

**Annual Town Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
March 8, 2011

**TOWN of BIG LAKE**  
*"Sherburne County's First 5-Member Township Board"*

On Tuesday, March 8, 2011, the Annual Town Meeting was held at the Big Lake Town Hall, located in Lions Park Community Center, 21960 County Road 5, Big Lake Township, County of Sherburne, State of Minnesota. The election polls were open for the annual township election as posted and published from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Laura Hayes, Town Clerk, called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. There were 18 people in attendance when the meeting commenced.

**Election of a Moderator** -Mike Hayes nominated Rick Stearns to be moderator for the meeting. Jim Sanford motioned to close nominations and seconded the nomination. All voted in favor. Rick Stearns took over the meeting as moderator.

**Pledge of Allegiance** - All stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

**Approval of the Minutes** –Jim Stahlmann motioned to approve the March 9, 2010 Annual Town meeting minutes as presented, and the August 25, 2010 Re-convened Annual Meeting as presented. Norm Leslie seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report** - Norm Leslie motioned to waive reading of all checks written and received, and to read a synopsis. Mike Hayes seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed. Treasurer Warneke reviewed the Revenues and Intergovernmental Revenues received during 2010 totaling \$1,463,470. Treasurer Warneke advised the gas tax received has been increasing, noting a few years ago it was approximately \$35,000. and is now nearly \$42,000. Treasurer Warneke reviewed Expenditures made during 2010 totaling \$1,514,947. He noted of this amount, \$622,963. or 41% are capital expenditures. Treasurer Warneke advised maintenance of the roads costs \$4,284. per mile. Treasurer Warneke advised developer escrows are held for unfinished projects. Treasurer Warneke advised the electorate that the Town Board of Supervisors conducts a Board of Audit each month through the process of reviewing receipts and approving payment of claims. The Board held the annual audit of all financial records for the year ending December 31, 2010 at the February 23, 2011 Regular Monthly Board Meeting. The clerk maintained throughout the year, the CTAS accounting software program for Town Clerk's from the State Auditor's Office to record these details. The Treasurer and Deputy Clerk maintained throughout the year, the CTAS accounting software program for Town Treasurer's from the State Auditor's Office to record these details. An outside CPA audit is conducted annually. The 2010 audit will be conducted in May of 2011. Treasurer Warneke advised the Township has been spending down its reserves to keep the tax levy as low as possible. Jim Sanford inquired about the revenue received by the City Revenue Sharing portion; and asked if this was received because the

Township is half owner of the 1992 OAA area and receives a return on their investment in perpetuity. Treasurer Warneke confirmed that was correct.

### **Annual Town Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2011

Page 2

**Annual Fire Report** - Big Lake Fire Chief, Randy Miller advised the Big Lake Fire Department ended the year with a total of 208 emergency calls, which is similar to previous years. 2009 – 183; 2008-227; and 2007-228. The call breakdowns were 44% to City of Big Lake, 39% to Big Lake Township, 10% to Orrock Township and 7% were mutual aid. Total hours spent on call were 3803, which is up from 2009 with 3248 hours. Total training and work details were also up from 2009. At this time there are 31 fire fighters on the roster out of 35 positions. Eight of the fire fighters have 20 years or more of service. The department will be looking to recruit four to five new members in the near future. Chief Miller advised training is and will continue to be one of the highest priorities. He advised the department officers include one chief, one assistant chief, four captains and two training officers. He noted the department responded to three structure fires in 2010. He further advised the fire department is not considering any large expenditures in the near future. The next major purchase would be in approximately two-years with the purchase of Self Contained Breather Apparatus (SCBA's), which include a bottle, harness and facemask for each fire fighter. Currently, the lights in the building are being considered for replacement at a total cost of \$3,000. to \$3,500.

**Hospital Board Report** - New River Medical Center CEO, Marshall Smith presented the 2010 annual report. The New River Medical Center is a Critical Access Hospital facility operating 25 beds. On average the hospital has 15 of those beds filled daily. New River also operates an 89-bed skilled care nursing facility that also provides rehabilitation programs. 565 babies were born at New River in 2010 and there were 24,010 outpatient visits and 13,054 emergency room visits. The Board of Directors reduced the tax levy \$200,000. to \$800,000. in 2010 and continues plans to reduce the levy over the next 4-years. In 2010 New River upgraded to digital mammography to provide the latest technology for breast cancer detection. The Legal Status Committee was formed in 2010 and began meeting in July. The purpose of the committee was to become educated on various hospital legal structure options including hospital district, 501c3 non-profit and lease and sale options. The committee is currently reviewing models; they have not formulated a recommendation. Big Lake Township Supervisor Jim Stahlmann is a member of the Legal Status Committee. Rick Stearns inquired about the status Otsego's membership in the hospital district; and, if there has been impact on the hospital since the opening of the Maple Grove Hospital. Marshall Smith advised Otsego took the ruling to the Court of Appeals and the Court found in favor of the hospital district. He further advised the Maple Grove Hospital and New River Medical Center have been able to work together without competition.

