



Regular Board Meeting  
Wednesday February 26, 2025, 6:00 pm

The Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors met in regular session, at 6:00 PM, on Wednesday February 26, 2025, 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 Chair Bruce Aubol and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Supervisor Larry Alford – via telecommunication, per MN Statute Stat. 13D.02, Supervisor Dean Brenteson, Supervisor Laura Hayes, Supervisor Mark Hedstrom, Treasurer Kenneth Warneke, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, Big Lake Fire Chief Seth Hansen, Commander Zawacki - Sherburne County Sheriff's Department, and newspaper reporter were in attendance. Per MN Statute 13D.02 all voting was done by rollcall.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

The personnel committee requested two additions to the agenda. Item 7C. Meeting Rates & Meeting Procedures and item 7D. Staff Compensation. Motion/Second to accept the amended meeting agenda by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. Motion carried. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the agenda presented.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consists of: A) Approval of Minutes; Regular meeting of 02/26/2025. B) Approve claims and payroll presented for payment. Motion/Second to Approve consent agenda by: Brenteson/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion carried.

Big Lake Fire Department Report

Chief Seth Hansen presented the Board with updates from January 2025. Chief Seth Hansen presented the Board with updates for the month of January. He reported: the department responded to 34 calls for service in the City of Big Lake, nine (9) in Big Lake Township, one (1) in Orrock Township, and three (3) mutual aid calls. Calls of interest included five (5) fires, two (2) motor vehicle accidents (MVA), six (6) hazardous conditions, two (2) medical assists, and one missing persons search. Members participated in search and rescue, RIT, and gear inspection training. Fully certified firefighters have been attending sectional schools and officer schools. The probationary members have passed fire fighter 1 (FF1) training and are now responding to calls. They are scheduled to take their HAZMAT test the weekend of March 1, 2025, will then move on to fire fighter 2 (FF2) training, and EMR training will be conducted in Clear Lake, beginning in April. Other general updates given: Annual ladder and compressor testing has been completed; the date for member's annual physicals is being finalized; firefighters are working on renewing EVOC training, Independence Elementary students have been enjoying

visits from firefighters during their lunch, and a new FaceBook page has been created called "Firefighter Friday".

The sale of Ladder 1 has been completed and is now part of the Minden Nebraska fire department's fleet. Big Lake's new Ladder/Tower Truck is nearing completion with final inspection, the first week of March and delivery date at the end of March.

### Sheriff's Department Annual Report

Commander Zawacki was in attendance to give the Sheriff's Department's annual report. Calls for service were similar to 2022, after a slight decrease in 2023. The types of serious calls and their occurrence, in Big Lake Township in 2024: assault (44), burglary (4), narcotics (5), DUI (7), CSC (2), theft (29), CDP (22), and zero homicides. The Zimmerman Public Safety building now houses the County's backup dispatch center. There were several retirements in 2024: Correctional Officer Curtis Swanson – 20 years, Correctional Officer Doug Green – 19 years, Correctional Officer Robert Bauer – 21 years, Deputy Jamie Wrobel – 24 years, Dispatch Supervisor Jo Richmond – 17 years, Investigative Captain Ken Hanson – 28 years, Investigator James Hintermeister – 23 years, Jail Commander Brian Frank – 30 years, Jail Sergeant Jason Volkers – 25 years, and Drug Task Force K-9 Deputy Jax Retired January 21, 2025. Jax handler was Investigator Sargeant Brad Muellner. K-9 Deputy Bane will begin training in March 2025 with his handler Deputy Nick Carlson. The Emergency Response Unit of Sherburne County Sheriff's Department Took home top honors at MN Tactical Officers Association Conference in October. Top Gun and Iron Team were given as team awards and Deputy Pesta received the Top Sniper award. Members of the Department participated in the Special Olympics Torch Run, Dunkin' Donuts "Cop on a Rooftop event, Night to Unite events, and Shop with a Cop. Commander Zawacki reminded everyone that Sherburne County Sheriff's Office is on FaceBook and X (formerly Twitter).

