



Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday July 23, 2025, 6:00 pm

The Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors met in regular session, at 6:00 PM, on Wednesday July 23, 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, Supervisor Dean Brenteson, Supervisor Laura Hayes, Supervisor Mark Hedstrom, Treasurer Kenneth Warneke, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, BLFD Chief Seth Hansen, County Commissioner Raeanne Danielowski, Layne Otteson - City of Big Lake Engineer, newspaper reporter, and one member of the public were in attendance.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion/Second to accept the presented meeting agenda by: Hayes/Brenteson.

Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. Motion carried. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the amended agenda.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consisted of approval of regular meeting minutes from 07/09/2025, claims and payroll 07/10/2025 – 07/23/2025, approving early access agreement with White Bear Clothing, Co., setting Joint Powers Board Meeting with City of Big Lake at 4:00PM, on Wednesday August 13, 2025 in City Council Chambers

Motion/Second to approve the consent agenda as presented by: Hedstrom/Hayes.

Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion carried.

Big Lake Fire Department Report

Chief Seth Hansen reported the department responded to 42 calls in June, bringing the total calls for the year to 228 and calls to Orrock Township are trending up. Calls of interest included four (4) fires – 1 grass, 1 building, 1 cooking, and 1 trash; one (1) motor vehicle accident (MVA), one (1) hazardous conditions, and one (1) trench rescue. The trench rescue was at Premier Pontoon where an employee fell in a "pit" and the injury left him unable to get out on his own. Captain 3 was in charge at this call and the department's stokes basket was used to lift the victim out of the pit. Lieutenants Dornbusch and Rosa provided hands-on pump training to the department's members, in June. The final score of the annual Spudfest Guns vs Hoses softball game: BLFD 6 – BLPD 5. Five applications have been received for the current hiring campaign. Applications will be accepted until August 1st. The Department will have Tower 1 at Lake Ridge Park on August 9th from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM, for a pop-up splash pad. The event will serve a dual purpose of providing training on the Tower and community event participation.

Regular Business

County Road 43 Sidewalk – Joint Project with City of Big Lake

City of Big Lake Engineer, Layne Otteson was present to give an update on the County Road 43 sidewalk joint project. The project was awarded grant funding, which is through MNDOT and the Federal government, making the process of getting the specifications reviewed and approved slower. Layne has been working through the process of answering any questions from these agencies and hopes to have approval in time to get the project advertised in time to open bids in September and have construction commence spring of 2026. The project's costs seem to be falling in line with the initial projections with exception of the FD warning flashers – a shared expense. Layne found a system which allows for the activation of flashers only when they are needed, via key fob. This system has yet to be installed in Minnesota, so it's been difficult to get any feedback on the system. The on-demand system is also more expensive than the 24/7 systems which are in use in many other communities, such as St. Michael. The two governing bodies will need to decide which system to purchase. Chair Aubol inquired if adding a segment to the trail on the west side of County Road 43 from the city limits to the Elk River bridge. A suggestion made by Supervisor Hedstrom to add safety to those using the trail, during a previous Board meeting. Layne suggested this be part of a paving project, since trails are bituminous, whereas the sidewalks will be constructed with cement. Chair Aubol asked if there were any plans to connect the existing trail on 205th Ave eastward to 172nd St. where the City has constructed a small section of trail. Layne informed the Board there were no current plans to extend the trail. If the trail is extended it will need to be 10 feet wide and there may be connectivity grant funding available should the town decide to extend either or both of these trails.

Authorize sale of unused grass truck skid equipment

Grass Truck 14 is no longer being used as a grass/brush truck. The truck has been converted to a command vehicle, which is driven by Assistant Chief Hedstrom. Since the truck has been converted, there is no longer a need to continue storing the tank and pump unit, also known as a Skid Unit, which had been used on the truck when it responded to grass fires.

At the July 8 meeting, the Big Lake Fire Board recommended the skid unit/equipment be sold. As owners of the department, the Town and City are being asked for authorization to sell the equipment.

Proceeds from the sale of the equipment will be allocated to the BLFD CIP fund (50% to the Town and 50% to the City).

