



Regular Board Meeting  
Wednesday August 28, 2024 6:00 pm

The Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors met in regular session, at 6:00 PM, on Wednesday August 28, 2024, at the Town of Big Lake Town Hall, located in the Big Lake Township's Lions Park Community Center, at 21960 County Road 5 NW, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, State of Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bruce Aubol and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Supervisor Larry Alford, Supervisor Brenteson, Supervisor Mark Hedstrom, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, Sergeant Derek Barret - Sherburne County Sheriff's Department, Chief Seth Hansen – Big Lake Fire Department, Kristin Pfaff, Richard Achman, Mark Greenlun, Jacque Nadeau, County Commissioner Raeanne Danielowski, newspaper reporter Katie Cantin, and two members of the public were in attendance. Treasurer Kenneth Warneke was absent. Supervisor Laura Hayes arrived after the meeting commenced – at 6:24PM.

#### Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion/Second to approve the presented agenda by: Hedstrom/Brenteson. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, and Hedstrom. Motion Prevailed. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the presented agenda.

#### Approval of Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consisted of the approval of minutes from the Regular Board on July 24, 2024, Joint Powers Board Meeting 07/24/2024, claims and payroll presented, and ratify claims and payroll paid on August 14, 2024.

Motion/Second to Approve consent agenda by: Alford/ Brenteson. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

#### Sherriff's Report

Sergeant Derek Baret was in attendance and reported 331 calls in the township, for the month of July 2024. Sergeant Baret informed the Board that neighborhoods on CSAH 15 from just north of the rail crossing up to Old County Road 79, had been burglarized. It appears there are one or two thieves involved. The burglaries are under investigation.

#### Fire Department Report

Chief Seth Hansen was in attendance and reported calls of service through the end of July at 225. The BNSF train derailment has been cleaned up and looks to back to normal. Captain Sam Hanson coordinated the pop-up splash pad at Lakeside Park. It was well attended. BLFD was out and about on August 6<sup>th</sup> attending annual Night to Unite, neighborhood block parties. Chief Hansen and Assistant Chief Hedstrom went to parties in the township while other officers and members attended gatherings within city limits.

The fire department is running a hiring campaign through August 31<sup>st</sup>. Applications can be found on the city and township's websites.

#### Open Forum

Katie Cantin, news reporter from the Patriot News newspaper, addressed the board and audience. She informed attendees of the upcoming Election Guide, being written for voters. She noted she has yet to receive comments from candidates running for township offices – Bruce Aubol, Laura Hayes, Mark Hedstrom, and Nathan Gaida. And requested the incumbent candidate’s responses.

Regular Business

Conditional Use Permit (CUP) on PID# 10-00547-0110 for Planned Mini Storage Facility

This item was tabled at the previous regular meeting as the Board had some questions about the proposed mini storage facility. Kristin Pfaff, the applicant was in attendance and had supplied information and answers to the Boards reservations, ahead of the meeting. Additional questions posed during the July 24, 2024 and the applicant’s submitted answers are as follows. Is there enough room for fire equipment to move within the facility. Chief Hansen reviewed the plans and noted the storage units are single story, and there would be no issue for travel within the facility. Paving of the site will be done at one time. The current plan is to pour the middle two concrete slabs as soon as possible and asphalt will be laid soon after. There will not be curbing since most of the parking lot is surrounded by the outer-lying buildings. Structural Buildings also submitted drawings showing the material of the buildings, for the board to review.

The Board had no other questions or concerns and recommended the County Planning Commission approve the CUP.

Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Storage Structure on PID #10-00403-1210

Mr. Achman made application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The CUP is to allow a 24’ x 50’ personal storage structure on his vacant parcel located in the Birch Lake Beach subdivision. This structure will replace personal storage building which was previously on the property. It was torn down after sustaining irreparable storm damage. The previous building was situated less than 5’ from the road right-of-way but the proposed location for the new storage building has a 67’ setback from the road right-of-way. The applicant and his contractor, Mark Greenlun – Structural Buildings, were present and able to answer questions pertaining to the location of driveway access and timing of when the applicant plans to construct a dwelling on the parcel. The applicant plans to build a residence on the property in the next year or two The Board noted the location plans for the proposed storage building is more desirable than the previous building's location. They also noted the driveway will need to have a culvert installed and, in a manner, as to not impede with the current drainage and existing culvert under 225<sup>th</sup> Ave. The applicant and his contractor acknowledged the requirements necessary for the construction of the new driveway.

The Board had no concerns after discussing the application and recommended the County Planning Commission approve the CUP.