### Regular Business

#### Petition to Vacate a Property Line Utility & Drainage Easement

The Town Clerk received a petition requesting the vacation of property line utility and drainage easement, signed by eight voters who reside within a 3-mile radius of Lot 1 & Lot 2, both in Block 1, in the plat known as Oak Savanna at Selg Farm. The owner of the property, Cherlynn Krueger, has taken the necessary steps to combine parcels 10-00566-0105 and 10-00566-0110 and would like to have the platted property line utility and drainage easements vacated. A \$500.00 escrow has been deposited with the Town, to cover any costs associated with the vacation procedure. Per Minnesota State Statute 164.07 subd. 2. (a); Within 30 days of being presented with the valid petition, the Town Board must adopt a resolution setting a date, time, and place for an easement vacation hearing. Clerk Kimberly-Maas drafted Resolution 2025-11 Setting Public Hearing for Vacation of Property Line Utility and Drainage Easement for the Board to adopt. Resolution calls for the public hearing to occur at 6:00PM, on Wednesday March 12, 2025, in the town hall.

Motion/Second to adopt Resolution 2025-11 consent agenda by: Hayes/Brenteson.  
Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion carried.

#### Health Reimbursement/QSEHRA update

The personnel committee learned they would have to offer QSEHRA to all employees at the same benefit level, since all the appointed officers – treasurer, clerk, deputy treasurer, and deputy clerk work less than 35 hours per week, which is what the IRS defines as full-time, for the purpose of QSEHRA. Because the personnel committee only wishes to offer some sort of health reimbursement benefit to Treasurer Warneke, Clerk Kimberly-Maas, and Deputy Clerk Workman, they recommended these people be given a monthly stipend in lieu of QSEHRA. They recommended the clerk and deputy clerk be considered full-time and receive a monthly stipend of \$602.00, and the treasurer be considered part-time and receive a monthly stipend of \$301.00. These figures take

into consideration that the stipends will be additional income, on which the recipients will be taxed. The personnel committee used 22% over the previously approved QSEHRA benefit levels.

Supervisor Brenteson suggested the basis for stipend be on full-time and part-time hours across all of the appointed officer positions and full-time be considered 30 hours a week and under 30 hours a week be considered part-time. Clerk Kimberly-Maas reminded the Board that the treasurer, clerk, deputy treasurer, and deputy clerk are considered officers of the town and perhaps this should be a consideration in this matter as it was when the group life insurance during the previous meeting.

Chair Aubol asked what the personnel committee would like to recommend after additional conversation was made. And Supervisor Hedstrom stated they wanted to put in place something that was removed when the Board terminated the relationship with Benefica and offer stipends in lieu of benefit to the treasurer at \$301.00 each month and the clerk and deputy clerk at \$602.00 each month.

Motion/second to pay the clerk and deputy clerk a monthly stipend of \$602.00 each month and the treasurer \$301.00 each month, retroactive to January 2025 by: Hedstrom/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

#### Meeting Rates and Supervisor Hourly

Supervisor Hedstrom noted the Board hadn't set pay rates during the reorganizational meeting. He suggested the Board maintain supervisor hourly rates at \$35.00/hour. He also recommended the meeting rates for appointed officers remain at \$100.00 since they prepare for meetings during their normal workday. However, since the supervisors must prepare for meetings as part of their meeting pay, they increase the supervisor meeting rate to \$120.00.

Supervisor Hayes noted the last time the board increased the meeting rate was four years ago and agreed with Supervisor Hedstrom on increasing the supervisor's meeting rate to \$120.00. Supervisors Brenteson and Alford were in agreement to maintain the meeting rate at \$100.00.

Motion/second to pay supervisors at \$35.00 / hour for work performed for the township by Hedstrom/Aubol. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Motion/second to pay appointed officers - treasurer, clerk, deputy treasurer, and deputy clerk, \$100.00 per meeting by: Aubol/Brenteson. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Motion/second to pay supervisors \$120.00 per meeting by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brentson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

#### Meeting Procedures

Supervisor Hedstrom stated he would like to receive the full packets the Friday before meetings. To facilitate this, information would need to be provided to the clerk in a timely manner. Supervisor Hayes informed all that she had spoken to the clerk ahead of the meeting and learned the clerk requires all information needed for meeting agenda items to be delivered to her seven (7) business days before the meeting at which the information is to be acted upon. In other words, the information needs to be in the clerk's possession the Monday of the week PRIOR to the meeting week. Clerk Kimberly-Maas noted this needs to be adhered to by everyone, including the supervisors. And the items which were added to this meeting agenda would not have been allowed, as no information was given to the clerk for distribution to the board members, to preview ahead of the meeting.

Supervisor Hedstrom stated that if there were an emergent need – such as a fine would result, only the chair would be able to add an item after the deadline.

