

Biwabik Township Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Biwabik Township Hall - 6555 Oak Drive, Gilbert, MN
Monday, October 19, 2020

Call to Order: 5:30 PM by Chairman Soderling

Present: Supervisors Hautala, Paris, and Soderling, Clerk Highland and Treasurer Hines, and
3 Guests; Chuck & Nita Larson, and Ed Holmstrom

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

Special Agenda Request:

Ed Holmstrom - asked the Board if they could plow Willow Lane this winter so he could have access to his property. Supervisor Paris explained that via MAT (Minnesota Association of Townships) Willow Lane gets closed in the winter for liability reason because it is only a minimum maintenance road. Chairman Soderling is concerned about the cost of maintaining it in the winter. Paris added the level of maintenance is to reflect the level of use. Soderling would like to leave it open through hunting like it has been in the past. Unless there is justification for keeping it open longer. Holmstrom explained he would like to burn the slash piles that have been left from logging. The Board agreed this is a very important reason to have access to the property to get these piles burned in a timely manner for safety purposes. The Board will work with Holmstrom on a burning schedule and guarantee access for that purpose. Steve Menart - called the office asking for a culvert for his property across from his home. Paris requested that Menart attend the meeting to discuss. The culvert policy is still in limbo and what has been done in the past isn't exactly clear. Soderling noted that once a policy is in place that is what will be followed. In regards to ordering culverts, Paris reminded the Board that we could piggy-back on the county's order. Hautala explained that in the past, Board's wanted the Foreman to do the ordering.

Minutes: Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve the September 21, 2020 Monthly Board Meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Opening Balance 09/01/2020	\$ 450,830.43
Receipts	\$ 19,722.59
Disbursements	\$ 28,549.49
Ending Balance 09/30/2020	\$ 442,003.53
Deposits in Transit	\$ 3,655.28
Outstanding Checks	\$ 2,678.72
Petty Cash	\$ - 100.00
Total Checking Acct.	\$ 440,926.97
Total Investments	\$ 210,668.60

The Clerk and Treasurer are in balance with the bank.

Treasurer Hines informed the Board that First National Bank of Gilbert is honoring the 0.55% interest rate for the renewed CDs.

Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve the financial report for September 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 \$4,626.75. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports:

Road & Equipment- The monthly road report was submitted. Summer equipment has been winterized. Both dump trucks will be used as sanders this winter.

Fire- A written report was submitted.

First Responders- Director Larson reported a total of 19 calls from April through September. Discussion on Covid-19 included how calls come across and the need for contact thermometers. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Chairman Soderling to purchase contactless thermometers, not to exceed \$300.00. Motion carried unanimously. Larson submitted a reimbursement request for sanitizer purchased from Vikre Distillery for \$127.00. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to reimburse Nita Larson \$127.00 for purchasing sanitizer for the EMRs. Motion carried unanimously. She also submitted the Arrowhead EMS dues for \$45.00. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to pay Arrowhead EMS Association \$45.00 for 2021 dues. Motion carried unanimously. Larson also reported that Homeland Security gave Covid-19 safety gear to the First Responders.

Recreation- Clerk Highland reported that she will be handing out goodie bags at the town hall on Halloween. Chuck and Nita Larson offered to volunteer and help hand out bags.

Cemetery- The Heitzman family called the office requesting to donate a lilac bush in memory of the family. Supervisor Hautala appreciates this gesture. Supervisor Paris would like to see the ground work laid out for it now. Hautala will contact the family and give them options that reflect the Cemetery Policy.

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

Old Business:

New Town Hall Building – This item can be removed from old business.

Sign Retro-Reflectivity – No update.

Culvert Policy review/edit – No update.

Broadband Info – Chairman Soderling reported the coalition will be contacting the Clerk to set a meeting with the public. The Board would like it to fall on next month's meeting. An ad will be placed in Hometown Focus once the meeting is scheduled for sure.

Parking Lot – Chairman Soderling still has not heard back from Mesabi Bituminous about striping the parking lot. He feels Foreman Merritt may have to be the contact point. Merritt seems to be the only one who gets a response. The parking lot project will now be put off until March. Supervisor Paris asked if the lot should be seal coated before striping. Supervisor Hautala would still like to see the parking lot extended.

