

**BIRCHDALE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2023 – 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, February 28, 2023 at the Birchdale Town Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Present were Supervisors Larry Bebus, Joe Ostendorf, Arnie Berscheid, Treasurer Marlene VanHavermaet and Clerk Jackie Bauer. Supervisors Dale Ahrens was absent.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Supervisor Bebus, seconded by Supervisor Ostendorf and unanimously carried to approve the January 31, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes.

4. Approval of Treasurer's Report

Treasurer VanHavermaet presented the January Treasurer's Report. A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf, seconded by Supervisor Berscheid and unanimously carried to accept the Treasurer's Report.

5. Approval of Bills

Next presented was the list of bills for the month of February to be considered for payment. A motion was made by Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Ostendorf, and unanimously carried to approve payment of the bills in the amount of \$1322.66. (See attached list of bills).

6. Resident's Comments

- a. None

7. Reports/Requests/Presentations

- a. None

8. Township Road Report

- a. Noxious Weed Grant Funds – Clerk Bauer updated the Board on her conversation with County Weed Inspector Nancy Uhlenkamp regarding the Noxious Weed Grant for this year. There was only \$28,000.00 and

there have already been enough applications for the funds. However the Minnesota Department of Agriculture is hoping to get more funding from the legislature for grants and she encouraged our township to apply again next year. She said that it does not matter if a township is awarded a grant. They are able to apply again the following year.

- b. Minimum Maintenance Roads – Supervisor Ostendorf stated that the Department of Natural Resources contacted him approximately 3 weeks ago and stated that they have grant funds available for Birchdale Township to use to repair two of the minimum maintenance roads that lead to state lands. Supervisor Ostendorf is going to meet with the DNR Representative on March 9th. He stated that we will have to get a wetlands permit in order to do any repair work and in discussing this with Todd County Soil and Water, it could take up to 6 months to get. The DNR feels that the township should request the permit now. When Supervisor Ostendorf meets with the DNR Representative, they will discuss what options can be done for the repair work. One idea might be to create a parking lot so that people could park vehicles and then walk in.

Supervisor Ostendorf also reported that he will be contacting Bart from MBC Drainage to discuss finishing up ditch cleaning and any additional brush cutting that still needs to be completed in the township.

Supervisor Berscheid stated that he as contacted by a resident who was hoping to lay an irrigation pipe under a township road. The Board would like the resident to sign something stating that if the pipe would burst and cause any damage to the road, that the resident would be responsible for all repairs. Supervisor Berscheid will get more details from the resident and report back at the next meeting.

9. Unfinished Business

- a. Culvert Policy – At the previous meeting, the Board had requested that the current Birchdale Township Culvert Policy possibly be re-worded to address other pipes being threaded through an existing culvert. One of the questions that a resident had asked about was possibly running a manure pipe through an existing culvert. Currently, the Culvert Policy does not have any reference to pipes being run through culverts and this is something that the Board would possibly like updated. Clerk Bauer tried to find other township culvert policies that had wording addressing this issue but was only able to find one township with somewhat related wording. However, the policy did not directly address any wording related to who might be responsible if something happened to pipes that were run through an existing culvert. The Board will decide whether the current policy should be updated or not. Clerk Bauer will place this item on next month's meeting for discussion.
- b. Five Year Capital Improvement Plan – Clerk Bauer is waiting to update the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan until the Board has more

information regarding possible funding for moving forward in reclaiming or seal-coating Alcott Drive. At this time, reclaiming Alcott is extremely expensive and the Board is exploring options on funding this project. This will determine when the work is completed. Clerk Bauer is holding off on updating the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan until more information regarding Alcott has been determined.

- c. Review March Annual Meeting Agenda & Preliminary Budget – The Board discussed the Proposed Agenda for the March Annual Meeting. Last year, the Board presented and the residents approved a \$100,000.00 increase to the Birchdale Township Levy. In order to meet the expense of reclaiming Alcott, the levy should be continuing to be raised each year. The project is projected to be over 1 million dollars in 5 years so in order to put aside enough money to fund the project, the levy should be continued to increase each year by \$100,000.00. The amount of levy and whether to approve passing it is something that is voted on by the residents at the Annual Town Hall Meeting. Supervisor Carstens suggested that this meeting item be discussed at the annual township meeting so that the levy is set by the residents who attend. The Board agreed to do this.

