

Biwabik Township Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
Biwabik Township Hall - 6555 Oak Drive, Gilbert, MN
Tuesday, February 13, 2023

Call to Order: 5:33 PM by Chairman Hautala

Present: Supervisors Hall, Hautala, and Paris, Clerk Highland, and Treasurer Bluhm
2 Guests; Gordon Imberg and Tony Nygaard

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited

Special Agenda Request: Approve Plumbing boiler quotes – Luke Soderling investigated our current boiler. It has been figured that the current boiler is too big (runs on too many volts) with too small of circuits, therefore the continued problem of blowing circuits. It is a manufactured issue, but because JK Mechanical would not follow up with the company on warranty (claiming no warranty) issues the boiler problems have persisted after changing circuits multiple times. Soderling submitted two quotes; one for a gas boiler and one for an electric boiler. Both have an install warranty of two years, plus manufacturer warranties greater than five years.

The electric boiler is smaller than the current unit. This will fit the current electric capacity better than what we have now. Estimated cost is \$12,339.00, plus an electrician would need to be hired for the wiring the unit in.

The gas boiler will be a bigger project and more expensive. We would no longer have the need for dual fuel and there wouldn't be an issue with voltage, like our current situation. Also, no additional electrician would be needed. Estimated cost is \$18,201.00.

There was discussion about warranties for the electric unit, especially since everyone involved, is aware of our current circuits blowing. Soderling assured the Board he would stay on top of warranties.

Supervisor Hall feels the current boiler was a manufactured, bad unit. Supervisor Paris wondered if this is a low voltage issue. He has lost small appliances at home due to power surges/low voltage. Chairman Hautala is concerned that the same issues will continue. Hall explained there is ultimately an electrical issue then that will need to be addressed at that time. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to accept the electric boiler estimate for \$12,339.00.

Discussion – Approve Plumbing's schedule is about 3 weeks out. An electrician will also need to be hired. The Board may go with Hometown Electric since they were the original electricians for the new building. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve the January 10, 2023 Monthly Board Meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve the Board of Audit Meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Opening Balance 01/01/2023	\$ 479,869.82
Receipts	\$ 3,262.63
Disbursements	\$ 36,579.50
Ending Balance 01/31/2023	\$ 446,552.95
Deposits in Transit	\$ - 0.00
Outstanding Checks	\$ 2,724.10
Petty Cash	\$ - 100.00
Total Checking Acct.	\$ 449,177.05
Total Investments	\$ 196,959.72

Motion by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve the financial report for January 2023 and file it for audit. Motion carried unanimously.

Claims: Clerk Highland reviewed the claims with the Board. She also just received a claim for Fort and Company for \$425.00 and requested to add that to the approval. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve claims as presented for \$16,805.02 and \$425.00 for Fort and Company. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports:

Road & Equipment- The crew is pushing banks back and keeping up on roads. An estimate for \$1,134.79 was submitted to replace front brakes on the one-ton. **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall to approve the Lundgren's estimate of \$1,134.79 for brake replacement. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire- Two calls for January. SCBA training has been completed.

Supervisor Hall reported he has met with Chief Nygaard regarding the price for collaborating with City of McKinley. He is assuming about \$7,500.00 and will create a formal breakdown to send to attorneys Couri and Ruppe. There are still questions about who would be responsible for major repairs. It was discussed that it could potentially be split 50/50. Nygaard would like to see this as a 10 year contract, but revisit it after the first year and again at five years. Supervisor Paris was concerned about building rental/utilities/repairs. This will be further decided with the help of the attorneys, but as of now the City has stated they will be responsible for it since it is attached to their city garage. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to send initial offer of coverage to Couri and Ruppe. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Hall has reviewed letters of intent and met with two candidates for the Assistant Chief position. He suggested moving forward with Jaymes Cuff as he has more experience holding other leadership positions. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Chairman Hautala to approve Jaymes Cuff as Assistant Fire Chief. Motion carried unanimously.

First Responders- No report. Fire Chief Nygaard reported the bylaws need to be revisited in regards to hiring.

Recreation- The rink is being maintained. The ground still isn't level under the ice causing for premature melting.

Cemetery- Clerk Highland submitted two deeds for approval. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to approve deeds for Richard Erchul and Marilyn Pershern. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Old Business:

Broadband Info – No update.

Gazebo/Shade Area– Project is completed. Final payment approved in claims.

Parking Lot – Chairman Hautala is going to go there in person to make sure we are still on the list. The IRRRB grant needs to be finalized by October 2023. He would still like a ramp leading from the parking lot to the south most shelter. If need be, he will see if there is a CDBG grant available.

Boiler Issues – Discussed earlier.

Cemetery Tree Removal Quote – Contact has been made, but no estimate submitted yet.

Dumpster – No update.

New Business:

LBAE Tuesday 5/9/23 @ 11:00 – For information purposes.

MAT Short Courses – **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to allow elected officials to attend Short Courses in person. Motion carried unanimously.

AB Ballot Board Resolution – **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to adopt Resolution 2023-01 naming Emily Highland, Kirstie Hall, Jean Korpi, and Kathleen Wagner as the Absentee Ballot Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Appoint Judges – **Motion** by Supervisor Paris, seconded by Supervisor Hall that Clerk Highland will use available judges that were trained as of July 2022 to serve as election judges for the March 2023 Township Election. Motion carried unanimously.

2022 Tax Forfeited Parcel – The County has submitted a request for acquisition of tax forfeited land in the township. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to not acquire the tax forfeited property for township use. Motion carried unanimously.

2024 Budget and Levy – Long discussion was had in regards to the 2024 budget. There is a budget short fall of about \$15,241.00 projected for Road and Bridge (wages, insurance, tires, and equipment repairs). It was later discovered that the short fall may actually be closer to \$20,000.00 due to fuel cost as well. Attempting to raise the income with snowplow contracts may not actually be effective because that is a variable number. If the levy was increased that is a guaranteed number. Supervisor Hall would like to see the levy increased to \$400,000.00. Supervisor Paris feels that is too big of a jump and would rather increase it in small increments. Resident Imberg explained, in the past they used to increase the levy yearly by 2%. There was discussion wondering if it is better to jump to full coverage or to slowly increase the levy and potentially always be playing catch up. The Board would like Clerk Highland to contact the county and get a breakdown of the effect on residents if the levy were increased to; \$365,000.00, \$380,000.00, and \$400,000.00. It is unknown at this time if there is a percentage cap for the township to follow for increases. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Chairman Hautala to propose the 2024 levy at the Annual Meeting in the amount of \$400,000.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Insurance Premium Increase – Local 49ers health insurance increase effective March 1, 2023 will be \$1,420 per month per member. **Motion** by Supervisor Hall, seconded by Supervisor Paris to acknowledge the health insurance premium increase, paid monthly by special claims. Motion carried unanimously.

Senator Money Update – Dick Grabko will be calling Clerk Highland on February 20th to discuss the award and next application process. They will be submitting a bill for services. Chairman Hautala has been in contact with Gary Lamppa. Through USDA we are able to apply for the \$900,000.00 the Senators awarded us previously. Hautala really wants to see a new fire hall.

NESC Certification – Clerk Highland will submit the necessary information requested from North East Service Co-op regarding internet usage.

