

BELGRADE TOWNSHIP
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

February 14, 2023

Nicollet County Human Services Building, North Mankato

Present: Supervisors: Corky Berdan, Bryan Bode, Christopher Frederick, Mary Milbrath,
and Shane Nelson
Town Clerk: Joan Untiedt
Town Treas: John Speckel
Residents: Eleven Residents

Meeting called to order by Chair Bode at 7:00 p.m.

Additions to the agenda include adding replacement or repair of smashed portable toilet, add Board of Audit meeting on February 28, 2023 to the upcoming meetings list, and add report on Mankato/North Mankato Planning Organization meeting. Frederick/Nelson move/second to approve the revised agenda, approved by all supervisors in attendance.

Consent agenda was presented for approval. Resident Cheryl Michels said residents would like a roll call vote on motions and a dissenting vote should state the reason for opposing. Bode stated a dissenting vote is a choice of the board member. Continued discussion on the matter. Frederick/Nelson move/second to approve the consent agenda which included January minutes from board meeting and reorganization meeting, treasurer's report, claims, and payroll as presented, approved by all supervisors in attendance.

Old Business

1. Kern's culvert project on hold until June.
2. During the discussion at the January meeting regarding employee review and recommendations, part-time employees were not addressed, just Harlan Olson as full-time employee. Milbrath/Frederick move/second to increase the rate for part-time employees to \$25 per hour effective January 1, 2023. Discussion continued with comments from residents regarding the current employees doing a great job and if not treated respectfully, they will leave the township. This included comments regarding the probation set on full-time employee Olson for 90 days. Motion was approved by all supervisors in attendance.
3. Frederick/Milbrath move/second to have Untiedt prepare a draft of an Employee Handbook to present at the April work session, approved by all supervisors in attendance.
4. Repairs to grader have been completed after hitting the stump by Old River Bluff Road.
5. Since the manufacturer has begun the process to build the Freightliner replacement, it cannot add the hydraulic tilt to the equipment. Frederick/Nelson move/second to defer the decision on the hydraulic tilt until after the truck arrived, approved by all supervisors in attendance.
6. Nicollet Fire Department had their budget meeting on January 23rd. The proposed budget for 2024 is \$122,600. New Fire Chief is Jeremy Sieberg and Assistant Chief is Justin Laven. The annual meeting of

the association is February 27, 2023. The department is looking for grants to help fund a new tanker which is expected to cost \$600,000-\$700,000.

7. Discussion on the calculation of the individual townships' responsibility of the fire department budget. In particular, the market values between City of Nicollet and number of residents. Bode will ask for clarification at the annual meeting. Discussion continued with possibly using the City of North Mankato. Keith Burg shared the history of contracting with the city, but they do not have a tanker to bring water to a rural site. Nicollet Fire Department can manage rural fires. However, it was agreed that a review of both options should be done since it was changed 20 years ago.
8. Signs completed by ID Sign Solutions.
9. Tree cutting safety class is still on the MAT agenda to coordinate.
10. Bode and Berdan toured the shop building with Olson and found no leaks from the roof. Bode presented a quote to inspect the building for its overall condition by ME Engineering. Nelson/Berdan move/second to accept the quote from ME Engineering at a cost between \$900 and \$1,260 to inspect the building, approved by all supervisors in attendance.
11. We have not received notice from the county court regarding the petition to have the election for a treasurer in the 2024 general election instead of a special election this year.
12. Frederick/Milbrath move/second to accept the Conflict of Interest Policy as presented at the last meeting, approved by all supervisors in attendance. Board members are to return their annual statement at the Board of Audit meeting on February 28th.

