

**Biwabik Township Monthly Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Biwabik Township Hall - 6555 Oak Drive, Gilbert, MN**  
**Monday, January 10, 2022**

**Call to Order:** 5:30 PM by Chairman Hautala

Present: Supervisors Hall, Hautala and Paris, Clerk Highland and Treasurer Bluhm

6 Guests: Kirstie Hall, Mike Bol, Chuck & Nita Larson, Richard & Doris Freeburg

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited

**Special Agenda Request:** None

**Minutes: Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve the December 13, 2021 Monthly Board Meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**Financial Report:** Treasurer Bluhm went over the December Financial Report with the Board.

Opening Balance 12/01/2021	\$ 351,034.18
Receipts	\$ 124,254.44
Disbursements	\$ 44,409.56
Ending Balance 12/31/2021	\$ 430,879.06
Deposits in Transit	\$ - 2.00
Outstanding Checks	\$ 3,385.05
Petty Cash	\$ - 100.00
<b>Total Checking Acct.</b>	<b>\$ 434,262.11</b>
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$ 211,271.14</b>

The Clerk and Treasurer are in balance with the bank.

**Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the financial report for December 2021 and file it for audit. Motion carried unanimously.

**Claims:** Clerk Highland reviewed the claims with the Board. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve claims for \$10,215.48. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports:**

**Road & Equipment-** Road report was submitted.

**Fire-** No report.

**First Responders-** Director Larson reported there were eight calls for December and 80 for the year. Call volume has definitely increased. Larson is working on getting Josh Olson in an EMR class. The initial cost for the class is \$550.00. There is a front line worker grant available to help cover about half of the cost (\$277.00). After grants are applied the township's portion should be less than \$500.00 for all first responder classes. Tony Nygaard is past due for his refresher. He will have a year to complete this. The cost will be \$100.00. Larson is planning on doing an inventory soon. There will be an invoice for replacement medical supplies. IamResponding will be renewed before March.

**Recreation-** Chairman Hautala has contacted Surface Pro. The company will need more information about what the township would like repaired. It was decided to get a quote for filling the crack, resurfacing, and painting pickle ball lines on one of the courts.

**Cemetery-** There have been three winter burials. The auger attachment has worked well for these.

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

**Old Business:**

Broadband Info – The Blandin Foundation is working on internet in our area. There may be possible funding in the future.

Gazebo/Shade Area– Chairman Hautala would like cement under the shade areas for cleaning purposes and handicapped accessibility. He would like to see one by the playground and another one placed by the BBQ stands. Hautala is concerned about where the money will come from. The Recreation Budget is quite small. Supervisor Paris suggested doing the project in phases. Clerk Highland explained funding possibilities. There is a general fund savings account available. She suggested leaving the Reserve Fund because that is there for emergencies. Supervisor Hall discussed sizing. He suggested the shelters should be 10'X20' that should fit two picnic tables.

Road and Bridge Equipment Options (sell sanding truck) – No bids were received. Supervisor Hall would like to see the bid time frame extended. Supervisor Paris has a call into a MAT attorney. He will ask if the truck can be sold out right. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Chairman Hautala to run a bid for the sanding truck again, after we received notification from MAT regarding bidding or outright sale. Motion carried unanimously.

**New Business:**

Matteson Cemetery Deed – **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the cemetery deed for Lyle Matteson. Motion carried unanimously.

Set Board of Audit/2023 Meeting – Monday, January 24, 2022 at 5:30 PM.

Jeff Burgess vacate road request – Supervisor Hall explained it is a private/public road. His garage is also on the neighbor's property. Supervisor Paris stated it is Burgess' dime to pursue vacation. MN Stat 164.07 does not automatically vacate a road after 25 years of township inactivity. This is more of a private property issue. Couri and Ruppe suggest the township does not get involved and the property owners will need to settle it with attorneys.

Classification of State Tax Forfeited Land – No action. The township does not want land locked parcels. Hopefully nearby property owners will purchase.

Insurance Coverage (building & equipment) – Damage to the dust control happened during a snow storm. There is no insurance coverage on the dust control building, New Holland tractor and boom mower attachment, and the skate shack. Supervisor Paris has a quote to repair the dust control building for \$2,500.00 to \$3,000.00. Our property insurance deductible is \$2,500.00 so that wouldn't help here, but all buildings should be covered in case something catastrophic happens. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to add the New Holland with Diamond boom mower, dust control building, and skate shack to the township's property insurance. Motion carried unanimously.