Requesting permission to install a memorial bench at Bailey Station Cemetery

Jacque Nadeau, Bailey Station Cemetery Actuary was in attendance on behalf of a plot owner, who has requested permission to install a memorial bench on the eastside of the columbariums, at Bailey Station Cemetery. The bench would be similar to the all-weather bench which was recently purchased and installed in the township’s large breed, off-leash, dog enclosure. Board members thought this would be a nice addition to the cemetery.

Motion/second to allow the installation of a memorial bench at Bailey Station Cemetery. The is to be secured to the ground, in some fashion by: Hedstrom/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion Prevailed.

**Supervisor Hayes joined the meeting at 6:24PM**

Requesting permission to plant memorial tree in Big Lake Township’s Lions Park

Staff was contacted by a member of the Lions/Lioness Club who requested permission to plant a tree in memory of Judy Zaske – an original member of the Big Lake Lioness Club. Judy was very active involved in the Club and the Big Lake area. Staff reached out to the township’s park grounds

maintenance vendor for placement and species recommendations. He noted there is an ornamental crabapple tree which has been damaged by storms and should be removed. It is located near the west pavilion, in the playground area. Removing that tree and planting a new one near the location was one suggestion. Another suggested location was near the north building entrance, which is used to attend events held at the town hall, including Lions sponsored events. Unsure of the type of tree being considered, he recommended hardy varieties of non-flowering and flowering deciduous trees – no conifers (pine, spruce, cedar, etc.). Board members discussed the presented locations and trees and determined they did not desire to have a flowering variety, due to the messiness when blooms drop. The Board instructed staff to contact the parks maintenance vendor to remove the dying tree and grind the stump. They deferred the final decision of variety to the Buildings and Park Committee. Irrigation lines will be marked, prior to digging.

#### Election updates and election judge wages

Clerk Maas, Deputy Clerk Workman, and Deputy Treasurer Guthrie all worked during the Primary elections and reported they went smoothly. The number of voters was significantly lower than the Presidential Primary Nominating election, with roughly 350 of the voters casting ballots – about 1% of the pre-registered voters in the township. It was good practice for the novice election judges.

Four affidavits of candidacy were filed for the three seats on the November election. Incumbents Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom filed. As did Nathan Gaida, who filed for Supervisor Seat 4 – currently held by Hedstrom. Clerk Maas noted Mr. Gaida is one of her election judges, who indicated he is looking to become involved on the Board and has no qualms with the how business has been conducted by any of the current board members.

Clerk Maas reminded the Board they made no change to the hourly rates for election judges during the 2024 Reorganization Meeting. Opting to wait until other local townships hold their reorg meetings, after March elections. Clerk Maas inquired with other township clerks to see what they are paying their election judges. Townships in Sherburne County are paying their election judges \$14 - \$30/hour and head judges \$15 - \$30/hour. Clerk Maas suggested the Board increase the rates for Big Lake Township's elections judges to \$18/hour and head judges to \$22/hour to compensate for the additional responsibilities and duties of the head judge position. If the Board approves the recommendations election labor will increase approximately \$1,000.

Motion/second to set the election judge hourly rate at \$18.00 and head judge rate at \$22.00 hour by: Aubol/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Clerk Maas informed the Board she had misinterpreted the election statutes when presenting meeting dates during the Reorganizational Meeting. The Board will need to canvass the Town Election results between the 3<sup>rd</sup> day and 10<sup>th</sup> day following the election. The normal timing of the first meeting of November, falls within that date range. She noted the BLFD Joint Board rescheduled their November meeting to Tuesday November 12, 2024, to accommodate elections. This is the same date the Town Board set as their November meeting and canvassing of election results. Clerk Maas recommended the Board return their November meeting to the second Wednesday of November – the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Motion/second to setting the November 2024 meeting and election results canvass as November 13, 2024, at 6:00PM by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion Prevailed.

#### Mailbox and post requirements

The Board has discussed the current requirements of the US Postal Service to have cluster style mailboxes installed in new developments. It is the desire of the Town Board to have all new and replacement mailbox posts be the swing style, as is used on county roads. This desire is to allow for safe and efficient right-of-way maintenance. As well as for the safety of mail carriers and residents. In a cluster mailbox situation, no single residency is charged with removal of snow and ice. There is one cluster style mailbox in the Township, which has been damaged by summer mowing. Staff was directed to research how request exception to this newer rule and learned a letter requesting exception could be sent to the US Postal Services offices. Said letter was sent by staff and the developer of Meadow

Estates North and Meadow Estates South. A response has been received declining the request.

