PM with the exception of September and October of which will be held on the third Monday at 5:30 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Designate Official Depositories, Posting Places, Official Newspaper: **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to keep status quo (American Bank & First National Bank of Gilbert, Town Hall & Lakeland Store, and Hometown Focus). Motion carried unanimously.

Designation of Deputy Officers: Clerk Highland appoints Tammy Petron as Deputy Clerk. Treasurer Hines appoints Lina Ott as Deputy Treasurer. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to accept deputies and acknowledge them for payroll purposes. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Special Claims List: **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to accept the special claims list attached to these minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports:

Road & Equipment- Supervisor Paris reported new rear tires for the one-ton are needed. They will be \$772.00 from Frank's Tire. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to purchase tires for \$772.00 from Frank's Tire for the one-ton. Motion carried unanimously.

Dyno Nobel asked if the township could pay to get their road graded going into their business. Clerk Highland said the township is not to road maintenance on driveways and she feels this is the driveway to the business. Paris asked if it could be done by contract and added it could be a good way to make money. Hautala suggested checking with MAT (Minnesota Association of Townships). Soderling is worried that if the Township starts to maintain it, after so many years it would then become a township road.

There has been a request for speed limit signs on Ponderosa. Paris will check with MAT for options. Soderling is concerned if we do one road all the township roads would need speed limit signs. Clerk Highland recommended looking into the yellow caution speed limit signs because then the road isn't legally posted.

Foreman Merritt has spoken with Mesabi Signs to get 'Biwabik Township' lettered on the one-ton and new dump/plow truck. It would be about \$360.00 for the stickers. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to purchase lettering from Mesabi Signs for equipment. Motion carried unanimously.

Salt Quotes – The Township solicited quotes for 25 tons of non-treated road salt for the 2020/21 winter season. Two companies replied Compass Minerals at \$74.45/ton delivered and Cargill at \$76.95/ton delivered. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to accept Compass Minerals' quote of \$74.45/ton, delivering 25 tons. Motion carried unanimously.

MinnBid '98 Dump Truck – The dump truck did not reach the original reserve of \$16,500.00. It stopped at \$15,000.00 and there was a municipality that was interested in it. Paris was wondering if MinnBid should reach out to the highest bidder and see if they will take the truck for \$15,000.00. We would still owe MinnBid the \$750.00 fee. Soderling would like MinnBid to contact the highest bidder and see if they are still interested. If they are not he would like to see the truck posted at a lower reserve of \$14,000.00, then lower again to \$13,000.00 if the reserve of \$14,000.00 isn't met. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to allow Supervisor Paris to contact MinnBid to sell truck to the highest bidder for \$15,000.00, if that option is not available the reserve will be set lower as discussed above. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire- A pump repair is needed on one of the fire trucks. Macqueen Equipment will do it next time they are in the area.

First Responders- No report

Recreation-

Walking Trail – Supervisor Hautala reported there are grant options available through IRRRB, but we can't apply until we have an amount from the engineer for how much it will cost to create.

Basketball court is getting used. However, there is a crack on that as well as the tennis courts.

The crack in the tennis court needs to be weeded.

Cemetery-

S. Frost Deed - **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the cemetery deed for Steven Frost. Motion carried unanimously.

Replace Dead/Missing Trees – Clerk Highland has gotten some requests to have the dead and missing trees in the cemetery replaced. There is money in the Cemetery Beautification Fund for this. Discussion about Road and Bridge buying and placing the trees was had. Maybe Volunteer Undeland would be willing to water them.

Bench – Foreman Merritt will work on the slab for the donated bench.

Supervisor Paris has received a suggested that the Veteran's flags stay up from Memorial Day to Fourth of July. The policy will be looked at before a decision is made.

Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Chairman Soderling to approve the reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

New Town Hall Building – The office area is having low air flow from the AC. New filters have been purchased and will be replaced.

Covid – 19 update – The Board discussed releasing the hold on overtime hours for quarantine purposes. Each Road and Bridge employee has three days' worth banked. In early Covid-19 response discussions, these three days were to be used in case a quarantine was warranted and the township would cover the other 7 days. This was set in place before employee Bernard was finished with his probation period. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to release overtime hours for employees to use to their discretion and the township will still offer to pay seven days of quarantine if warranted during the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. Motion carried unanimously.

MAT has draft Covid-19 preparedness plans for officers and employees. The Board reviewed it and filled it out accordingly. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to adopt the Covid-19 preparedness plans for officers and employees. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Engine Fund – **Tabled** for time purposes.

New Business:

Town Hall Parking Lot- We are still waiting on a price from the engineer. Supervisor Paris asked the Board to consider contouring the lot so the water flows to the road and not towards the block building, as it is currently. The Board agreed this would make much sense.

Other Concerns – None

Correspondence: Clerk Highland reviewed correspondence with the Board.

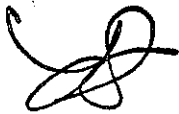
- IRRRB – Grant options
- St. Louis County email – Public Health Emergency Communications (weekly email to clerk)
- RAMS – CARES act
- Sarah Priest – Census weekly updates (email)

Supervisor Paris would like to get on board with the CARES ACT. We will have to actively track our spending on items pertaining to Covid-19 i.e. sanitizers.

Hall Rentals: None

Comments from the Audience: None

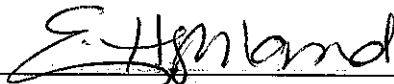
Adjourn: Chairman Soderling adjourned the meeting at 8:20 P.M.



Chairperson:

8-20-20

Date:



Attest by Clerk:

