



Board of Canvass & Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday November 13, 2024

The Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors commenced their regular meeting and board of canvass at 6:00 PM, on Wednesday November 13, 2024, at the Town of Big Lake Town Hall, located in the Big Lake Township's Lions Park Community Center, located 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 Alfords, Supervisor Laura Hayes, Supervisor Mark Hedstrom, Treasurer Ken Warneke, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Sergeant Derek Barret - Sherburne County Sheriff's Department, County Commissioner Raeanne Danielowski, newspaper reporter Katie Cantin, and one member of the public were in attendance. Supervisor Dean Brenteson was absent.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Supervisor Hayes requested the addition of an agenda item to discuss installation of automatic garage door openers on town hall garage doors, as Town Business - item F.

Motion/Second to approve the amended agenda by: Hayes/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. Motion Prevailed. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the amended agenda.

Board of Canvass

Clerk Kimberly Maas administered the Board of Canvass Oath to the Supervisors and presented the results of the November Town election. She reported there were 5761 registered voters when the polls opened on Election Day (11/05/2024). An additional 285 residents registered on election day. The County Auditor/Treasurer's office received 1547 absentee/early/military/overseas ballots, cast by township residents. For a total of 5173 ballots cast by township residents. Voter turnout in the township was 85.56%. The Board reviewed the abstract provided by Sherburne County Auditor's office. Results for town offices:

Supervisor Seat 3:	Bruce Aubol – 3182	Write-in – 37	
Supervisor Seat 4:	Mark Hedstrom – 2520	Nathan Gaida – 946	Write-in – 30
Supervisor Seat 5:	Laura Hayes – 3057	Write-in – 32	

There were no concerns or questions with the results and the Board signed the election certification to be sent to Sherburne County Auditor/Treasurer's office.

Motion to accept the results of the November 5, 2024, Town Elections by: Aubol/Hayes. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consisted of the approval of minutes from the Regular Board on October 23, 2024, and claims and payroll presented.

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

Sherriff's Report

Sergeant Derek Barrett was in attendance and reported 285 calls in the township, for the month of October 2024. Sergeant Barrett reported the traffic stops included a special project and a stop-arm

violation in the 18600 block of County Road 14. A single car rollover accident occurred at Old County Road 79 and County Road 15 and a 2-vehicle accident on County Road 15 at 156th St. resulting in minor injuries were also reported.

Regular Business

Encroachment Agreement for SSTS line in drainage easement

The septic system for the residence of 14918 200th Ave. NW was found to be non-compliant when it was inspected prior to the property sale in 2023. The location for the new Subsurface Septic Treatment System (SSTS) was limited due to structure and well locations. The new SSTS design places the drain field in a drainage easement. Sherburne County Planning & Zoning notified the applicant they would need to get an encroachment agreement from the Town Board, before a permit would be issued to construct the new SSTS. The SSTS was supposed to have been replaced prior to the property sale in 2023. However, due to declining weather the system was unable to be constructed prior to the property sale. Sherburne County allowed the sale to proceed, providing money was placed in escrow for the construction of a new SSTS. The deadline for the new SSTS was set as no later than 1-year after the property sale (end of 2024). The company originally hired to install the SSTS, failed to apply for an encroachment agreement. Therefore, the construction of the SSTS did not occur. The property owner has been granted an extension by Sherburne County and hired Finley Excavating, LLC. to install the SSTS.

Nick Schadewald, from Finley Excavating, LLC. has made application with the town clerk, provided the necessary escrow funds, and documentation needed to draft an encroachment agreement. Nick is hoping the weather will hold so he can get the SSTS built, yet this year.

Supervisor Alford's went to the property earlier this year, to review the drainage easement for a different issue. He reported the location for the proposed SSTS drain field will not cause an issue to the drainage.

Motion/Second to approve encroachment agreement for property located at 14918 200th Ave. NW Elk River, MN, PID# 10-00430-0230 by: Alford's/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alford's, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Naming representative and alternate to Sherburne County Planning & Zoning Advisory Commission

The Township participates in a Joint Agreement with Sherburne County for the Planning & Zoning of the township land. For this reason, the township is given a seat for township representation, on the County's Planning & Zoning Advisory Commission. The term for the seat is a three-year term, with the current term expiring on December 31, 2024. Planning & Zoning has requested the Town Board make appointments for the township's representative and alternate for the term beginning on January 1, 2025, and running through December 31, 2027, prior to the Planning Commission meeting on December 4, 2024. Supervisor Aubol is currently the township's representative, and Supervisor Hedstrom is the alternate. Both Supervisors expressed interest in continuing service on the Planning Commission.

Motion/Second to appoint Supervisor Bruce Aubol as the township's representative and Supervisor Mark Hedstrom as the township's alternate to the County Planning Commission by: Aubol/Alford's. Approved by: Alford's, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Determine 2025 QSEHRA benefit limits

During the September 25, 2024, meeting, the Board authorized continued participation in the QSEHRA HSA benefit and decided to keep the same plan design, using the IRS publication 502 to determine what items are reimbursable. At that time the IRS had not released 2025 allowed medical expense amounts for 2025. Team members at Benafica, the Town's HRA administrator, notified the Clerk the IRS released the 2025 Contribution Limits for Qualified Small Employer Health Reimbursement Arrangements: Self-Only Coverage Annually: \$6,350.00 and Family Coverage Annually: \$12,800.00. Currently the Clerk and Deputy Clerk positions receive the full single benefit amount set by the federal government. The Treasurer position receives 50% of the single benefit amount set by the federal government. The Board decided to continue the same plan coverages for the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, and Treasurer at the 2025 self-only coverage limits.

Motion/Second to increase the coverage limits to reflect the 2025 IRS contribution limits: Clerk and Deputy Clerk \$6,350.00 annually and Treasurer \$3,175.00 annually by: Hedstrom/Hayes. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. None abstained. Motion Prevailed.

Receive Hospital District Dissolution Letter

Clerk Kimberly-Maas informed the Board that the Town received a letter from the on November 7, 2024, from the Monticello-Big Lake Community Hospital, giving notice that the District was officially dissolved. The dissolution was the result of an agreement between the District and CentraCare Health and the purchase of the health care facility campus. The remaining District funds were divided and dispersed to the seven communities that comprised the District. Each community, including the Town of Big Lake, received \$ 353.42.

Motion/Second to accept the dissolution letter from the Monticello-Big Lake Community Hospital and the Town's share of the District's remaining funds by: Aubol/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Declaring a Temporary Vacancy of Town Office

Supervisor Alfords normally leaves the state in the winter months. He contacted Clerk Maas requesting she research the ability for the Board to temporarily vacate his seat, when this occurs. He indicated that he felt giving an interested person the opportunity to the duties of Town Supervisor during his absence would benefit the Town in the long run. Clerk Maas has confirmed it is at the discretion of the Board if they would like to temporarily vacate an office. MN Statute 367.03 which governs Annual Elections of Officers, Vacancies, and Special Elections. Subd. 7 of the statutes states, "...a vacancy in a town office may be declared by the town board when an officer is unable to serve in the office or attend board meetings for a 90-day period because of illness, or because of absence from or refusal to attend board meetings for a 90-day period. If any of the preceding conditions occurs, the town board may, after the board by resolution has declared a vacancy to exist, make an appointment to fill the vacancy at a regular or special meeting for the remainder of the unexpired term or until the ill or absent member is again able to resume duties and attend board meetings, whichever is earlier. If the vacancy is in the office of supervisor, the vacancy must be filled by an appointment committee made up of the remaining supervisors and the town clerk. If the original member is again able to resume duties and attend board meetings, the board shall by resolution so determine and remove the appointed officeholder and restore the original member to office."

Supervisor Hedstrom said he felt there would be no need to temporarily vacate Supervisor Alfords' seat when Alfords is out of state, since he can attend meetings via Zoom. Supervisor Alfords said he is going to be in state for the foreseeable future but wants the other Board members to keep in mind there is an option to rely on the statute, should he or any other supervisor need to be absent from board duties for a temporary, extended timeframe. No action required or taken.

Automatic garage door openers

Supervisor Hayes informed the Board the Building and Parks Committee requested staff investigate the cost to have automatic door openers installed on the four garage doors on the west end of the town hall. These doors are heavy and automatic door openers would be beneficial in avoiding a renter from injuring themselves when opening the doors. They would also eliminate the need for renters to remember to secure the overhead doors with the manual sliding locks. Staff received an estimate from Victory Door Systems, Inc for the purchase and installation of four door openers. There will no keypads installed for access from the exterior of the building. potential injury to renters who use the garage, The proposal total for the purchase and installation of four door openers, 4 interior single-button wall controls, and photo safety eyes: \$1,892.00.

Motion/Second to accept the proposal from Victory Door Systems, Inc. for the purchase and installation of four garage door openers in the amount of \$1,892.00 by: Aubol/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Road report

Supervisor Alfords said there were some concerns brought to him regarding the dispatch of plows on

October 31st. However, the roads were in poor driving conditions and sending the plows was the safer route. A lot of trimming and brushing has been accomplished, all the 35 MPH regulatory signs have been installed, and the order for other road signs has been received. Those signs will be installed in the upcoming weeks.

Business from the Board – Committee Reports/Updates

Supervisor Aubol attended the BLFD Joint Powers Board meeting the previous night. The JPB decided to authorize the purchase of a reader board for the safety of fire members and traveling public at fire response scenes. The JPB also decided to give credit to members who have previous experience at other departments, by starting their pay rate at the level of service that is same as their previous experience – lateral pay plan. The JPB received estimates to have the truck bay floors resurfaced. A recommendation from the JPB will be presented at the next town board meeting. Instead of a committee meeting on February 4, 2024, the full Joint Powers Board will meet to review the staffing study and the recommendations from the Town and City’s Joint Meeting.

Treasurer’s Business & Report

Treasurer Warneke reviewed the Treasurer’s Report and financial statements with the Board. He informed the Board he is expecting the second tax settlement soon. He highlighted the unexpected \$13,000.00 worth of lots sold, in the Bailey Station Cemetery this year. Accounts balances highlighted in the report included the general fund (\$297,161.16), road fund (\$ 977,372.63), and Big Lake fire fund (\$47,814.17). The town treasury ending balance (less escrows) after payment of approved claims was \$2,615,572.89 and escrow funds balance of \$141,264.41. The total town treasury balance: \$2,756,837.30.

Motion/Second to approve the Treasurer’s report by: Hayes/Alfords. Approved by: Aubol, Alfords, 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.*

Open Forum

Bret Collier addressed the Board expressing his concern with the construction of sidewalks on the west side of County Road 43. He noted the sidewalk will be in township properties from the round-about at CR43 and 205th Ave. The projected cost to build the sidewalk is \$100,000.00 which will need to be maintained by the township at additional cost to township residents. He acknowledged some of the construction money is coming from grant funds. But those funds are collected through taxes. Maintenance of the sidewalks will be the responsibility of the town and township residents will pay for it, even though the sidewalk will mostly serve city residents. He believes there is no need for these sidewalks, since there are paths on the west side of CR43 which are and will continue to be used by students to get to the school’s campuses..

Announcements

- Town office will be Closed Thanksgiving & Friday following (11/28 & 11/29)
- Next Regular Meeting Wednesday December 11, 2024 @ 6PM.

Adjournment:

Motion/Second to adjourn Regular Board Meeting at 6:58 PM by: Hayes/Alfords. Approved by: Aubol, Alfords, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion prevailed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Clerk

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

Bruce Aubol, Chair

Attest: _____
Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Town Clerk