



Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday December 10, 2025, 6:00 pm

The Town of Big Lake Board of Supervisors met in regular session, at 6:00 PM, on Wednesday November 12, 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 Alfords – via telecommunications, per MN Statute Stat. 13D.02, Supervisor Dean Brenteson, Supervisor Laura Hayes, Supervisor Mark Hedstrom, Treasurer Kenneth Warneke, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie, Sergeant Derek Barret – Sherburne County Sheriff's Department, Chief Seth Hansen – Big Lake Fire Department, County Commissioner Raeanne Danielowski – Sherburne County and one member of the public were in attendance. All voting was done by rollcall, in accordance with MN Statute 13D.02.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion/Second to accept the presented meeting agenda by: Brenteson/Hayes. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. Motion carried. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the agenda as presented.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consisted of approval of 11/12/2025 Town Board regular meeting minutes; claims and payroll submitted for payment since 11/12/2025 and review of the Big Lake Fire Department claims presented; adoption of Resolution 2025-18 Establishing Paid Leave Premium Sharing; call for Joint Community Meeting on Thursday January 15, 2025 to be held at 6:00PM, in the City of Big Lake City Council Chambers; ratify 2025 certified township mileage of 82.74 miles.

Motion/Second to approve the consent agenda as presented by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None Opposed. Motion carried.

Sheriff's Report

Sergeant Derek Barret reported there were 238 calls in the township in the month of November. Slightly higher than the same month in 2024. Calls of interest were two motor vehicle accidents. One occurred on County Road 11 just west of HWY25 and involved two vehicles. The other noted MVA happened on County Road 14, just west of the County Road 43 intersection, at the curve. This was a single car accident where the driver fell asleep at the wheel. The driver was uninjured. Sergeant Barret reported the Sheriff's Department assisted with a swift river kayak rescue on the Mississippi River. The snow season arrived as have the normal issues which result from the season.

Fire Department Report

Chief Hansen gave an update from the Fire Department for the month of November. The fire department had responded to a total of 380 calls through the month of October. The breakout of the calls was 252 in the City of Big Lake, 89 in Big Lake Township, 22 in Orrock Township, and 17 mutual aid responses. Calls of interest included seven (7) fires – including 3 brush/grass, (2 authorized, 1 unauthorized), 1 outside equipment; three (3) motor vehicle accidents; four (4) hazardous conditions; four (4) smoke & carbon monoxide (CO) alarms; one (1) swift water rescue. Chief Hansen highlighted the swift water rescue and compost fire in his report. Firefighters trained on cold water rescues in November.

The swift water rescue involved three kayakers in the water. Two had capsized and one was still anchored in his kayak. Victim 1 was standing in the water and eventually made it to the Wright County side of Mississippi. Victim 2 was entangled in the anchor rope of anchored, occupied kayak. Victim 2 was grasping to the kayak and slipping under the water. Crews had a hard time reaching the victim with the strength of the current. The Wright County Sheriff's Office reached the victim with a River Pro boat and brought him to BLFD crews standing by to help get the patient to EMS. When the victim was admitted to the ER his body temp was 88 deg. Hypothermic is anything below 95 deg.

The department was called to the City of Big Lake compost site on November 22, when the compost pile combusted. The pile was 1/3 larger than its previous largest size. The inability to turn the pile, due to its size, contributed to the fire. A contractor was called in to assist in making fire breaks in the pile. Becker, Elk River, Monticello assisted in fighting the fire, and Zimmerman FD was on standby for any other Big Lake calls. BLFD labor hours dedicated to the fire and cleanup equated to 377. When adding mutual aid time, over 500 hours were spent fighting the fire.

The BLFD Joint Powers Board authorized the purchase of a new software called ECHO. This software was created by a firefighter. The department will use it to maintain equipment inventory and enter call information. The software has built in reports which will allow for better call analytic reports. One bit of information realized from the new software is the busiest call time for the department is 1:00PM on Wednesdays.

Lieutenants Dornbusch and Rosa will end their term at the end of the year. Interviews for new lieutenants will be held on December 17th. The five candidates who have applied for the positions are all well qualified. The department participated in the Santa parade and tree lighting ceremony in the City of Big Lake, and yearend activities are being done.

