

Monthly Board Meeting
Minutes
January 13, 2016

TOWN of BIG LAKE
“Sherburne County’s First 5-Member Township Board”
P.O. Box 75, Big Lake, Minnesota 55309

On Wednesday, January 13, 2016 the Big Lake Board of Supervisors met at the Big Lake Town Hall located in the Big Lake Lions Park Community Center at 21960 County Road #5, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, State of Minnesota. The meeting was tape recorded for transcribing purposes only.

Chairman Hofer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There were 8 people in the audience at the start of the meeting. Roll call was taken by the Chairman.

Board Members Present: Bob Hofer, Chairman
 Norm Leslie, Supervisor
 Bruce Aubol, Supervisor
 Steve Pflieghaar, Supervisor
 Ken Warneke, Treasurer
 Laura Hayes, Clerk
 Samantha Peterson, Deputy Clerk

Board Members Absent: Larry Alford, Supervisor

All present stood and recited the pledge of allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Supervisor Leslie motioned to approve the agenda. Supervisor Pflieghaar seconded. All were in favor. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the agenda as presented.

Supervisor Pflieghaar motioned to approve consent agenda items. The consent agenda consisted of: a) Approval of Minutes: Regular Monthly Board Meeting 12-9-15. b) Call the Quarterly Meeting of the Sherburne County Association of Townships Meeting January 20, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at Sherburne County History Center. c) Adopt Resolutions 2016-01 Resolution to Adopt Amendments to the Big Lake Township Zoning Ordinances. d) Approve List of Election Judges to choose from for March 8, 2016 Township Election. e) Approve Resolution 2016-02 Setting the Absentee Ballot Board for the March 8, 2016 Town Election. f) Set Date for Local Board of Appeal & Equalization: Thursday, April 14, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. Big Lake Town Hall. g) Renew 2016 Big Lake Chamber of Commerce Membership; and, participation in the 2016 Big Lake Chamber Business Expo. Sunday, March 6, 2016. h) Approve Resolution 2016-03 Accepting Donations to the Big Lake Fire Department. i) Approve List of Claims (Disbursement List will be Received at Meeting). Supervisor Aubol seconded. All present were in favor.

Commander Steve Doran, Sherburne County Sheriff's Department advised the Sheriff's Department responded to 224 calls in the past month. That is an increase of 28 calls from December, mostly traffic related.

Big Lake Fire Chief, Paul Nemes advised the Big Lake Fire Department responded to 19 calls in December and have responded to 8 calls so far in January. January training drills were very in depth training for responding to rail car accidents involving Bakken crude oil. The Fire Department held its annual Christmas party and appreciation dinner on January 9. 10 year service awards were given to Jim Jenson and Derrick Gloege. Mike Bondus was recognized for 25 years of service. Mike Bondus and Kyle Breffle tied for most training points. Chris Brezinka received recognition for highest call percentage at 80%, the average is 42%. The Big Lake Fire Department Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's) have been updated with several additions in section 2 and the addition of a Code of Ethics, signed by each Firefighter.

OPEN FORUM

Joe Tierney, Sunrise Energy Ventures, Minnetonka, MN (SEV MN 1, LLC) appeared before the Board regarding the 1979 established cartway access to the proposed solar garden project owned by Jim Sanford. Joe Tierney advised Jim Sanford is only interested in vacating the cartway contingent upon getting approval of the IUP for the solar garden. There was discussion regarding the process for vacating a cartway, which is treated the same as a road vacation. Clerk Hayes advised she would send the procedure to Joe Tierney. Nancy Riddle, Sherburne County Zoning Administrator was present in the audience, she advised, in Sherburne County the setbacks for cartways are the same as roads.

BUSINESS FROM THE CLERK

Big Lake HoldCo, LLC; Gordy Simanton, Solar Stone Partners/Requesting a 65' Variance from the North property Line to allow for a 20' setback for inclusion of an essential service communication pole 85' in height – Gordy Simanton and Kaya Tarhan, chief development officer at Solar Stone Partners appeared before the Board to present the variance request. Gordy Simanton advised a typical site is at least 30 acres; therefore, this 26.71 acres site is slightly undersized. Kaya Tarhan advised Xcel Energy has requested the communication pole for security and safety communication transmissions. The pole is being located on the north side of the property to reduce shadowing onto the panels, which could cause a panel(s) to shut down. There was discussion regarding the need to keep the pole from leaving the property boundary in the event it is brought down unexpectedly; and, how the surrounding properties could change and be developed 25 years in the future. Supervisor Aubol motioned to recommend denial of the request as presented. Supervisor Leslie seconded. All present were in favor.