**Open Forum** – No requests for the Town Board to consider; or, requests to consider when setting the proposed 2012 levy were presented. Sherburne County Commissioner, Ewald Petersen advised the University of MN and several state agency's drafted a 200-page report to the legislature regarding water resources in the State of Minnesota. Within this report there is a recommendation to charge fees on all private domestic wells and irrigation wells. There will be more to come in the future on this issue.

**Past Years Report of the Town** - Big Lake Town Board Chairman, Bob Hofer gave a report of Township activity from the past year.

### **Annual Town Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2011

Page 3

### **January 2010**

The City and Township approved the appointment of 4 new firefighters to the Big Lake Fire Department.

### **March 2010**

Annual Town Election was held on March 9. Bob Hofer and Norm Leslie were both re-elected for 3-year terms each.

### **April 2010**

Big Lake Lion's Park playground equipment removal occurred April 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Installation of the new equipment was done April 23<sup>rd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup>. The project went very well even though it rained. Supervisor Leslie coordinated the project and worked closely with the Minnesota/Wisconsin Playground Project Supervisor. Both did an excellent job and the playground has been used everyday since it was installed. Township Supervisors donated time and equipment for the project. It would not have been possible to do such a large project without the help of volunteers from the Big Lake American Legion, Big Lake Lion's Club, Big Lake Fire Department, and several community volunteers. The approximate total cost of the project was \$37,500. \$40,000. had been budgeted.

### **May 2010**

Annual Clean Up Day was held May 1<sup>st</sup>.

There were 681 loads through the gate, an increase of 23 loads from 2009. 24.23 tons of tires were collected. 16.51 tons of electronic waste. 92.52 tons of batteries and general waste. 40.59 tons of scrap metal.

### **June 2010**

Awarded the 2010 Seal Coat Bid to the low bidder, Asphalt Surface Technologies Corporation (ASTECH). Four bids had been received. The Engineer's estimate was \$117,000. The high bid received was \$111,820; the low bid received was \$96,980.

Awarded the 2010 Road Improvement Project to the low bidder, Knife River Corporation in the total amount of \$266,706.35. Three bids had been received. The engineer's estimate was \$252,000. and was based partially on bituminous costs estimated at \$45. to \$47 dollars per ton using spring 2010 prices.

## **July 2010**

Treasurer Ken Warneke presented the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Year Ended December 31, 2009 conducted by a Certified Public Accountant. Big Lake Township has

## **Annual Town Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2011

Page 4

received a clean opinion and, the Township is in compliance with government standards of accounting.

## **August 2010**

State Primary Election Held – all went well.

On August 24<sup>th</sup> Town Road paving was completed.

Treasurer Warneke presented 2010 budget and 2011 proposed levy information. He advised the Township has lost the majority of its Market Value Credit in the amount of \$45,000. He further advised he didn't anticipate receiving any in 2010 or 2011.

The Reconvened Annual Meeting was held August 25. The 2011 tax levy was approved in the amount of \$1,070,000.

## **October 2010**

Computation of the 2009-2010 Aspen Hills Wastewater Treatment Facility Project Cost was completed. All 78-property owners in Aspen Hills were advised in writing of the amount of the project and the portion of the project cost they are responsible for. The total cost of the project was \$307,216.75, which is \$3,938.68 for each of the 78 lots.

## **November 2010**

The General Election was held – all went well.

211<sup>th</sup> Avenue was reviewed for consideration of a spring 2011 road project.

The Township was notified funding has been obtained by the County to enable County Road 5 and 73 bridge reconstructions to be moved up to the summer of 2011. Bids will be let in January.

## **December 2010**

The Township discussed with Rhonda Lewis, Sherburne County Engineer, about the possibility of including construction of a passing lane in front of the Town Hall entrance on County Road 5 during the County Road 5 Bridge Reconstruction. The County Road 5 and 73 bridge reconstructions will be done simultaneously to allow the contractor to do each step of the

project at the same time at each site. The entire project is expected to last 3 to 4 months during 2011.