Boiler Issue – The boiler has been out since at least December 30<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was had as to who should be called to look at it. Hautala is the liaison for the town hall and will need to be the one to let the service man in outside of office hours. He will contact Approve Plumbing to look at it.

01/05/2022 Winter Storm /Plowing requests & concerns – Resident Bol spoke and explained the work the crew does is good, they just need to get out earlier. He is concerned that the fire hall is not adequately getting plowed out. They should get cleared first for emergency purposes. Supervisor Paris explained the crew was trying a new strategy of clearing intersections before clearing roads. Paris has addressed this issue and it will not be protocol. Roads must be cleared first, clean up second. Resident Freeburg was concerned about the mail delivery and school bus routes. Over 70 people did not receive mail that day. Paris stated the crew will no longer wait until the snow stops before starting to plow. If they need to clear some roads twice, so be it. Supervisor Hall had also received a phone call wondering when the roads would be cleared. Clerk Highland read correspondence regarding the turnaround area for North Silver Lake Rd\*. The turnaround is on private property. In the past the previous owner paid for plowing. The new owners do not pay for plowing, so technically the township should not be going past their fire number. Paris will talk to Foreman Merritt to find the best remedy for this issue.

Other Concerns – Supervisor Paris is upset about an email received from MAT regarding ARPA funds. Now ARPA funds are able to cover Road and Bridge needs. We did not originally apply because we didn't fit the guidelines and felt it wasn't ethical to lie to get the money. Couri & Ruppe suggests that we apply for any and all handouts. Paris feels we should ask to reapply now that the guidelines have changed. Clerk Highland reminded the Board a special meeting was held to attempt to apply after the deadline, but we were unsuccessful. Supervisor Hall agreed it is upsetting that the guidelines have changed, but we won't be able to apply because the website has been taken down. Paris suggested paying Couri & Ruppe to have them pursue something legally. He's wondering if all along they knew the guidelines were going to change and that's why they were pushing everyone to apply.

**Correspondence:** The correspondence was reviewed by the Board. No action taken.

- CPF – Summary Plan Info
- St. Louis County
  - Classification on tax forfeited land (2 letters)
- Jeff Burgess – Vacate Road request (email)

Clerk Highland will email Jeff Burgess stating the Boards decision. Supervisor Hall will talk to him in person.

**Hall Rentals:**

- Potluck – First Wednesdays of every month
- Dayna Peterson – Saturday, January 22, 2022

**Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve hall rentals. Motion carried unanimously.

**Comments from the Audience:**

Richard Freeburg told the Board to be careful when spending the \$90,000.00 ARPA money. He wouldn't want to see the Board get into a sticky situation and end up paying \$90,000.00 in attorney fees. Paris replied we didn't want to stretch the truth originally so that's why we never applied. He's upset that they changed the rules after the fact and now honest people have missed out on money.

**Adjourn: Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 PM. Meeting adjourned.

Walter W. Nantala                      Feb 14, 2022                      E. Highland  
Chairperson:                              Date:                              Attest by Clerk:

\*All attachments are in the minute book filed in the office.

**Biwabik Township Special Meeting Minutes**  
**Biwabik Township Hall - 6555 Oak Drive, Gilbert, MN**  
**Monday, January 24, 2022**

**Call to Order:** 5:45 PM by Chairman Hautala  
Present: Supervisors Hall, Hautala, and Paris, Treasurer Bluhm  
Clerk Highland via Zoom

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited

**Board of Audit:**

The Board of Supervisors compared and verified the Clerk and Treasurer's schedule 1s, year-end cash control statements, and investment sheets are in balance. They continued the audit by checking claims and receipts with the bank book. The verification sheet is attached to these minutes. Chairman Hautala counted petty cash and there was \$100.00. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve the 2021 Board of Audit and have Clerk Highland submit the books to the State Auditor. Motion carried unanimously.

The 2023 Budget and Levy will be discussed during the February Monthly Board Meeting.

**Adjourn: Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Chairman Hautala to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM. Meeting adjourned.

Walter W. D. Hautala  
Board Chair

Feb. 14, 2022  
Date

E. Highland  
Attest by Clerk