Big Lake HoldCo, LLC; Gordy Simanton, Solar Stone Partners /Requesting a Variance from the requirement that vegetative screening be installed around the perimeter of the proposed community solar garden - Gordy Simanton and Kaya Tarhan advised the

panels will be 15' high and will be 500' and 800' from the nearest residences. The site will have a chain link fence on the property line for security. Supervisor Aubol noted again, the possible change in the surrounding property in the future and therefore, 15' panels would be very visible and impacted by shadowing. Supervisor Aubol recommended strongly that the applicants work with adjacent property owners to acquire more land so variances wouldn't be necessary and this wouldn't be an undersized parcel for this use. There was discussion that without the variances this could reduce the garden to 4 Megawatts from 5. Supervisor Aubol inquired if it is cost effective to reduce to 4 Megawatts. Solar Stone Partner representatives advised they would have to run calculations to determine that; but, adding more acreage to the project site would require an EAW be completed which adds cost to the project. Supervisor Aubol motioned to recommend denial of the request as presented. Supervisor Pfliegerhaa seconded. All present were in favor.

Big Lake HoldCo, LLC; Gordy Simanton, Solar Stone Partners /Requesting a 30' Variance from the North, South, East & West property lines (EACH A SEPARATE VARIANCE) for construction of a Minnesota Community Solar Garden Project. Required setback is 50' (20' from property line) - Gordy Simanton and Kaya Tarhan advised the panels would be fixed, non-moving. There would be no change to the grading and no footings would be necessary for mounting the panels. Inside of the facility area, there would be a maintenance road. Supervisor Aubol recognized the desire to maximize the size of the property noting these four (4) variance requests are less concerning to him than the vegetation and communication pole variances. Supervisor Aubol motioned to recommend approval of the four (4) 30' property line variance requests as presented. Supervisor Leslie seconded. All present were in favor.

Clerk Hayes inquired if the Board would be interested in making a recommendation on the IUP for the solar garden, noting a recommendation would be contingent upon the variances being granted. Supervisor Aubol advised he preferred to take action on the variance requests first and the IUP at a later date.

Other-Updates-Meetings/Discuss Purchase of a Pallet of Salt - Clerk Hayes advised Don Kampa had inquired about the cost of salt by the pallet rather than by the bag. The difference is \$2.82 per bag by the pallet rather than \$4.99 each. Supervisor Pfliegerhaa motioned to approve purchase of a pallet of salt. Supervisor Leslie seconded. All present were in favor.

BUSINESS FROM THE SUPERVISORS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

TOWN ROADS

1) Other-Updates-Meetings – Treasurer Warneke advised there have been complaints regarding snow removal and ice control in some areas. The road committee will meet and discuss their approach to addressing these concerns. Treasurer Warneke advised the road committee hasn't met with the Township Engineer regarding spring road plans yet.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Hofer advised he had received the Highway 25 Corridor Coalition Joint Powers Agreement from the City of Monticello. Participants in the Joint Powers Agreement would be Sherburne County, Wright County, City of Monticello, City of Big Lake and Town of Big Lake. The proposed funding formula for the annual budget would be Sherburne County and Wright County evenly splitting 50% of the total cost. The cities and Big Lake Township would split the remaining 50% of the total cost. The total annual budget is approximately \$8,000. The contributions would be expected January, annually. Consideration of the JPA will be placed on the January 27, 2016 Big Lake Township agenda for action by the Board.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Other-Updates-Meetings – Supervisor Aubol advised Big Lake Community Education held an open house for ECFE at Liberty School. Approximately 40 families/80 children attended. Attendance for the Tonic Sol Fa concert in November was down. Proceeds from ticket sales were split with the community education program. Auditions begin next week for the community musical, The Little Mermaid. The Early Childhood coalition will start January 27th. The swimming pool at the high school has been rented consistently and is used regularly. Community Education will publish 4 programming brochures in 2016.

Supervisor Leslie advised the brush piles at the township park were burned last week.

BUSINESS FROM THE TREASURER

a) Monthly Report –Treasurer Warneke advised he has been watching the rates in the 4M fund. No investments have been made yet. One of several older escrow funds have been refunded. Treasurer Warneke gave updates on the financial audit proposals he has received and who other Sherburne County Townships are using for their audit services. A copy of the proposal from Schlenner Wenner & Co. from St. Cloud was given to each Board Member for review. There was brief discussion. Supervisor Aubol motioned to hire Schlenner Wenner & Co. contingent upon Treasurer Warneke's final inquiries being answered satisfactorily. Supervisor Pflighaar seconded. All present were in favor. Treasurer Warneke reviewed the Cash Control Statement year ending 2015 and the General Fund, Road Fund, Big Lake Fire Fund, Economic Development and General Capital Funds ending 2015. He advised no detail reports for 2016 would be available until 2015 is closed in the CTAS accounting system. Supervisor Pflighaar motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report. Supervisor Leslie seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

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ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Supervisor Leslie to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Pflughar seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Hayes, Clerk

Robert Hofer, Chairman