

**BIRCHDALE TOWNSHIP**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, January 25, 2022 - 8:00 P.M.**

**1. Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call**

Chair Jim Carstens called to order the regular meeting of the Birchdale Township Board at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at the Birchdale Town Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Present were Supervisors Jim Carstens, Dale Ahrens, Arnie Berscheid, Joe Ostendorf, Larry Bebus, Treasurer Marlene VanHavermaet and Clerk Jackie Bauer.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Ostendorf and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as amended.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Bebus and unanimously carried to approve the December 28, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes as amended.

**4. Approval of Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer VanHavermaet presented the January Treasurer's Report. A motion was made by Supervisor Ahrens, seconded by Supervisor Ostendorf, and unanimously carried to accept the Treasurer's Report. Treasurer VanHavermaet also reported that the December Settlement Payment in the amount of \$3,525.62 was received.

**5. Approval of Bills**

Next presented was the list of bills for the month of January to be considered for payment. A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf seconded by Supervisor Berscheid and unanimously carried to approve payment of the bills in the amount of \$9,846.40 (See attached list of bills).

**6. Resident's Comments**

- a. None

**7. Reports/Requests/Presentations**

- a. None.

**8. Township Road Report**

- a. Ambassador Drive Wood Stumps – Supervisor Berscheid observed that there were some stumps along Ambassador Drive that needed to be removed. He contacted Supervisor Ostendorf and Hoffman Tree Service was contacted and completed the work.

- b. Supervisor Ostendorf stated that MBC will begin ditch clean in the next few weeks. He stated that it might be good to have a back-up contractor for tree removal or clean-up if we get any spring storms. MBC is contracted with Birchdale Township for the major ditch clean-up and may be unable to respond to storm clean-up also.

## **9. Unfinished Business**

- a. Postcard Mailer for Annual Meeting – Clerk Bauer updated the Board regarding the postcard mailer that will be sent out to residents in the township informing them about the Township Election and Annual Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Clerk Bauer is working with Schmidt Printing in Melrose. Todd County is providing labels for resident names and addresses. Clerk Bauer will continue to work on this project and make sure that the postcard is mailed out about a week before the meeting. Last year, the postcard mailer did impact improving the attendance at the Annual Meeting so hopefully, attendance will again be good at this year’s meeting.
- b. Letter Being Drafted By Attorney Gilchrist Regarding Shed In Road Right-of-Way – Clerk Bauer stated that she contacted Township Attorney Gilchrist to check on the progress of drafting a letter regarding a resident’s shed in the township road-right-of-way. Attorney Gilchrist stated that he is still working on drafting the letter but will have it ready before the February meeting.
- c. Township Technology Update – Clerk Bauer stated that she has not yet put in the order for equipment for the town hall because she is hoping that all of the equipment can be ordered through Amazon in order to complete it in one purchase. Supervisor Ostendorf stated that should work but he was concerned about the shipping of the large screen TV and making sure that it is not damaged in transit. Once the equipment is installed in the town hall, the temperature in the building will have to be maintained at 40-45 degrees. Clerk Bauer shared the log-in and password for the Birchdale Township Amazon Account. She will work on putting in the equipment order and have Supervisor Ostendorf review it before the February meeting.
- d. Township Ditch Mowing Work – Supervisor Ostendorf stated that MBC Drainage will begin work in March. They would have started earlier but with the amount of snow and cold temperatures we have received, the work was delayed. So, the entire will be coming out in March and completing all of the work before road restrictions are put on. They will begin with trees on Alcott Drive, pulling and cleaning up branches, removing rock and debris from the ditches and they will be using a boom to take down branches. They will contact Supervisor Ostendorf prior to starting.

## **10. New Business**

- a. The Board then reviewed the following policies and job descriptions:

- \*Investment Policy
- \*Road Standards Policy
- \*Dust Control Policy
- \*Administrative Policy
- \*Culvert Policy
- \*Clerk Job Description
- \*Treasurer Job Description

Supervisor Berscheid asked about whether plastic culverts could be used by residents. In the Culvert Policy, it states, “All culverts shall be corrugated steel, galvanized and shall be a minimum of 15” diameter and 16 gage steel”. Supervisor Berscheid proposed that this line be removed from the Culvert Policy as this is an outdated requirement. A motion was made by Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Bebus and unanimously carried to amend the Birchdale Township Culvert Policy removing the above line.

Supervisor Berscheid was contacted by Grey Eagle Township requesting what the hourly pay and meeting rate was for Birchdale Township. Supervisor Berscheid shared that the hourly rate is \$25.00/hour and the per meeting rate is \$80.00/meeting. Grey Eagle Township stated that they are going to increase their rates to stay current with increased pay rates in the private sector. Supervisor Berscheid proposed that Birchdale Township also increase their hourly pay rate by \$5.00/hour to \$30.00/hour, the per-meeting rate to \$100.00/meeting and the election judge hourly rate to \$25.00/hour. Supervisor Carstens stated that economics are putting pressure on businesses to increase pay rates but that this needs to be justified. This changes to the Compensation Policy in rates will be presented as part of the overall budget presented to residents at the March Annual Meeting and residents will vote on whether to approve the budget at that meeting. A motion was made by Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Bebus and unanimously carried to amend the Birchdale Township Compensation Police to reflect an increase in pay rates for Board Members to a \$30.00/hourly rate, a \$100.00 per meeting rate and a \$25.00/hourly rate for election judges.