The Board discussed possible other options for repairing Alcott Drive such as maybe seal-coating the road now, and then saving up for the reclaiming work to be done in a few years. Supervisor Berscheid stated that the north end of Alcott is in better shape than the south end. He said maybe it would be good for the township to have an engineer come out and view the road and give a second option on possible repair options. These will all be items discussed with the residents at the annual meeting in March. Clerk Bauer will also place this agenda item as unfinished business on the monthly meetings.

The Board also asked Clerk Bauer if the Arvig Representative, Chris Bechtold, was planning to attend the meeting to discuss fiber-optic cabling being laid in the township this summer. Clerk Bauer has had difficulty reaching Mr. Bechtold but will try again to schedule him to attend the meeting.

- d. Open Sealed Quotes Received For Crack Filling and Consider Awarding Quote –The Board then opened quotes received from Midwest Asphalt, Astech Corporation and Precision Roadway for Crack Filling for the 2023 Season. Quote information had been sent to Midwest Asphalt, Astech Corporation and Precision Roadway. A notice was also posted on the Township’s website and bulletin board. The quote received from Midwest Asphalt was as follows: \$1.89/lb (Crafco 535). The quote received from Astech Corporation was as follows: \$2.25/lb and the quote received from Precision Roadway was \$1.65/lb and the product is Maxwell Nuvo. Last year, Precision Roadway was award the quote for crack filling and they did a nice job with the roads. There wasn’t as much tar that peeled up and ended up in the road ditches as the previous year. A motion was made by

Supervisor Berscheid, seconded by Supervisor Bebus, and unanimously carried to award the Crack Filling for the 2023 Season quote work to Precision Roadway as quoted at a rate of \$1.49 per pound. Clerk Bauer was directed to notify Precision Roadway of the quote award.

- e. Sourcewell Grant Funds – Clerk Bauer updated the Board regarding possible grant funding available through Sourcewell for townships. She stated that they have 3 types of grants, one that is a small amount called a Boost Grant that is meant to be a matching grant for something smaller such as a laptop computer. There is an application to complete for this smaller grant and the Board is required to pass a resolution so that a copy of the resolution can be mailed in with the grant application. Another grant is available for \$20,000.00 to \$50,000.00 called an Impact Grant. This is a lottery-system grant where non-profits can apply for funds (to be used for anything except any type of road maintenance) and then are chosen randomly for the grant funds. This could be a grant for the township to assist with funding for new carpet, chairs and tables and other updates in the town hall. The Board encouraged Clerk Bauer to pursue applying for this grant to be used for updating the town hall. Finally, there is a third grant that is a matching community grant up to \$10,000.00 per year which requires the township to match the dollar amount of the grant requested. Clerk Bauer will begin the paperwork for applying for both the Boost Grant to assist in paying for a new laptop computer for the clerk as the current laptop will not accept Windows 10 and Windows 10 is needed for the latest update of the financial software for the township, CTAS. So, a new laptop is needed. Clerk Bauer will also begin paperwork for the Impact Grant in the amount of \$20,000.00 to be used towards improvements for the town hall.

10. New Business

- a. Next presented was the proposed quote information and form regarding the Grading/Blading of Gravel Roads in Birchdale Township. A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf, seconded by Supervisor Berscheid and unanimously carried to approve the quote information and form and authorize seeking sealed quotes for Grading/Blading of Gravel Roads for the 2023 year. Clerk Bauer was directed to send the quote information and form to Herdering Inc. and Mayers Inc. and to post it on the Township website and Township bulletin board. Quotes to be received until 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2023 and the quotes to be opened at the 8:00 p.m. Board meeting.
- b. Next presented was the proposed quote information and form regarding the Lawn Mowing at the Town Hall for the 2023 budget year. A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf, seconded by Supervisor Bebus, and unanimously carried to approve the quote information and form and authorize seeking sealed quotes for Lawn Mowing at the Town Hall. Clerk Bauer was directed to send the quote information and form to Cayden VanHavermaet and to post it on the Township website and the township

bulletin board. Quotes to be received until 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2023 and the quotes to be opened at the 8:00 p.m. Board meeting.