Motion/second to require agenda item information be sent to the clerk seven (7) business days – the Monday of the week prior to the meeting, to be considered for a meeting agenda. Only the chair is able to add items to the agenda after this cutoff date by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Motion/second to have full meeting packet, including claims, to the board the Friday prior to the meeting by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

#### Treasurer and Clerk Pay

The Personnel Committee contacted the City of Big Lake and Sherburne County to find out what their agencies had decided regarding 2025 pay increases for their staff. The City of Big Lake increased their hourly pay by 3% and Sherburne County increased their pay rates 2.5% and also give individual increases based on merit. Clerk Maas mentioned the City of Zimmerman increased their staff pay rates 5% and asked if the board had received the most recent Sherburne County township's pay and benefit survey, from her. None had so she retrieved that information for the board for additional information. Neither Treasurer Warneke nor Clerk Kimberly-Maas were informed pay rates were going to be discussed and hadn't prepared recommendations for their deputies.

After reviewing the information provided the Personnel Committee suggested the Board increase the treasurer and clerk hourly rates 4% to cover cost of living increases, as well as merit increases.

Motion/second to increase the treasurer and clerk's hourly rates 4% and make the increase retroactive to January 1, 2025, by: Hayes/Brenteson. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

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

Supervisor Hedstrom will be part of the fire department contingent which will be going to Appleton, WI to do the final inspection of the new ladder truck – Tower #1.

Supervisor Aubol attended the Sherburne County Planning Commission meeting where a wine bar in a residential area was discussed in depth.

Supervisor Hayes will be absent from the March 26, 2025 meeting.

#### Roads

Supervisor Brenteson reported the town engineer is still working on the bid documents. He believes the bids will be ready to be let by the end of this week or early next week. The hope is to be able open bids the end of March. He also mentioned 172<sup>nd</sup> Street on the north side of Hwy 10 was removed from the 2025 overlay project list. Some minor repairs will be done instead.

#### Treasurer's Business

##### 2026 Levy Recommendation

Treasurer Warneke made some slight adjustments to the 2026 levy recommendations he presented at the previous meeting. Levy recommendations start by using the previous year's budget and rolling it forward. Then a formula is used to project needs for the following year. When calculating the levy the board should always aim to have 50% of the expected general and fire operating expenses, since the first property tax collection is received around mid-year. He noted the fire capital fund cash flow was worked through since the City deferred purchase of a new tender and grass rig and no trucks are projected for purchase until 2029 when the 2000 Tender 17 is slated for replacement, 2 years later – 2031 the 1996 Engine 12 is planned to be replaced. Supervisor Hedstrom said the 1996 engine – Engine 12, had been sold when Engine 22 was replaced. Treasurer Warneke noted the 1996 engine was still on the BLFD CIP for replacement and he or Becky will contact Deb Wegeleben – City Finance Director to get it removed. Treasurer Warneke also mentioned the General Capital fund has \$168,000 and there are no definite plans for the money. Clerk Kimberly-Maas stated the Building and Parks Committee had discussed expanding the office space to the south to get more room for the appointed officers and storage.

The Board approved that Treasurer Warneke use the proposed levy as recommendation at

the Annual Meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Warneke reviewed the Treasurer's Report and financial statements with the Board. He told the board the 2025 road allocation had increased from \$68,000 to \$70,000. He highlighted funds in the report general fund (\$434,267.52) and road fund (\$1,492,570.28). February 26, 2025, ending balances (less escrows) after payment of approved claims: town funds; \$2,500,992.74; escrow funds balance: \$134,064.75. The total town treasury balance: \$2,635,057.49.

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

Open Forum

NONE

Announcements

- BLFD JPB Regular Meeting – Tuesday March 4, 2025 @ 5PM, at fire station
- Town Annual Meeting Tuesday March 11, 2025 @ 6PM at Town Hall
- Next Regular Meeting Wednesday March 12, 2025 @ 6PM
- Big Lake Lions Fish Fry Friday March 21, 2025, at Big Lake Town Hall – food service begins @ 4:30PM

Adjournment:

Motion/Second to adjourn Regular Board meeting at 7:39 PM by: Hayes/Aubol. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, and Hayes. None opposed. Motion prevailed.

Accepted this 12th day of March 2025, by the Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors.

Recorded by: Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Town Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Aubol, Chairman

Attested by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Clerk