Motion/second to authorize the sale of the unused grass rig skid unit by Hayes/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

2026 BLFD Operations and Capital Improvement Plan Budget

The 2026 BLFD budget was approved by the BLFD JPB during their regular meeting on July 8, 2025. The overall general operating budget increase is \$33,283 or 6.24%. The Town of Big Lake would be responsible for \$230,468.

Significant changes are listed below:

*Review the 2026 BLFD budget approved by the BLFD JPB during their regular meeting on July 8, 2025. The overall general operating budget increase is \$33,283 or 6.24%. The Town of Big Lake would be responsible for **\$230,468**.*

Significant changes are listed below:

FIRE DEPARTMENT DRAFT PERSONNEL BUDGET

2026 draft personnel budget is \$294,668 an increase of \$11,055 or 3.89% over 2025 personnel budget. Below is the basis of how this draft personnel budget was calculated:

- *Wages and Fringe – increase of \$11,055*
 - *There is a 3% proposed increase to the pay scale*
 - *Starting wage is begin at \$16.50*
 - *Step Increase for all employees that are not on the final step of the pay scale (2% between Steps)*
 - *No proposed increase to any stipends*
 - *Mandated new law of Paid Family Medical leave act - \$1,063, this is an increase of \$107 This law is schedule to begin until January 1, 2026,*
 - *Voluntary Life Insurance - \$570*
 - *The JPB approved to paying for in the line of duty life insurance that was previously paid by the Big Lake Fireman's Relief Association.*
- *Work Comp – \$40,457. This is a decrease from the 2025 budget of \$4,212*

FIRE DEPARTMENT DRAFT OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET

- *Fire Administration - Professional Services – Audit, there is a decrease of \$1,500 as a full Fire Relief actuary will no longer be needed.*
- *Fire Administration – Profession Services – EDP, Software & Design - \$15,000*
 - *New software requested by the Fire Chief*
- *Fire Administration - General Liability Insurance, there is an increase of \$2,184, this is an 13% increase above what was actually paid in 2025.*
- *Fire Fighting -Small Tools & Minor Equipment - \$20,000, this is an increase of \$5,000*
- *Fire Prevention – Operating Supplies for Fire Prevention - \$7,000, an increase of \$1,000*
- *Fire Training- Training/Schools - \$26,000, an increase of \$3,000*

FIRE DEPARTMENT DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET

- *Township and City's share for Fire Protection Service will remain the same as funding level as 2025 -\$230,468*
- *Orrock Township share for Fire Protection Service, under the new contract, is budgeted at \$67,844*
- *Donations, \$5,000 is still budgeted, these funds do go into the Fire Departments Special Revenue Fund for unbudgeted items*
- *Training Reimbursement is budgeted for \$1,000, additional funds received increase fire departments fund balance*
- *Unreserve fund balance funds of \$30,423 will be used to balance the budget.*

FIRE DEPARTMENT DRAFT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) BUDGET

The Fire Department's CIP Plan are capital items or improvements that are funded by the City and Township and must be approved each year. The CIP plan reflects the total cost, which then is split between the City and Township 50/50. **This is only a plan not a guarantee that the assets will be purchased.** Below are the CIP items through 2031.

- *2023 CIP items*
 - *Replace 2000 Grass Rig 16 - \$143,000 – not purchased*
 - *Replace 2000 Water Tender 17 - \$330,000 – not purchased*
- *2024 CIP items*
 - *Station Truck Bay Floor Repairs - \$55,000, Moved from 2023, increased to \$70,000*
 - *Replace Side by Side - \$30,000, moved to 2026, will need to use the funds for building maintenance*
 - *Possibly selling snow machine to get side by side*
 - *Thermal Image Camera - \$15,000, Moved to Truck bay floor, as two cameras were purchased in 2022*
- *2025 CIP items*
 - *Replace 5 Computers - \$6,500*