- c. Next presented was the proposed quote information and form regarding Class 5 Gravel for the 2023 budget year. A motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf seconded by Supervisor Berscheid, and unanimously carried to approve the quote information and form and authorize seeking sealed quotes for Class 5 Gravel. Clerk Bauer was directed to send the quote information and form to Herdering, Inc. and Central Specialties and to post it on the Township website and the Township bulletin board. Quotes to be received until 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2023 and the quotes to be opened at the 8:00 p.m. Board meeting.
- d. Discuss Proposed Road Projects for 2023 – This item is listed on the Calendar of Events. The Board discussed possible road projects that might be needed for 2023. At this time, there are no major road projects scheduled for 2023.
- e. Discuss the March Township Election and Annual Meeting - The Township Election, held on March 14th, will run from 4 until 8 PM. The results will then be counted and the Township Annual Meeting will begin at 8:15 PM. Supervisor E Position which is currently held by Supervisor Larry Bebus is up for election. A postcard mailing has gone out to all residents to remind them of the election and meeting. Clerk Bauer will also hold a Public Accuracy Testing of the Automark Machine on March 7th at 3:00 PM at the Todd County Election Office.
- f. Clerk Bauer notified the Board that the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting will be scheduled on April 18th, 2023 at 9:00 AM at the Town Hall. Clerk Bauer presented a Notice of the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting to be posted for one week in the Sauk Herald and Long Prairie Leader and also to be posted on the township website and at the town hall. A motion was made by Supervisor Carstens, seconded by Supervisor Ostendorf and unanimously carried to approve the notice.

11. Informational Items

The Board then reviewed the following informational items:

- a. Correspondence Received From Todd County Auditor/Treasurer's Office – Information includes forms that need to be completed by March 31st, 2023 including Township Levy for Taxes Payable for 2024 and the 2023 Certification of Town Officers. Also included is an estimate of the maintenance and software fees for the 2024 election equipment which is approximately \$577.50. This amount is to help the township with budget planning for expenses.

- b. Correspondence Received from Minnesota Association of Township Insurance & Bond Trust – Correspondence received from MATIT stating that they were a victim of a Business Email Compromise that resulted in a wire transfer theft from their fund amounting to \$834,197.00. They are now contracting with a security firm to ensure that this does not happen again. They were able to sustain the theft due to their financial solvency.
- c. Correspondence Received from Crisis Line and Referral Service – Request received for donation of funds.

12. Officers Comments

- a. Clerk Bauer requested approval from the Board to attend a webinar titled, Robert's Rules. This is a training session regarding Robert's Rules and how they are utilized in formal meetings. The cost of the training is \$25.00. The Board did give their approval for Clerk Bauer to attend the webinar.
- b. Supervisor Berscheid informed the Board that he plowed out a township road that runs behind his property. He used his own equipment to do this and will charge an hourly rate for this work on this time card.
- c. Supervisor Bebus stated that he was contacted by a resident who could not get to her mailbox for 3 weeks due to the heavy snow. She stated that the contractor who is doing the plowing for the township is not getting close enough to the mailboxes to clear the snow. Supervisor Bebus suggested that she attend the Annual Meeting and share her concerns about the snow-plowing. Supervisor Bebus will also mention this to Mr. Erv Herdering who does the plowing but he is also aware that the plowers are being careful to not damage any mailboxes.

13. Adjournment

With no further business, a motion was made by Supervisor Bebus, seconded by Supervisor Berscheid, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 p.m.

14. Board of Audit Meeting

Chair Jim Carstens called to order the Board of Audit meeting of the Birchdale Township Board at 9:44 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28th, 2023 at the Birchdale Town Hall. Present were Supervisors Jim Carstens, Joe Ostendorf, Larry Bebus, and Arnie Berscheid, Treasurer Marlene VanHavermaet and Clerk Jackie Bauer. Supervisor Dale Ahrens was not in attendance.

Clerk Bauer and Treasurer VanHavermaet presented financial reports run from the CTAS Program which showed the break-down of total claims, disbursements and investments. The Board also reviewed paid claims for 2023. The Board reviewed all documents and concurred with the reports.

With no further business, a motion was made by Supervisor Ostendorf, seconded by Supervisor Carstens, and unanimously carried to adjourn the Board of Audit meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Bauer
Birchdale Township Clerk