Chief Hansen wrapped up his presentation with reminders of lake ice safety and winter driving tips.

Regular Business

Options, Inc. cleaning contract.

The Board was presented with a contract for Options, Inc. to provide cleaning of the town hall, in 2026. Options is a private, nonprofit organization, which provides vocational services to adults with disabilities.

Crews from Options, Inc., have been providing cleaning services for the town hall banquet and board rooms, for several years.

Each year Options reviews their billing rates and sends a proposed contract for services, for the upcoming year.

The 2026 contract proposal is \$51.50 per day for a crew of 3-4 and a job coach. This is a \$3.50 per day increase, from the 2025 contract price. Services will be billed monthly.

Motion/second to enter into contract with Options, Inc. to provide town hall cleaning services in 2026 by: Alford/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

BLFD Capital purchase – grass rig

At the November BLFD JPB meeting, the Joint Powers Board decided to make recommendation to the Town Board and City Council to replace Grass 16. Grass 16 is currently a 2001 F-350. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), front-line apparatus should remain in service for no more than 15 years and then serve up to 5 additional years in reserve status. Once an apparatus reaches 25 years of age, it should be retired for safety reasons.

Since its inception, Grass 16 has consistently operated at its maximum payload capacity of 3,670 lbs. Combined with its age, aging pump, and outdated equipment, this poses a potential liability risk. In the event of an injury or fatality, an attorney could argue that the department failed to meet the accepted standard of care by continuing to operate an apparatus beyond its recommended service life and capacity. The proposed replacement— a new F-350 — offers an approximate payload capacity of 4,400 lbs, which aligns with the specifications of the new skid unit (dry weight of 1,050 lbs) and a 250-gallon water tank adding roughly 2,000 lbs. This increased capacity, along with modern anti-roll and sway control technology, will help mitigate the liability concerns previously identified and enhance overall safety and performance. The Ford F-350 bid was obtained through Sourcewell. Guardian Fleet Safety will outfit the truck with a skid, lights, siren, etc. The new skid will have a dry weight of 1,050 lbs and will hold a 250-gallon water tank weighing approximately 2,000 lbs. when filled, for a total load of approximately 3,050 pounds.

FD Capital purchase require approval of Town Board & City Council. The total cost of \$94,256.51 will be split equally between the Town and City at \$ 47,128.30 each.

Motion/second to approve the purchase of a 2026 F-350 from Sourcewell, to be outfitted for use as a grass rig. Guardian Fleet Safety to install skid, emergency lights, siren, and other emergency vehicle accessories. Total cost to Town of \$ 47,128.30 by: Aubol/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

2025 – 2026 Snow and ice control contracts

TW Hauling and JME have provided snow removal and ice control services on township roads, for several snow seasons. Township roads are split between the two vendors with TW Hauling providing these services at the town hall. Both vendors' 2025-2026 season rates were obtained and reviewed by the Board during the meeting. TW Hauling rates were unchanged from the 2025 snow season. JME rates increased \$15/hour for plow and pickup trucks and \$20-\$30/hour for loaders. Road Committee members recommended the Board award a contract for plowing and snow removal to TW Hauling and JME, for the 2025-2026 snow season.

Motion/second to enter into contract with TW Hauling and Excavating, Inc. for plowing and ice control services on designated township roads for the 2025-2026 snow season by: Alfords/Hayes. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Motion/second to enter into contract with JME Companies. for plowing and ice control services on designated township roads for the 2025-2026 snow season by: Hedstrom/Hayes. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Meadow Estates North and Meadow Estates South road acceptance

Dan Berning, developer of Meadow Estates North and Meadow Estates South made a request to have the Town accept 174th St. NW in Meadow Estates North and Meadow Estates South for maintenance. The road and rights of way were inspected by William Tessmer, Town

Engineer, deemed built to the Towns' road specifications/standards, and ready for acceptance. Road Committee members toured the developments and reported the roads are in good shape and the one-year paving warranty is also complete. There were minor concerns with erosion. The developer has erosion control in place, and the storm water permit will handle any erosion issues which may occur. The developers' agreements for these developments allow the Board to defer acceptance until the developments are at least 50% full. Meadow Estates North has 4 of the 6 lots filled and 5 of the 10 lots in Meadow Estates South are filled.