- Replace 2004 Grass Rig 1 was moved to 2027
 - Replace 2003 Ladder 1 moved from 2027 - \$2,250,000, will need to prepay in 2025
- 2026 CIP items
 - Replace Jaws of Life - \$50,000 Not needed
 - Allocate \$4,800 yearly beginning in 2026 for to replace radios as needed
- 2027 CIP items
 - Replace 2004 Grass Rig #1 - \$175,000
 - Radio Replacement yearly allocation - \$4,800
- 2028 CIP items
 - Radios replaced – 44 @ \$6,500 - \$286,000
 - Radio Replacement yearly allocation - \$4,800
 - Replace Air Packs - \$225,000
 - Look for grants
- 2029 CIP items
 - Radio Replacement yearly allocation - \$4,800
 - Replace 2006 Tender - \$400,000
- 2030 CIP items
 - Replace 5 Computers - \$7,000
 - Replace Command Vehicle - \$50,000
 - Radio Replacement yearly allocation - \$4,800
- 2031 CIP items
 - Jaws of Life - \$55,000
 - Radio Replacement yearly allocation - \$4,800
 - Replace an Engine - \$900,000

Motion to adopt the 2026 Big Lake Fire Department Operations and Capital Improvement Budget by: Alford/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, and Hayes. Hedstrom abstained. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Garbage Enclosure Replacement

The wooden garbage enclosure is in a dilapidated state. The Building and Parks Committee has decided it should be replaced. The enclosure is planned to be expanded to the east to allow the sidewalk which leads into the maintenance room to be inside the enclosure. Quotes to have the enclosure replaced with wood, vinyl, and composite decking boards have been obtained from three vendors.

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Wood</u>	<u>Vinyl</u>	<u>Composite Decking</u>
Legacy Landscaping	\$3,500	\$6,500	\$9,500
Ideal Renovations MN	\$3,200	\$7,168.80	
Kiser Construction, Inc.	\$10,800	\$10,800	

The Board reviewed the presented quotes and determined they wanted to have the structure built by Legacy Landscaping, opting for the composite decking material. They believe the material will hold up the best and last the longest. They would like to see the color options and decking material, prior to awarding the contract. Deputy Clerk Workman will contact Aaron with Legacy Landscaping to get color options, from which the Board will choose.

TABLED until August 13, 2025 meeting.

Request to store spent pull tabs in Lions area of pole shed

Spudfest committee member, Deb Johnson met with Clerk Kimberly-Maas and Deputy Clerk Workman to discuss the possibility of storing spent pull tabs on park premises. The Spudfest organization is required to store spent pull tabs for 3 ½ years before they can be destroyed, per MN statutes. Spudfest has other storage sites. However, they are at capacity. Deb Johnson is also a member of the Big Lake Lions Club. She noted the Lions have a lot of equipment which is no longer needed, and the Lions are working to clean out the unneeded items from their section of the storage shed, which would open up some space to store the spent tabs. The metal "cage" which is in the town hall's main mechanical room, could be moved to the storage shed, and used as an additional layer of security for storing spent pull tabs. Deb plans to store the oldest tabs on the premises, if permission is given by the Town Board and the Lions Club. The matter was informally presented at a Lions meeting. But because the property belongs to the Township, permission must first be given by the Town Board.

The Board would like to find out if storing the spent pull tabs creates significant liability to the Town and requested the Clerk get advisement from the town's attorney, Peter Tiede.

TABLED until August 13, 2025, meeting.

Shed Storage Lease Agreement - Big Lake Ambassadors

Laurel Merten, Big Lake Ambassador Board Chair, requested a meeting with the Building and Parks Committee during the open forum portion of the June 25, 2025 town board meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to better define the parameters of access to the area of the pole building in which the Town Board has allowed the organization to store their parade float, items for the parade float, and additional items utilized for Ambassador events.

Chair Aubol, Supervisor Hayes, Deputy Clerk Workman, and Clerk Kimberly-Maas met with Ambassador Board members, Laurel Merten, Chair, Amy Cross, and Katie Osowski, on July 15th to review the current lease agreement, discuss access desires of the Ambassador Board, and define parameters for access to the storage area.

While considering agreement revisions, committee members kept the need to maintain security of the town's asset, limit the town's liability, and accommodate desires of the Ambassador Board.