Another letter to the next level of oversight at the US Postal Service could be sent. However, the Big Lake Postmaster has indicated he has yet to see an exception to the rule, be made. Deputy Treasurer Guthrie noted the developer's agreement for Meadow Estates South, has been put on hold while the cluster mailbox regulation is being challenged.

The Board decided to halt its efforts to receive an exception to the cluster mailbox regulation. Instead, guidelines will be added to the developer's agreement which include the style of mailbox must be snowplow and mowing equipment friendly. Deputy Treasurer Guthrie will forward a link with various styles of cluster mailboxes to the road committee for consideration. Their determination will be used in revision of the Meadow Estates South developer's agreement.

The Board previously discussed how to handle replacement of existing posts when a resident does not want to have a swing-style post installed. Staff contacted the Town's legal advisor and learned a variance process could be set in place. Staff feels the administration of mailbox variances could become cumbersome. Board members reviewed Ordinance 1150 to ensure the language supports the Town nor its vendors/assigns are responsible for damage, unless a swing-style post installed. No changes were deemed necessary.

### Roads

Supervisor Brenteson reported; vendors have been out to remove trees downed in recent storms, completed crack-filling, and replaced signs which were identified in need of replacement, during the spring road tour. The Road Committee has identified the rural residential roadways where enforceable speed limits should be set at 35 MPH. They also have identified 140 locations where signage will need to be installed. The Committee is working with the town's engineer on developing a color-coded map to be used as the exhibit in a resolution designating rural residential roadways.

### Business from the Board – Committee Reports/Updates

Supervisor Hedstrom inquired if the areas where overlays were installed within the township, were experiencing an abundance of sandbur plants growing in the seeding material used. He noted the town's contractor also performed work in Becker Township. The Becker Town Board is receiving several complaints about sandburs in the overlain areas. Complaints have not been logged in Big Lake Township. But the Road Committee will investigate to see if there is an issue.

Supervisor Brenteson gave an update on CMRP. He told the Board that Bolton & Menk is making progress on a purpose and needs statement, with options for possible Mississippi River crossing locations. This is expected to be filed with the State by the end of 2024. He also noted the organization should have acquired non-profit status, within two months.

### Treasurer's Business

#### Treasurer's Report

Deputy Treasurer Guthrie reviewed the Treasurer's Report and financial statements with the Board. She said the fund balances look good. She noted the first installment was made to the township's new website developer and there should be new content by mid-September. She also reminded the Board that Treasurer Warneke would like to use the unobligated ARPA funds toward fire capital improvements, specifically he new ladder truck – Tower 1. However, the Board has yet to take action to do so. Clerk Maas informed the Board she had received notice from Maureen Mossack, Environmental Specialist, Sherburne County Planning & Zoning, of the County Board's approval to disburse additional funding for 2024 Recycle Day events. Big Lake Township will receive an additional \$2,823.59. Accounts balances highlighted in the report included the general fund balance (\$365,714.77) and road fund balance (\$1,134,297.87). The town treasury ending balance (less escrows) after payment of approved claims was \$ 2,894,799.49 and escrow funds balance of \$ 156,448.20. The total town treasury balance: \$ 3,051,247.69

Motion/Second to approve the Treasurer's report by: Hayes/Brenteson. Approved by: Aubol, Alfords, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion Prevailed.

*Financial Reports are retained as part of the Official Minutes, which are available in the Clerk's Office.*

Announcements

- Sherburne County Household Hazardous Waste Collection event – Tuesday September 10th 2:00PM – 5:00PM. Town Hall north parking lot.
- Big Lake Community Food Shelf – Produce & Pantry food distribution Monday September 16<sup>th</sup> 3:30PM – 5:30PM.
- Big Lake Lioness Garage Sale – Saturday September 14th – Town Hall.
- Annual Dog Vaccination Clinic and Water Testing (Nitrates only) – Saturday September 21st 9:00AM – 12:00PM - Town hall adjacent garage.
- BLFD JPB Regular Meeting Tuesday September 2, 2024 @ 5:00PM.
- 2024 Annual Meeting Reconvenes Wednesday September 11, 2024 @ 6:00PM.
  - o Town Board Regular Meeting to Commence after Annual Meeting adjourns
- County Road 43 will open for all traffic on Friday August 30, 2024 (ahead of schedule)
- Sherburne County Mattress/Boxspring Collection Event, Saturday September 7, 2024, 9:00AM – 1:00PM @ Vonco II, in Becker. Free to Sherburne County residents, proof of residency required.

Adjournment:

Motion/Second to adjourn Regular Board Meeting at 7:21 PM by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Aubol, Alfords, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion prevailed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Clerk

Accepted this 11th day of September 2024, by the Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors.

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Bruce Aubol, Chair

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Town Clerk