

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

On Wednesday, November 9, 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.

Chairman Hofer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. There were 6 people in the audience at the start of the meeting. Roll call was taken.

Board Members Present:     Bob Hofer, Chairman  
                                   Steve Pflgebraar, Supervisor  
                                   Norm Leslie, Supervisor  
                                   Bruce Aubol, Supervisor  
                                   Larry Alfords, Supervisor  
                                   Laura Hayes, Clerk  
                                   Ken Warneke, Treasurer  
                                   Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Clerk

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

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

Supervisor Leslie motioned to approve consent agenda items. The consent agenda consisted of: a) Approval of the Minutes: Regular Monthly Meeting 10-12-16; Second Monthly Meeting 10-26-16. b) Approve the Claims & Payroll and List of Claims & Payroll. Supervisor Pflgebraar seconded. All were in favor.

**BUSINESS FROM THE CLERK**

a) Solarstone Partners IUP for Placement of Five (5) Electrical Utility Poles for the Interconnection of 5 Megawatt Solar Garden to Xcel’s Electrical Energy Grid – Gordy Simanton and Kaya Tarhan, Chief Development Officer for Solarstone Partners appeared before the Board to present the request for the IUP. They advised the application had been changed to show eighteen (18) poles and would be presenting their request tonight to the Board referencing 18 poles. Supervisor Aubol inquired if the lines could be underground, if poles less than 35’ could be used or if a transformer system could be used instead. The applicants advised none of these options were available due to the voltage of the line. It was noted 3 polls were necessary for every megawatt of power. Supervisor Aubol expressed his concern with the pole gallery as presented and noted it was deceptive to start the project and not show the poles in the site plan. He further noted shadowing from a single communication pole had been noted as a major issue when the original IUP was requested, prior to the site annexation. He inquired how shadowing from 18 poles would be tolerable. Supervisor Aubol again noted that he took exception to the deceptive presentation of the project from its beginning. Supervisor Alfords noted Clear Lake Township is getting a 5 megawatt solar garden and it doesn’t have poles. Kaya Tarhan advised it was the difference of having a

substation and lower voltage lines. Supervisor Alford also noted his dissatisfaction with the incomplete planning of the project and the need to bring it back in segments for consideration. The plan should be comprehensive and complete upon original presentation for consideration. Kaya Tarhan stated he agreed they (Solarstone) should know the scope of the project at the beginning of the project and disclose that. He addressed the pole shadowing question and advised it should not be an issue on the south end of the property. He further noted there has been a lot of dialogue with Xcel Energy regarding the poles; and, they (Solarstone) doesn't like to have to come back again to present more segments to the project. Supervisor Alford reiterated the need to put the entire plan together prior to presentation. He further noted that it is apparent work has begun on site which tells him there is a way to get transmission lines installed, other than overhead, or Solarstone Partners would not have broken-ground at the project site yet. This gives the appearance they have something planned to make this work whether they get these poles as proposed or not. Chairman Hofer inquired if Solarstone Partners has an easement from James and Mary Hallila, property owners, to place these poles on their property. Gordy Simanton advised Solarstone Partners is currently working with Hallila's and their attorney to create a document. Supervisor Aubol motioned to not forward any recommendation, at this time, for the IUP request; and, Solarstone Partners come back to the Town Board with a pole interconnection plan that is ground based. Underground or closer to the ground, such as a transformer. This plan must be presented in a complete site plan to be considered by the Town Board. Supervisor Pflieger seconded. All were in favor.

b) Big Lake Township Financial Participation in Big Lake City Branch of GRRL Library Site – City Finance Director, Deb Wegeleben appeared before the Board. The Board received a 5 page letter from City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt which included the requested City of Big Lake annual budget and expenses for operating the library. Treasurer Warneke inquired about the wages and insurance line item. Deb Wegeleben advised that was the city staff time for administration of the building. There was discussion regarding other line items, comparing the building cost per square footage; and, confusion by room users going to Cargill's business location because the program room was titled the "Cargill Room". Supervisor Pflieger further discussed the change in use and name of the "Cargill Room" program room. It was noted the City has stated that changing the name did not change the use of the room. The room is used by all community groups with priority given to the library. Supervisor Alford noted the Township has a community room, the Town Hall, used by many community groups and is funded solely by the Township and rental income. Supervisor Pflieger advised he felt the community room should be removed from the library cost analysis. Deb Wegeleben commented that could be done, and it would most likely change the preferential use the library receives for the room. In closing it was determined the request to remove the community room from the cost analysis would be brought back to City Administrator, Clay Wilfahrt and the discussion and review of the analysis would be turned back to the library committee members.

## BUSINESS FROM THE SUPERVISORS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

### TOWN ROADS

Township Engineer, Ross Abel advised he has received only one quote for the 187<sup>th</sup> Avenue storm sewer repair. The quote received from Schendzielos excavating in the amount of \$13,630. The engineer's estimate is \$10,065. Supervisor Alford motioned to

allow the road committee to award the quote, not to exceed \$13,630. Supervisor Pfliegerhaas seconded. All were in favor. Chairman Hofer inquired if the Township would have any liabilities if they don't finish before snow and/or freeze. Treasurer Warneke advised the site would be barricaded if that were to be the situation.

Chairman Hofer and Supervisor Alfords noted the culvert on 211<sup>th</sup> Avenue has a beaver dam and physical blockage of the road culvert. Jeff Rhodes has been asked to open up the dam. Supervisor Alfords will contact the DNR to have the beaver trapped.

#### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Hofer advised he had nothing specific to report.

#### SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Leslie advised next Monday is the EDA meeting. Park maintenance to repair a picnic table and the little digger has been arranged. The park has been winterized. The Community Education meeting was cancelled, a different night to meet is being determined.

#### BUSINESS FROM THE TREASURER

a) Monthly Report – Treasurer Warneke reported the cash balance of all funds is \$836,146.28. Mowing and crackfilling has been paid. December property tax settlement will be the next time the Township receives a significant receipt of funds. Supervisor Pfliegerhaas motioned to approve the Treasurer's report. Supervisor Aubol seconded. All were in favor.

#### OTHER BUSINESS FROM THE BOARD

Supervisor Aubol noted that he anticipates that the township will hear more solar array requests in the future. The Board agreed and after discussion recommended that the Township work the Sherburne County Zoning office to develop a policy or process that will work with the current County and Township adopted Zoning Ordinance to ensure that absolute complete plans, site drawings, and all aspects of the solar farm are presented in their entirety when the first IUP review is conducted.

#### ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Supervisor Leslie to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Aubol seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Hayes, Clerk

Robert Hofer, Chairman