The agreement being presented to the Town Board for its consideration retains insurance cost sharing of \$100.00 annually and damage & security deposit of \$250.00 annually. Payment and renewed deposit check to be remitted at the time of the agreement execution.

The presented agreement was reviewed by Peter Tiede, town attorney, and contains the following changes:

- **Section 1. TERM**

- Removal of automatic annual renewal clause. The Building and Parks Committee feels it necessary to review the agreement and its language annually when the Ambassador membership changes.
 - REMOVED: "This Agreement shall be automatically extended for successive periods of one (1) year following the initial term, unless either party notifies the other at least thirty (30) days in advance of the end of the then-current term in writing of its election to terminate this Agreement."

- **Section 4. ACCESS**

- Ambassadors are to provide the town office with a listing of members of the Ambassador organization who are authorized to check out access keys for short-term and extended term periods. The list is to be sent prior to issuance of keys to

new Ambassador members and updated with any membership changes throughout the term of the agreement.

- Ambassadors are to provide a calendar of known events for the year.
- Defined short-term key check out as 5 days.
- Extended-term key check out is allowed between May 1st and Labor Day, with request prior to or at the time of check-out.
- Extended-term is defined as 10 days.
- Issuance of an emergency-use key to one Ambassador Board member.
- 2025 Board member to be issued the emergency-key is named in the agreement.
- Emergency-key holder is the sole user of said key.
- Failure to pick up a key from the town office during business hours, for a scheduled event, is not considered an emergency.

Motion to approve the presented 1-year lease agreement between the Town of Big Lake and the Big Lake Ambassadors by: Brenteson/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion Prevailed.

Roads

Supervisor Brenteson had no schedule updates regarding 2025 overlays. Regular summer road and right-of-way maintenance continues. Crack-filling has started.

Supervisor Alford informed the Board, right-of-way on 151st St in Aspen Hills, was chemically treated to keep the wild parsnip and queen Anne's lace under control.

Business from the Board – Committee Reports/Updates

Supervisor Hedstrom was called out to Rivercrest Farms to "evict" another rooster.

Supervisor Hayes has requested the clerk's office contact Sherburne County dispatch to get extra patrols on 211th Ave. This road is being used as an unofficial detour for the County Road 83 and County Road 15 construction projects. She was met on the road by an oncoming vehicle who was traveling across the centerline, likely due to speed in excess of the posted limit of 35MPH.

Chair Aubol will be attending a planning & zoning advisory board meeting where the simple plat of Alford Addition will be discussed.

Supervisor Brenteson reminded all of the open house on August 4th where the I94 to Hwy 10 connectivity PEL study will be on display and members of the committee will be on hand to answer any questions. The open house will be in the Mississippi room at the Monticello Community Center.

Treasurer's Business

Treasurer Warneke informed the Board that all the fund balances are in good shape. He expects to see bill from Schlenner Wenner, the town's auditing firm, soon and anticipates it will be roughly \$22,000.00. He also anticipates the receipt of SCORE grant funds will be deposited in the near future.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Warneke reviewed the Treasurer's Report and financial statements as of 07/19/2025 with the Board. The funds highlighted in the report included the general fund (\$438,662.86) and road fund (\$2,003,442.27). The town funds ending balance (less escrows) is: \$ 3,354,231.04; escrow funds balance: \$ 126,093.20. The total town treasury balance: \$

3,480,324.24.

Motion/Second to approve the treasurer's report by: Hayes/Brenteson. 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

There were no items heard during open forum.

Announcements

- JPB Special Meeting Wednesday August 13, 2025 @ 4PM in City Council Chambers
- Town Board Regular Meeting Wednesday August 13, 2025 @ 6PM
- Sherburne County SWCD annual tour of conservation practices Thursday August 28, 2025
- Sherburne County Household Hazardous Waste collection Wednesday, September 17th from 2-5pm

Adjournment:

Motion/Second to adjourn Regular Board meeting at 7:02PM by: Hayes/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion prevailed.

Accepted this 13th day of August 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