Motion/second to adopt Resolution RES 2025-19 A Resolution Accept Meadow Estates North Platted Roads by: Aubol/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Motion/second to adopt Resolution RES 2025-20 A Resolution Accept Meadow Estates South Platted Roads by: Aubol/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Christmas Holiday and office closure

Clerk Maas addressed the Board with a request to close the town office the Fridays following paid holidays of Christmas and New Year's Day. The office is normally opened from 9:00AM – 12:00PM on Fridays but likely little to no business would be conducted these Fridays due to the holidays.

Motion/second to close the Town office on Friday December 26, 2025 and Friday January 2, 2026 by: Aubol/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

The Board authorized paid holidays as part of the 2025 Reorganization meeting. New this year, staff was allowed to take Friday after Thanksgiving in lieu of Columbus Day. The Board approved the office closure schedule at the same meeting. The office is scheduled to be closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Staff would like to propose closing Friday after Christmas and Friday after New Year's Day – Friday's are 3-hour workdays.

Staff worked on Columbus Day but also inadvertently worked on Veteran's Day (November 11, 2025). Staff took Friday after Thanksgiving in lieu of Columbus Day and would like to request the ability to take either Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve as alternate paid holiday for Veteran's Day.

Motion/Second to allow staff to take either Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve as a paid holiday, as an alternative for Veteran's Day by: Aubol/Hayes. Approved by: Alford, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried.

Roads

Supervisor Brenteson informed the Board that snow removal operations seem to be going well. And the committee is looking at 2026 road project and will be working with the town's engineer, William Tessmer to get them defined and ready for bidding.

Business from the Board – Committee Reports/Updates

Supervisor Aubol reported all Board members had submitted their comments pertaining to the amendment for solar on township land. He will be attending the Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee meeting on December 18, 2025. The public requests for amending zoning ordinances pertaining to solar and towing and wrecking will be reviewed at that meeting. Supervisor Aubol also informed the Board he had been appointed to the Board of Adjustment by the County Board and will take over for Bryan Adams, who is retiring from the Board of Adjustment, on January 1, 2026.

Treasurer's Business & Report

Treasurer Warneke told the Board that the second tax settlement of \$ 1,178,000 was received. He also informed them that some of Meadow Estates North and Meadow Estates South escrows will be refunded to the developer, since the Board action to accept 174th St. NW in those developments. The Board also approved payment of the Town's responsibility for the upgrades to County Road 43 when approving the claims presented in the meeting's consent agenda. Sherburne County offered to split the payment. However, the amount billed was \$114,000 rather than the projected \$126,000 and budgeted \$160,000. So, it was paid in full because the amount due was less than the budgeted amount.

The interim financial report was reviewed with the Board. 2025 beginning balance of town funds was \$ 3,781,569.05. The town received \$ 3,301,519.11 and has approved claims in the amount of \$ 3,589,527.47. The town funds ending balance (less escrows) was \$3,493,560.69. The escrow funds balance was \$ 151,892.88. The total town treasury balance equaled \$ 3,645,453.57.

Motion/Second to approve the treasurer's report by: Aubol/Alfords. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion carried. *Financial Reports are retained as part of the Official Minutes, which are available in the Clerk's Office.*

Open Forum

None.

Announcements

- Office closures – Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and Friday following Christmas (Wednesday December 24 - 26, 2025); New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, and Friday following New Year's Day (Wednesday December 31 – January 02, 2026)
- BLFD JPB Meeting Tuesday January 06, 2026
- Town Regular Meeting Wednesday January 14, 2026
- Joint Community Meeting Thursday January 15, 2026, Supervisor Hedstrom will present the Town's update at this meeting.

Adjournment:

Motion/Second to adjourn Regular Board meeting at 6:44PM by: Hayes/Hedstrom. Approved by: Alfords, Aubol, Brenteson, Hayes, and Hedstrom. None opposed. Motion prevailed.

Accepted this 14th day of January 2026, 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