A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf, seconded by Supervisor Ahrens and unanimously carried to approve the other 6 Birchdale Township Policies with no changes.

- b.** Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan – Clerk Bauer reviewed an updated Five Year Capital Improvement Plan for the Township. This information will be presented at the Annual Meeting where the Board will seek input from residents regarding the plan. Supervisor Berscheid will contact County Engineer Loren Fellbaum about the cost of paving for Alcott so that the township can begin planning for this major project. Supervisor Berscheid will also ask Mr. Fellbaum if he believes crack filling should be one on Alcott or would this be a waste of funds especially if the road will be re-paved in the future. Supervisor Ostendorf also asked if Supervisor Berscheid can ask about the cost of adding shoulders to the road. Alcott was paved more than 20 years ago so it needs to be updated. Treasurer VanHavermaet stated that depending on the cost of this project, the levy

may need to be increased and this is something that needs to be planned for. The levy has not been increased for at least 13 years. Supervisor Berscheid will be in contact with Loren Fellbaum regarding Alcott Drive.

The Board also asked Clerk Bauer to add in brushing work on the Capital Improvement Plan so this work can also be maintained and budgeted for. Once this information is gathered, an updated Capital Improvement Plan will be presented to the board for their adoption.

- c. The Board reviewed the Property Inventory List. The Board asked Clerk Bauer to add the two remote controls for the blinking speed sign and the computer router on the Property Inventory List. The inventory list should also state that the inventory is stored in both the town hall and in the township storage shed. Clerk Bauer will update the inventory list.
- d. Clerk Bauer gave an update on plans for the March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Township Election. The Township Election will run from 4:00 PM until 8:00 PM and two Supervisor Positions are up for election, Supervisor A currently held by Jim Carstens and Supervisor B currently held by Dale Ahrens.
- e. Public Accuracy Testing using the AutoMark Machine will be done at the Todd County Courthouse at 3:00 PM on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Information announcing Public Accuracy Testing has been posted in the Sauk Herald, the Long Prairie Leader, on the Birchdale Township website and at the Town Hall.
- f. Preliminary Audit Work Update - Clerk Bauer and Treasurer VanHavermaet will meet prior to the February 22, 2022 Board Meeting to review CTAS reports in preparation for the Board of Audit Meeting and State Auditor's Town Financial Reporting Form which is due on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- g. Clerk Bauer received notification that the City of Sauk Centre Fire Department will not hold a Fire Contract Meeting this year but instead a copy of the contract will be sent out covering the period 2021-2022.
- h. Proposed Resolution No. 2022-01, Resolution Appointing Election Judges for March Township Election - See attached Proposed Resolution. A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf, seconded by Supervisor Ahrens, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution No. 2022-01, Resolution Appointing Election Judges for March Township Election. Supervisor Larry Bebus abstained. The Election Judges will be Jackie Bauer, Marlene VanHavermaet, Larry Bebus and Cathy Lensing.
- i. Approve Meeting Schedule – Clerk Bauer presented the meeting schedule for the 2022-2023 year with the monthly dates for board meetings. A motion was made by Supervisor Bebus, seconded by Supervisor Berscheid and unanimously carried to approve the meeting schedule for the 2022-2023 year.

- j. Then presented was the proposed quote information and form regarding crack filling for blacktopped township roads for the 2022 budget year. A motion was made by Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Ostendorf, and unanimously carried to approve the quote information and form and authorize seeking sealed quotes for the crack-filling project. Clerk Bauer was directed to send the quote information and form to Astech, Precision Roadway and Midwest Asphalt and to post it on the Township website and Township bulletin board. Quotes to be received until 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 22, 2022 and the quotes to be opened at the 8:00 p.m. Board meeting.

## **11. Informational Items**

The Board then reviewed the following informational items:

- a. Special Assessment Information Request received from Main Street Title & Closings LLC for the following: o 10982 Angler Drive, Grey Eagle, MN 56336 o 11693 Alcott Drive, Sauk Centre, MN 56378. Clerk Bauer responded that there were no assessments from Birchdale Township.
- b. Correspondence received from Minnesota Association of Townships regarding in-person, out-state training for clerks and treasurers – Clerk Bauer presented correspondence regarding training dates and locations. None of the locations are near Birchdale Township.
- c. Broadband Consortium Letter – Clerk Bauer received a letter addressed to Birchdale Township asking for their support of the Broadband Consortium. The Board is supportive of the group working to bring broadband to Todd County and will wait to see what requests are made by the group to the township in the future.
- d. Clerk Bauer stated that Birchdale Township was awarded a \$5,000.00 weed grant from the State of Minnesota. She will complete paperwork so that the funds can be received.

## **12. Officers Comments**

- a. Supervisor Ahrens stated Erv Herdering had contacted him. He was not able to be at tonight's board meeting but asked Dale to relay to the Board to let him know if they see any road or repair work that needs to be done and to contact him.

## **13. Adjournment**

With no further business, a motion was made by Supervisor Bebus, seconded by Supervisor Ahrens, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jackie Bauer  
Birchdale Township Clerk