Rhonda Lewis also advised the Township of Sherburne County's proposed plan to realign 193<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and create a four-legged intersection with right and left turn lanes during the reconstruction of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 43 in 2012.

**Annual Town Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2011

Page 5

**Bailey Station Cemetery** – Clerk Hayes reported the Bailey Station Cemetery Board met on Saturday, May 22, 2010 at 8 a.m. at Bailey Station Cemetery. This was a working meeting. The Board walked the cemetery grounds and cleaned up debris from the winter. Approximately eleven (11) columbarium niches have been purchased to date, and approximately seven burial lots were sold in 2010.

**Big Lake Township Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP)** – Clerk Hayes invited the public to share any opinions or comments on the Township's SWPPP. The SWPPP is the "Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program". 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 stormwater pollution prevention program designed to reduce the discharge of the pollutants to protect water quality and to satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan was drafted and submitted to the MPCA on November 14, 2007. The Township submitted its first annual report for calendar year 2007 due in June 2008; and has submitted it annually since. During the April 2008 Annual Town Road Tour, the road committee took an inventory of Township storm drainage facilities. These outlets have been mapped and are inspected annually during the Town Road Tour. Since April 2009 the road committee has inspected these 12 culverts, greater than 18" in size, located under Township roads, and found no deficiencies or outside activities present. The plan is on file at the Clerk's Office and is available for public review anytime during business hours.

**Old Business** – There was no old business presented for discussion.

**New Business** – Sherburne County Commissioner, Ewald Petersen advised the County Board reappointed Marc Schneider as weed inspector for 2011. He further advised the Minnesota Department of Agriculture has made several changes to the list of invasive weeds and weeds to be eradicated. He advised the County is feeling the push to offer more public health services. As of January 1, 2011 the Public Health and Human Services Departments were combined. The County Road 73 and 5 bridge replacement projects are in process. County Road 11 from the T.H. 25 bridge to Highway 10, in Becker Township will be milled and overlaid. MNDOT will be constructing double left turn lanes on T.H. 25 at County Road 11.

**Election Results** - Moderator, Rick Stearns announced the election results as follows:

Supervisor Seat #3:	Mike Hayes	60
Write-Ins:		0

The Board of Canvass will meet at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 to certify the election results.

**Proposed Levy for 2012** - Treasurer Warneke presented the proposed levy amounts, which were prepared by Town Board's Finance Committee.

**Annual Town Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2011

Page 6

General Fund	\$	80,000.
Road Fund	\$	600,000.
Big Lake Fire Fund	\$	133,000.
Cemetery Fund	\$	0.
Fire District #1 Fund	\$	35,000.
Fire Bldg./Equip. Fund	\$	0.
Economic Development	\$	9,000.
CIP Bond Redemption	\$	59,000.
Capital Expenditure Fund	\$	<u>100,000.</u>
Proposed 2012 Levy	\$	1,016,000.

The proposed levy for 2012 is a decrease of \$54,000. from 2011. Treasurer Warneke reviewed the estimated 2012 tax values, rate comparisons and tax capacities. The finance committee met and drafted the proposed budget. They planned for a 5% tax capacity decrease when preparing this levy proposal. The finance committee intended for the tax rate to remain level. Treasurer Warneke advised the 2011 tax levy proposal was based on an anticipated 2%, which was actually a 5% decrease. Treasurer Warneke recommended accepting the report as tentative and finalizing the levy at the reconvened annual meeting on August 24, 2011. Bob Hofer motioned to accept preliminary report and set the final levy at the Reconvened Annual Meeting on August 24, 2011. Jim Sanford seconded. All present were in favor. The motion carried.

**Next Annual Meeting** - Richard Helms motioned to set the date of March 13, 2012 for the next annual meeting, immediately following the closing of the polls at the Big Lake Town Hall. Bob Hofer seconded. All present voted in favor. The motion passed.

**Last Call for Business From the Floor** –Sherburne County Commissioner, Ewald Petersen advised that he thought the Treasurer's projections were accurate. He advised it is anticipated the state legislature will be making significant changes again to the Green Acres law this year. It has been proposed that the South Western Minnesota 5 county valuation basis be eliminated and that control will be returned to the local assessor rather than the department of revenue. Jim Sanford inquired if this will raise the valuation on farmland in Sherburne County. Commissioner Petersen advised it would increase.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Jim Sanford to recess the annual meeting until August 24, 2011, at approximately 8:00 p.m. at which time the levy, tentatively set at \$1,016,000. will be finalized. Bob Hofer seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed. The meeting recessed at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Laura Hayes,  
Town Clerk