New Business

1. Employees

- Full-time employee Olson took emergency family medical leave effective February 1st. He told Berdan today that it will be at least February 27th before he returns. Discussion on what will be done with the roads until he returns:
 - Contractor quotes were received from Enz Construction and Kato Lawn to cover as needed. Berdan said Enz can handle the township gravel roads. Kato Lawn said it would be hard for them to plow on the wide gravel roads and said they could be a backup option.
 - Berdan put down red rock today on the hills. However, he closed the hills to prevent accidents with the ice buildup.
 - Joe Lorentz discussed the use of more limestone in the past few years with quality being an issue.
 - Dave Chambers suggested to use recycled asphalt.
 - Ultimately need to keep roads safe for all residents.
 - The cost would be \$125,000 per mile to asphalt the three hills.
 - Shawna Olson said the roads have been in the best condition ever in the past few years with Olson and asked the board to take care of him so he would not leave.
 - Dave Chambers asked why he was not invited to submit a quote for contract services.
 - An emergency plan will need to be written in case this ever happens again.
 - Frederick/Nelson move/second to use all three contractors (Enz, Kato Lawn, Chambers) who submitted quotes at the discretion of two supervisors to authorize the work as needed, approved by all supervisors in attendance.

- John Speckel has appointed Frank Little as the Deputy Treasurer.

2. Equipment

- The portable toilet by the township shop building was found smashed by the service company. Frederick/Milbrath move/second to replace the portable toilet, approved by all supervisors in attendance.

3. Roads

- City of North Mankato sent an invoice for snow plowing done on December 24th. Berdan said it was taken care of and nothing due.
- Responsibility for safe roads
 - Resident Michels called Berdan on January 18th regarding 478th Street regarding slippery intersections. Berdan told her no sanding would be done at intersections because of the impending snow fall. Michels had 5 close calls with being struck due to sliding and her son went in the ditch.
 - Berdan explained the grader was in the shop with repairs for 4 days when it should have been plowed, creating the icy roads.
 - All residents should be careful driving on snow packed roads.

4. Other

- Frederick/Milbrath move/second to set the April work session on Tuesday, April 18 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Nicollet County Human Services building in North Mankato, approved by all supervisors in attendance.
- MAT spring course for town board members will be on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 in Mankato. All new town board members are encouraged to register as soon as possible.
- Milbrath gave a summary of the Tuesday Talk topics from the last week. It included a letter from Executive Director Jeff Krueger regarding the expelling of 5 Norman County townships from MAT membership due to severe and false accusations made against MAT. Milbrath said she does not want to see that happen to our township and cited the issues with new board members at the January meeting, especially with the refusal to honor the prior board recommendations for pay increases for the township employees.
- Milbrath/Frederick move/second to remove the probationary period Olson was subjected to at the January meeting and make his \$3 per hour increase effective January 1, 2023. Discussion continued with comments from board members and residents stating it was wrong to deny the raise in January. Motion approved by all supervisors in attendance.
- MAT-University is an online library of training available to the township officers. An email was sent with the login and password to access the trainings.
- List of 2023 legislature priorities was distributed for review. It includes transportation funding, annexation fairness, taxes/state aid, broadband funding, noxious weeds, and government operations & elections.
- MATIT sent a letter to all members of the insurance trust regarding an email compromise recently experienced by the association. Payment of \$834,197 for the reinsurance premium was misdirected to the wrong recipient. To date, no recovery has been made of the funds.

MATIT has strong finance balances, so they were able to make the payment to the correct party and not affect the solvency of MATIT.

- Annual meetings reports need to be written by the supervisors in preparation for the meeting with residents on March 14th.
- Annual newsletter was distributed for review. Only addition will be adding the work session date before mailing.
- Nelson reported on attendance at the Mankato/North Mankato Planning Organization.
- Joe Lorentz thanked Milbrath for all her hard work in recent years. He appreciates the board's willingness to listen to the residents.
- Discussion on need for another part-time employee. Frederick/Nelson move/second to hire Dave Chambers as a part-time employee, approved by all supervisors in attendance.

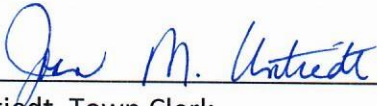
Milbrath/Frederick move/second to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m., approved by all supervisors in attendance.



Bryan Bode, Chair

3-21-23

Date



Joan Untiedt, Town Clerk

3-21-23

Date