Gazebo/Shade Area – Soderling reported these are important projects, but figures the parking lot needs attention first. Hautala thinks a packer for the grader should come before any recreation projects are done.

Retiree Insurance – A discussion from last month's meeting was clarified. The retired employee is shopping for part "D" not part "B". Part B comes from Social Security only. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Chairman Soderling to acknowledge up to \$150.00 for part B Medicare per contract, starting in December.

New Business:

Road and Bridge-

Coffee Maker – Clerk Highland requested to purchase a coffee maker for the Road and Bridge garage. They do not have one and she feels they should be able to have access to coffee especially coming into the season where they may work overtime hours when the office isn't open. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to purchase a coffee maker for the Road and Bridge garage. Motion carried unanimously.

Cameras – The receiver in the garage is no longer working. Foreman Merritt cannot look back at recordings. Chairman Soderling would like Merritt to contact Great Lakes Alarm about the system issue.

Logs/Timesheets/Reports – Liaison Paris reported the Road and Bridge crew are double recording daily activities and road work. He would like to see them try to eliminate logs and rely on just timesheets and the road reports. This will be a work in progress with the crew to see what is the best way to document work days.

Temporary Employees ADT – All three temporary employees have been pulled for randoms. There was discussion if this is needed for them since they do not drive the trucks, but they do operate heavy equipment. Followed by what to do if they back because they only work seasonally. Hautala feels all randoms should be done. Soderling agreed all employees should be in the random pool. Paris explained a policy will need to be created in order to enforce any refusals.

MATTIT Insurance on attachments ('99 truck) – Clerk Highland asked if the attachments should be insured separately from the truck. As of now, they should be covered while on the truck. However, there would be no coverage bound if equipment gets ruined off the truck. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling to insure attachments (tailgate sander, wing, and plow) for the '99 truck.

Discussion- Clerk Highland will need specifics on the attachments before she calls MATTIT. Motion carried unanimously.

Election Grant – CARES Act – The only COVID -19 update the township had to install for the elections have been plexi-glass shields. They were made by the Road and Bridge crew and materials were not expensive. The county has supplied all disinfectant and sanitizers. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to not accept CARES Act funds for elections. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Concerns –

Clerk Highland explained the office computers are starting to act up. New computers were budgeted for back when Janet was treasurer. She can contact Roger's Online for quotes. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to allow up to \$2,500.00 temporarily for computers if there is an emergency need for new ones before quotes are available. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Paris explained there is a property easement issue with Paul Stark over by McKinley. Paris has explained to Stark it is the landowner's expense to pay for an easement. Soderling feels this is more on a McKinley issue because to get to Stark's property it is through property in McKinley.

Paris has been contacted by Windemere Township requesting information about our Road and Bridge department. Clerk Highland has already given information the Union regarding this request. The Board feels Windemere can have three years of the following Road and Bridge information: Levy, end of year disbursements, budgets, wages, and miles of roads.

Correspondence: Clerk Highland reviewed correspondence with the Board.

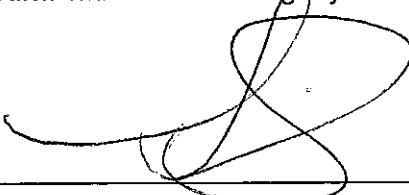
- St. Louis County email
 - Public Health Emergency Communications (weekly email to clerk)
 - Elections CARES Act grant (email)
 - LBAE Training on-line – Hautala's expires July 2021

Hall Rentals: Hall closed to public rentals per Covid-19

Comments from the Audience:

Chuck Larson asked why are other township roads getting graded and Norway isn't. He doesn't agree with buckets of dirt and backblading. Larson also feels the loader driver is going too fast. Chairman Soderling recommended calling Merritt or Paris about concerns. Issues can't be fixed if we don't know about them. Paris added contact should be made right away so the issue can be remedied immediately.

Adjourn: Chairman Soderling adjourned the meeting at 7:23 P.M.



Chairperson:

11-16-22 

Date: Attest by Clerk: