



TOWN ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday March 12, 2024 6:00PM

The Town of Big Lake Electorate met, for their Annual Meeting, on Tuesday March 12, 2024 at the Town of Big Lake Town Hall, located in the Big Lake Township's Lions Park at 21960 County Road 5 NW, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, at 6:00PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. resident and Treasurer Ken Warneke, Jim Johnson - resident and Town Representative on CentraCare Hospital Board, seven (7) residents, and one newspaper reporter were in attendance.

Election of a Meeting Moderator

Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas opened the floor for the nomination of a moderator. Laura Hayes nominated Bret Collier to moderate the meeting which was seconded by Mark Hedstrom. Mr. Collier accepted the nomination. Electorate Voted unanimously to approve Bret Collier moderator for the 2024 Annual Meeting. Motion Prevailed

Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second to dispense with the reading of and approve the 2023 March 14, 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes and the September 13, 2023 Reconvened Annual Meeting Minutes by Bruce Aubol/Dean Brenteson. Unanimous electorate approval. Motion Prevailed.

Big Lake Township Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP)

The Township was mandated to develop this plan by the MPCA under their Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. The Township was required to develop, implement and enforce a storm water pollution prevention program (SWPPP). The Town's SWPPP is designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants, protect water quality and satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Big Lake Township's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and MS4 Permit application was received and the Permit was reissued in 2021 and will be in effect through 2025.

Storm water equipment was inspected and cleared of debris, as needed. No insufficiencies were found.

MPCA Reports are submitted annually to ensure compliance. The reports are based on the previous calendar year activities. The town's 2021 report was submitted and approved by the MPCA.

Following the conclusion of the MS4 annual report for calendar year 2021, the MPCA MS4 program discontinued its use of the Snap Survey platform to host the MS4

annual report. This means MS4 permittees that have coverage under the 2020 MS4 General Permit do not need to submit annual reports for calendar years 2022 and 2023 by June 30, 2024. Instead, when the e-service is released, MS4 permittees will be expected to report MS4 activities for each previous reporting year (e.g., calendar years 2022 and 2023).

The SWPPP Document/Permit Application is available for public review at the Clerk's Office during regular business hours.

The public is invited to share any opinions or comments on the Township's SWPPP. The original application, the inventory map and the Authorization for Reapplication form is on file and available for public review at the Town Clerk's Office during regular office hours.

Moderator Collier opened the floor for any comments on the Town's SWPPP. No comments were made.

CentraCare Hospital & Board Report

Jim Johnson, Big Lake township's representative to Monticello Hospital Board gave an update on operations and activities. He shared the hospital is providing vein and vascular care, their birthing center has a NICU unit, they are in the process of renovating and updating the hospital and realized the nursing home is better operated by an agency which specializes in that arena. St. Ben's is overseeing the nursing home facility. The CentraCare St. Cloud campus plans to have a new University of Minnesota medical school at their location.

2023 Town Review

Sherburne County estimated the town's 2023 population at 8,519. There were 12 new homes constructed – an increase of 3 from 2022. The electorate finalized and certified the 2024 levy at \$2,750,000.

Residential Development

Three new plats were approved which will increase the township's lot inventory by 18. The new developments are in the County Road 43 and County Road 83 area. Pine Haven is adjacent to County 43 and has 4 lots, Meadow Estates North is located to the north of Roslyn Addition and contains 6 lots, and Meadow Estates South is to the south of Roslyn Addition and contains 10 lots.

ARPA Funds

The Town Board authorized funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to be used to make improvements to the town hall – including an upgraded security camera system, paying for some of the 2023 road improvements, and made donations toward Outdoor Options (an Options, Inc. program) and the Sherburne History Center.

Supervisor Retirement

Supervisor Norm Leslie retired in 2023.

His service to the community included the gifting of the township's Lions Park and the many improvements made to it. He was a township liaison to the Boy Scouts and

oversaw several Eagle Badge projects that have become amenities at the park. The inclusion of the small and large breed, off-leash, dog parks has become a frequented area. And a 2023 Eagle Scout project was the construction of a shelter in the large breed dog park. This is where a bench commemorating Norm will be permanently installed.

After his resignation, the town board appointed Laura Hayes to the vacated seat. This position and two other supervisor seats will be up for election on November 5, 2024.

Community Involvement

The park is host to several community events, such as the monthly Big Lake Community Food Shelf's produce distribution, annual dog vaccination clinic and nitrate testing of well water and will host the County's September Household Hazardous Waste Collection event. The town also hosts an annual Recycle Day event at its maintenance building on the third Saturday each May.

BLFD – Joint Ownership

The township and city of Big Lake are joint owners of the Big Lake Fire Department. The department serves the City of Big Lake, Big Lake Township, and 9 sections of Orrock Township. They also provide mutual aid to other local departments. In 2023 the department responded to 456 calls in 2023. There were 305 calls in the City of Big Lake, 113 in Big Lake Township, 23 in Orrock Township. And provided mutual aid service 9 times in Elk River, 3 times in Monticello, twice in Becker, and once in Clear Lake. The department took delivery of their new engine (Engine 22) and provided a traditional push-in ceremony of the truck. The town board and city council approved the purchase of a new mid-mount, platform ladder truck which is scheduled for delivery in 2025. Four new members joined the department and have finished their firefighter one, firefighter 2 and hazmat training. Three members retired in 2023. Mike Bondhus served for 32 years, Charlie Stern served for 13 years, and Jeff Johns served for 9 years before leaving the department. Members Jutin Hattesoehl and Jeremy Kokesh served with the department for 5 years each, prior to moving out of the area. Thank you, gentlemen, for your invaluable service to the community!

2023 Annual Treasurer's Report

Motion/Second to waive the reading of all checks written and funds received by the Town in 2023 by: Laura Hayes/Leah Hirsch. Unanimous electorate approval. Motion Prevailed.

Treasurer Warneke informed the electorate that the Town Board of Supervisors acts as the Board of Audit, at every town meeting. Annually they have a formal Board of Audit meeting which occurred during the February 28, 2024 meeting. The purpose of the Board of Audit is to ensure all claims, disbursements, receipts, and deposits are accurately accounted. Additionally, the town has an audit performed by a CPA firm, annually. The external audit firm will perform the 2023 audit mid-May. Ken presented the listing of all claims paid, receipts and deposits made into the town treasury in 2023 (Schedule 1 report). The town's financial transactions and bank statements were made available for review an hour prior to the commencement of the Annual Town Meeting and during the meeting. The schedule 1 report will remain posted on the bulletin board in the

meeting area, near the clerk's office. The town's funds are held at Old National Bank, Sherburne State Bank, First Bank of Elk River and in the 4M Fund. The 2023 summary financial report was provided for electorate review and was reviewed by Ken. *The summary financial statement is retained as part of the official minutes.* In 2023, the town began the year with \$3,322,106.34, received \$3,157,244.92 and spent \$3,285,018.90.

The town receives the bulk of its receipts from property taxes (87%). Additionally, the town receives money from forfeited land sales, some franchise fees, and permits. Intergovernmental revenues are received from the state in the form of market value credit and highway user (gas) tax. The funds numbered 801 and higher are escrow funds which are not considered part of the town's treasury. Most of the town revenue is from local – township, property taxes (87%). The town also receives some taxes from cable franchises in the township, some gravel tax, licensing and permits, and other misc. taxes. The town receives intergovernmental revenues as well. A motor vehicle credit, highway user tax, some county grant funds, and revenue sharing from property the town and city developed together – Big Lake Industrial Park, Marketplace, and Industrial Park East. Miscellaneous revenue generation by way of charges for services – permitting, hall rental, CUP/IUP and variances, court fines (which are placed in the road fund) and interest income from investments made over the last few years. Townships were hoping to get some additional funding through legislation to share the car parts taxes with townships. This did not happen in the 2023 session.

Roads

The town maintains 81.75 miles of roads and is its largest asset and expense. In 2023 the town performed overlay work on several segments of roads, installed a ultra-thin bituminous wear course on 205th Ave from Liberty Elementary eastward to and onto a short section of 166th St., 156th St., and 172nd St. from 198th Ave southerly for roughly ¼ mile. The shallow frost and heavy snows resulted in several potholes and cracks in the roadways. These were repaired after roads were swept of residual ice control products. Two damaged culverts were repaired and a lot of brushing and trimming work was performed. Very little snow activity during the season has allowed for the town to do a lot more trimming and brushing during the winter season. Bret Collier commented that the bump outs from the overlays done in 2023 in his neighborhood, all ended up cracking. He wondered if this was due to the milling done to allow for the overlay to be feathered into the existing driveway accesses. Dean Brenteson told Bret that these will be inspected during the spring road tour to evaluate why this occurred and what might be done to prevent it on future projects.

Presentation of 2024 Estimated Levy

Treasurer Warneke informed the electorate that the finance committee met to discuss the 2024 budget and projected 2025 levy amounts needed to provide services to the residents. He mentioned the finance committee discussed using the remaining ARPA funds – roughly \$400,000, for paving expenses, fire capital expenses, and town hall remodeling and improvements. So those projected expenses are not included in the proposed levy amounts.

The Finance Committee is recommending the 2025 levy amounts, based on 7.00% increase in tax capacity.

General Fund:	\$324,000	Road & Bridge Fund:	\$1,345,000
Big Lake Fire Fund:	\$318,000	Fire Dist. #1 Fund	\$86,000
Fire Building/Equip. Fund:	\$345,000	Cemetery Fund:	\$4,000
IP Bond:	\$57,000	Capital Expenditure:	\$ -0-
Econ. Dev./Industrial Park:	\$ -0-		
		Totaling:	\$2,479,000

This is a 9.85% reduction from the amount the electorate approved and certified for the 2024 levy.

Treasurer Warneke recommended deferring the adoption of the levy and reconvening the Annual Meeting in September to adopt and certify the levy.

Open Forum

Mark Hedstrom stated he would like to see the levy remain at the same amount as 2023 or increase slightly to avoid any large jumps in the future as was done in 2023. He mentioned the need to replace aged out signs – due to reflectivity standards, or to comply with statutory speed limits, and E911 signs that are faded, in the wrong location, or in very poor condition. He had emailed Ken to see what the levy would look like if the road fund levy remained the same as 2024. The result is a 2.3% decrease from the certified 2024 levy.

Amy Vrudny commented she would like to see E911 signs replaced in the township. She felt that many are in poor condition. Mark Hedstrom noted that older signs are of engineer grade and the new signs are DG3 which are highly reflective. She would like to see the project be moved forward to have uniformity within the township. Clerk Maas informed her that the project had been researched and quotes were obtained in 2023. At that time the cost to purchase the signs, posts, and hardware, plus installation was estimated to be \$150 - \$200 per sign. Amy wondered if cost sharing with residents could be an option, or perhaps other grant opportunities are available.

Bret Collier said he promoted the reduction in the levy, as it shows the township is being fiscally respectful toward the residents during the high inflation and poor economy the country is experiencing.

No other business presented.

Set Date and Time of 2025 Annual Meeting

Motion/Second to hold 2025 Annual Town Meeting on March 10, 2025 – per statutory requirements (MN statute 365.51), commencing at 6:00PM at Big Lake Town Hall, located at 21960 County Road 5 NW, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, Minnesota by: Bruce Aubol/Laura Hayes. Electorate voted unanimously to approve. Motion Prevailed.

Motion/Second to *tentatively set* the 2025 levy at the amounts proposed by the Township Treasurer and to recess any action on it until the annual meeting is reconvened by: Laura Hayes/Bruce Aubol. Electorate voted unanimously to approve. Motion Prevailed.

Recess

Motion/Second to recess 2024 Annual Town Meeting until September 11, 2024 at 6:00pm by: Bruce Aubol/Laura Hayes. Electorate voted unanimously to approve. Motion Prevailed.

Meeting recessed at 6:51PM

The Town of Big Lake Electorate reconvened their Annual Meeting, on Wednesday September 11, 2024, at the Town of Big Lake Town Hall, located in the Big Lake Township’s Lions Park at 21960 County Road 5 NW, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order by John Norgren, at 6:00pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, and six additional members of the town electorate (nine total including the meeting moderator, deputy treasurer, and deputy clerk), Sherburne County Sheriff’s Sargeant Derek Barret, and newspaper reporter were in attendance.

Agenda Approval

Motion/Second to approve the presented agenda made by Bruce Aubol, seconded by Eric Rosa. Vote was taken. Unanimous approval by the electorate. Motion Prevailed.

Updated Financial Report & Update to Proposed 2025 Estimated Levy

Deputy Treasurer Guthrie presented the updated the electorate with information for the 2025 levy:

The following amounts were presented to the Electorate, for consideration and approval:

General Fund:	\$ 324,000.00	
Road and Bridge Fund	\$1,553,000.00	
Big Lake Fire Fund:	\$ 318,000.00	
Fire District #1 Fund:	\$ 86,000.00	
Fire Bldg/Fire Equip:	\$ 345,000.00	
Cemetery Fund:	\$ 4,000.00	
Ind. Park Bond Redemption:	\$ 57,000.00	
Econ. Dev/Indust. Park:	<u>\$ 50,000.00</u>	
TOTAL LEVY	\$ 2,687,000.00	a decrease of 2.29% under 2024 levy.

The property tax rate is estimated to decrease by 8.69% based on the 7% increase in tax capacity.

Report Approval

Motion /Second to approve the treasury report made by Dean Brenteson. Seconded by Larry Alfords. Vote was taken. Unanimous approval by the electorate. Motion prevailed.

Meeting Moderator called for comment and discussion on the proposed levy amounts.

A question on the increase to the road and bridge fund, from the March proposal was asked. Road Committee member Dean Brenteson informed the electorate the increase was recommended due to an increase in 2024 costs which are expected to continue, as well as a

significant amount of trimming and brushing which will need to occur in 2025. No further questions or comments were made.

Approval & Certification of the 2025 Tax Levy (MS 365.10)

Mark Hedstrom moved to adopt the 2025 Levy amounts presented by Deputy Treasurer Guthrie. Motion second by Bruce Aubol. Electorate Vote: nine (9) approve. Zero (0) opposed. Zero (0) abstained. Motion prevailed.

Eric Rosa moved to certify the approved 2025 Levy amounts to Sherburne County Auditor/Treasurer by September 30, 2024. Motion second by Larry Alfords. Electorate Vote: Nine (9) approve. Zero (0) opposed. Zero (0) abstained. Motion prevailed.

Moderator Norgren announced the 2025 Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday March 11, 2025, commencing at 6:00PM at the Big Lake Town Hall.

Adjournment

Eric Rosa moved to Adjourn the Reconvened 2024 Annual Town Meeting. Motion second by Larry Alfords. Electorate voted unanimously to approve. Motion Prevailed adjourning the Reconvened Annual Meeting, at 6:08PM on September 11, 2024.

Recorded by:
Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Clerk
Town of Big Lake

Ratified this 11th day of March 2025, by the Town of Big Lake Electors.

Meeting Moderator

Attest: _____
Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Town Clerk