

Biwabik Township Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Biwabik Township Hall - 6555 Oak Drive, Gilbert, MN
Monday, November 16, 2020

Call to Order: 5:30 PM by Chairman Soderling

Present: Supervisors Hautala, Paris, and Soderling, and Clerk Highland

Via Zoom: Treasurer Hines and 2 Guests; Gordon Imberg and Todd Hall

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

Special Agenda Request: Supervisor Paris noted Governor Walz has extended the peace time emergency.

Minutes: Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to approve the November 16, 2020 Monthly Board Meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Opening Balance 11/01/2020	\$ 429,592.55
Receipts	\$ 263.43
Disbursements	\$ 36,709.65
Ending Balance 11/30/2020	\$ 393,146.33
Deposits in Transit	\$ 0.00
Outstanding Checks	\$ 9,131.82
Petty Cash	\$ - 100.00
Total Checking Acct.	\$ 402,178.15
Total Investments	\$ 210,675.10

The Clerk and Treasurer are in balance with the bank.

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

Claims: Clerk Highland reviewed the claims with the board. Supervisor Paris wanted an explanation on asterisks on the claims list. Clerk Highland mention she believes those are claims that get edited after being entered. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to pay claims as presented for \$10,885.91. Motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Highland requested payment for Menards in the amount of \$84.39. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the payment to Menards of \$84.39. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports:

Road & Equipment- They are working on the roads.

Fire- A written report was submitted. Public Safety payroll will be completed this week.

First Responders- No report.

Recreation- Supervisor Hautala reported the rink is getting flooded. There was some discussion as to what to do with the remaining plastic around the edge. A suggestion of moving the picnic tables by the rink for people to get skates on was made. The skate shack heater has already been fixed for the year. It will be posted for one family at a time to use.

Cemetery- No report

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

Old Business:

Sign Retro-Reflectivity – No update.

Culvert Policy review/edit – No update.

Broadband Info – Chairman Soderling reported they are releasing the study on broadband soon. Supervisor Paris would like more clarification on financing the service through municipalities. Soderling explained the numbers given during the presentation were rough estimates and are about 50% higher than actual cost. Paris is concerned that the township will not re-coup money put up front for service. He continued by giving an example if we loaned them the money and they paid us back it would be worth it. Soderling countered by explaining that the providers will not set up the service in the area if they are unable to make a profit after the initial cost set up. Paris would like to see every resident in the township receive the service before any more money is put forth. Soderling thought residents can get pro-rated tax rates if they don't get the service. (The tax rate is only if the county or township were to raise the levy for broadband.) Paris would like to tread lightly if they ask for any more money. Soderling wants to make a decision based on what is best for the people. The people can choose if it should be levied, if it gets to that point. Ultimately, the providers will come back with the study information and present it to us. At that point further discussion for moving forward can be held. Supervisor Hautala explained the school boards would support the township getting broadband for their students. Soderling appreciates that concerns and thinking about the best option for the township.

Gazebo/Shade Area (pre-built options) – Supervisor Paris saw that Z tech sells Old Hickory Buildings that include pre-built gazebo picnic shelters. There was discussion about what the size should be. Soderling likes ideas coming in. It will be best to bring up at the Annual Meeting for more input.

Office Computers – Clerk Highland submitted a quote from Roger's Online. The Board is concerned about the service maintenance contract. We don't call him often for hourly work. Chairman Soderling is against the quote. Paris feels we will get stuck in a contract. Soderling will explore other options.

Gutters for Hall – Soderling has not received a call back from ABC. He figures they won't put up anything until Spring.

Supervisor Paris mentioned Norlander Electric has not started the LED lights project at the fire hall or garage yet. This is the second month in a row. Paris asked if there is anything the Board can do i.e. hold or retain payment in full since he is late in starting.

New Business:

Resolution 2020-08 – Chairman Soderling read Resolution 2020-08 designating the town hall as the annual polling place.

Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Chairman Soderling to adopt Resolution 2020-08. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2020-09 – Chairman Soderling read Resolution 2020-09 closing Willow Lane for the winter. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Chairman Soderling to adopt Resolution 2020-09. Motion carried unanimously.

R&B Covid-19 time off (ex: 2nd round of quarantine) – Chairman Soderling noted that the time off plan in place is indeterminate through the state of emergency. He would also like to amend the current plan to encourage testing so employees are not afraid to take time off waiting for results. Paris suggested rewarding employees who haven't needed to take time off due to Covid. Soderling explained this is a pandemic, it's not fair and it's not equal. If this becomes a prolonged issue we may need to work with the union on paid time off options available.

Treasurer Printer – The imaging unit has quit working on the treasurer's printer. With the new copier both the Clerk and Treasurer are able to print to it. The treasurer's printer was originally purchased when printing off the copier wasn't an option. The printer will be recycled and not replaced.

Health and Welfare Fund increase – Health insurance will increase to \$1,325.00 per month. Per contract, the \$25.00 will be split 70/30 between the township and employee. First payment will be made in February for coverage starting in

March. **Motion** by Chairman Soderling, seconded by Supervisor Paris to update the special claims list, noting IUOE Fringe Benefit, will be \$1,325.00. Motion carried unanimously.

CPF Payroll Audit – Clerk Highland has received a request from Central Pension Fund to do an audit. She will give the information to Treasurer Hines to set up.

Designate New Deputy Clerk – Deputy Clerk Tammy Petron has moved out of the area. Clerk Highland appoints Kirstie Hall as Biwabik Township Deputy Clerk. The bank will be contacted to remove the previous Deputy and add Kirstie Hall. Clerk's Note: It was discovered that the bank records still reflect Sharon Mount as Deputy Clerk (deputy before Tammy Petron). She will be removed from the bank's records and Kirstie Hall will be added when these minutes are approved.

Other Concerns –

Supervisor Paris reported to the board that the push arm on the 1999 snowplow wing is soft. Foreman Merritt would feel more comfortable if a new one was ordered so it is on hand to replace if necessary. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hautala to purchase a new push arm for about \$1,200.00. Motion carried unanimously. There is not an option of lease to buy from Titan for the walk and roll packer. Supervisor Hautala would like Merritt to talk to Town of White about the packer they have. Paris has been keeping an eye on MinBid and they have had tow type packers going for \$5,500.00 - \$6,300.00.

Floor to ceiling and Approve Plumbing have done their part in the family bathroom. Part-time employee Imberg will place the finishing fixtures.

Correspondence: Clerk Highland reviewed correspondence with the Board.

- St. Louis County
 - Public Health Emergency Communications (weekly email to clerk)
- SLCAT - Zoom meeting schedule (emailed)
- Minnesota Unemployment – CARES Act coverage
- RAMS – Annual report and ballot
- Operating Engineers Local 49 – Health Insurance Increase

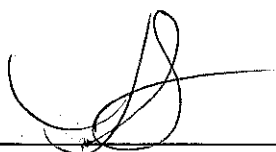
The Board voted for the RAMS election.

Hall Rentals: Hall closed to public rentals through next meeting per Covid-19.

Comments from the Audience: None

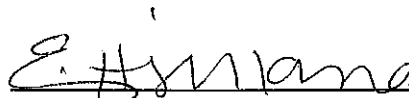
The next Board meeting will be held in the same format, officials present and public via Zoom.

Adjourn: Chairman Soderling adjourned the meeting at 7:11 P.M.



Chairperson:

1-11-21
Date:


Attest by Clerk:

