



TOWN ANNUAL MEETING
Tuesday March 11, 2025, 6:00PM
RECONVENED
Wednesday September 10, 2025, 6:00PM

The Town of Big Lake Electorate met, for their Annual Meeting, on Tuesday March 11, 2025, at the Town of Big Lake Town Hall, located in the Big Lake Township's Lions Park at 21960 County Road 5 NW, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, at 6:00PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Treasurer Ken Warneke, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie – all of whom are township residents, four additional residents, and one newspaper reporter were in attendance.

Election of a Meeting Moderator

Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas opened the floor for the nomination of a moderator. Laura Hayes nominated Korby Guthrie to moderate the meeting which was seconded by Mark Hedstrom. Mr. Guthrie accepted the nomination. Electors voted unanimously to approve Korby Guthrie moderator for the 2025 Annual Meeting. Motion carried.

Ratify 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second to dispense with the reading of and ratify the 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes by: Dean Brenteson/Laura Hayes. Electors voted unanimously to approve. Motion carried.

Set Date and Time of 2026 Annual Meeting

Motion/Second to hold 2026 Annual Town Meeting on March 10, 2026 – commencing at 6:00PM at the Big Lake town hall by: Mark Hedstrom/Dean Brenteson. Electors voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

Big Lake Township Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP)

Clerk Kimberly-Maas informed the electors that the town was mandated to develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program "SWPPP" by the MPCA under their Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. The Town's SWPPP is designed to reduce the discharge of pollutants, protect water quality, and satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Big Lake Township's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and MS4 Permit application was received by the MPCA and the initial permit was issued in 2008. The permit was most recently reissued in 2021 and will be in effect through 2025.

Following the conclusion of the MS4 annual report for calendar year 2021, the MPCA MS4 program discontinued its use of the Snap Survey platform to host the MS4 annual report. This means MS4 permittees that have coverage under the 2020 MS4

General Permit, like Big Lake Township, have not needed to submit annual reports until the e-service is released. Once released, the Town of Big Lake will be expected to report MS4 activities for each previous reporting year (e.g., calendar years 2022, 2023, and 2024).

In 2024, storm water equipment was inspected and cleared of debris, as needed. No insufficiencies were found.

The SWPPP Document/Permit Application is available for public review at the Clerk's Office during regular business hours.

The public is invited to share any opinions or comments on the Township's SWPPP. The original application, the inventory map and the Authorization for Reapplication form is on file and available for public review at the Town Clerk's Office during regular office hours.

Moderator Guthrie opened the floor for any comments on the Town's SWPPP. No comments were made.

2024 Town Review provided by Clerk Kimberly-Maas

Sherburne County estimated the town's 2024 population at 8,557. There were 15 new homes constructed – an increase of 3 from 2023. The electorate finalized and certified the 2025 levy at \$2,687,000.

Community Involvement

The Town is involved in various projects and events, such as the monthly Big Lake Community Food Shelf's produce and pantry distribution, annual dog vaccination clinic and nitrate testing of well water, the County's September Household Hazardous Waste Collection event, and Eagle Badge projects for Boy Scout Troop 93. The town also hosts an annual Recycle Day event at its maintenance building on the third Saturday each May.

Joint Ownership

The Town of Big Lake and the City of Big Lake are joint owners of the Big Lake Fire Department. The department is staffed by paid-on-call firefighters and serves the City of Big Lake, Big Lake Township, and 9 sections of Orrock Township. They also provide mutual aid to other local departments. In 2024 the department responded to 398 calls. There were 86 responses to Big Lake Township, 281 in the City of Big Lake, 14 in Orrock Township. And mutual aid service was provided on 17 occasions. The department's 2025 operating budget is \$533,018 for which Big Lake Township is responsible for \$230,468. The Town Board and City Council authorized the fire fighters retirement be changed from private investing to Minnesota Public Employee Retirement – Statewide Volunteer Firefighters fund. The retirement change went into effect on January 1, 2025. Two capital improvement projects were completed in 2024 – repaving of the parking lot and resurfacing of the truck bay floors. Final inspection of the new ladder truck took place March 5-7, 2025. The delivery date of the truck is expected at the end of March 2025.

Business & Industry

The Town of Big Lake and the City of Big Lake jointly own Big Lake Industrial Park – East. Lion Industries, LLC on behalf of RAWR Organics purchased Lot, 1, Blk 1 of Big Lake Industrial Park Plat Seven in the park. Plans for an initial 16,700 square foot building with

five future building additions based on growth projections. As part of the developer's agreement, the company must add 4 new full-time equivalent employment positions to their current staffing. The new positions must be added within 24 months of receiving their certificate of occupancy and must be maintained for a minimum of one year.

KAP Real Estate Holdings, dba Safe Space Storage applied for and was granted an IUP for the construction of self-storage units on Lot 2, Blk 1 of Spanky's Corner Plat. The plan is for a total of 5 buildings which will have a combined 77 storage units. The initial construction of 2 buildings on the east and west property lines then additional buildings constructed when existing buildings are roughly 90% filled. KAP's goal is to have all 5 buildings completed withing 5-6 years.

2024 Elections

There were three elections held in 2024. The Presidential Nominating Primary March 5th, the State Primary August 13th, and the General Election November 5th.

For the General election there were 5761 people registered when the polls opened at 7:00AM. An additional 285 people registered and voted on election day. The total number of Big Lake Township residents who voted on the 5th of November was 5173. This was a 90% turnout.

Town elections were held during the General elections for three supervisor positions. The people elected to those positions were Supervisor Bruce Aubol – Seat #3, Supervisor Mark Hedstrom – Seat #4, and Supervisor Laura Hayes – Seat #5. A huge thank you to the thirty invaluable election judges who worked at Big Lake township's precincts and made all of the 2024 elections a success!

Monticello Hospital District Dissolved

On November 7, 2024, the town received a letter of notification of the dissolution of the Monticello Hospital District. The Monticello Hospital District was established in 1961 by local communities: Big Lake Township, City of Big Lake, Monticello Township, City of Monticello, Silver Creek Township, Becker Township, City of Otsego. In 2013, the district entered an Agreement with CentraCare. On October 10, 2024, the Monticello campus was transferred to CentraCare. At that time, the Hospital Board determined the conditions for the creation of the district no longer existed and that the Hospital District served no public purpose and decided to dissolve the hospital district. Due to Minnesota Statutes requirements, the hospital district's fund balances were returned to the establishing communities. The hospital board evenly split the fund balance and distributed \$353.42 to each founding community.

Road Report provided by Dean Brenteson – member of the Town Road Committee

Approximately 8 miles of mill/overlay and overlay projects were completed.

The town has two vendors who perform snow and ice control for the township. Minimal snow the past seasons has allowed for a lot of trimming and brushing work to be performed during the winter months. The work spans the full width of the right-of-way, which are typically 66' on a horizontal plane and vertically the same width. This allows for the roads to be exposed to sunlight during winter months, assisting in ice & snow melting.

The Town Board received a letter from Sherburne County Attorney's office which questioned if the speed regulatory signs on township roads were still compliant to the

retro-reflective standards adopted by the Board. The Board realized the signs were no longer compliant. Due to 2009 legislative changes, the board followed the correct processes to make township roads enforceable at 35MPH limits, as is allowed in rural residential districts. It was noted that the default speed limit on roads in rural residential districts is 55MPH if the road authority does not establish the allowable minimum of 35MPH and erect signs.

The Road committee has been working with the town's engineering firm to create a database of the signs installed on township roads. The database will be used to ensure signs are replaced in a timely manner. And to keep the regulatory signs in compliance with reflectivity requirements.

2024 Annual Treasurer's Report

Motion/Second to waive reading of all checks written and funds received by the Town in 2024 and have the treasurer provide a summary report by: Laura Hayes/Mark Hedstrom. Unanimous electorate approval. Motion carried.

Treasurer Ken Warneke informed the electorate that the Town Board of Supervisors acts as the Board of Audit, at every town meeting. Annually they have a formal Board of Audit meeting which occurred during the February 12, 2025, meeting. The purpose of the Board of Audit is to ensure all claims, disbursements, receipts, and deposits are accurately accounted. Additionally, the town has an audit performed by a CPA firm, annually. The external audit firm will perform the 2024 audit mid-May. Treasurer Warneke presented the listing of all claims paid, receipts and deposits made into the town treasury in 2024 (Schedule 1 report). The town's financial transactions and bank statements were made available for review an hour prior to the commencement of the Annual Town Meeting and during the meeting. The schedule 1 report will remain posted on the bulletin board in the meeting area, near the clerk's office. The town's funds are held at Sherburne State Bank, First Bank of Elk River, and in the 4M Fund. The 2024 summary financial report was provided for electorate review and was reviewed by Treasurer Warneke. *The summary financial statement is retained as part of the official minutes.*

The town's 2024 beginning funds balance was \$3,184,000, total revenues were \$3,310,920 total expenditures were \$2,570,998 – 28% of the expenditure was capital expenses (eg. overlays) and \$123,679 was spent on snow & ice control. The amount the town spends on road improvements and maintenance is \$10,111/mile. The town receives the bulk of its receipts from property taxes (87%). In 2024, 85% of the town levied property taxes were collected.

Additionally, the town receives money from court fines (which are placed in the road fund), forfeited land sales, franchise fees, county grant funds, and revenue sharing from property the town and city developed together – Big Lake Industrial Park, Marketplace, and Industrial Park East. Intergovernmental revenues are received from the state in the form of market value credit and highway user (gas) tax. Miscellaneous revenue generation by way of charges for services – permitting, hall rental, CUP/IUP and variances, and interest income. Funds numbered 801 and higher are escrow funds which are not considered part of the town's treasury.

Motion/Second to approve the summary treasury report by: Mark Hedstrom/Laura Hayes. Electors voted unanimously to approve. Motion carried.

Presentation of 2026 Estimated Levy

Treasurer Warneke explained to get 2026 levy projections; a formula is used over the board adopted 2025 budget. When calculating the levy the aim is to have 50% of the expected general operating and fire operating expenses, since the first property tax collection is received around mid-year. The fire capital fund was evaluated knowing the City deferred purchases of a new tender and grass rig, and no trucks are projected for purchase until 2029 when the 2000 Tender 17 is slated for replacement. The Town's general capital fund has \$168,000 in it. There are no current, definite plans for the money. However, the Building and Parks Committee has discussed expanding the office space to the south, to allow for more office and storage space.

The Board reviewed the following 2026 levy amounts and approved their presentation to the electors. These amounts are based on no change in tax capacity.

General Fund:	\$266,000	Road & Bridge Fund:	\$1,923,000
Big Lake Fire Fund:	\$219,000	Fire Dist. #1 Fund	\$33,000
Fire Building/Equip. Fund:	\$194,000	Cemetery Fund:	\$ -0-
IP Bond:	\$38,000	Capital Expenditure:	\$ -0-
Econ. Dev./Industrial Park:	\$ -0-		
		Totaling:	\$2,673,000

This is a .52% reduction from the amount the electorate approved and certified for the 2025 levy.

Treasurer Warneke recommended the electors defer adopting the levy and reconvene the Annual Meeting in September to adopt and certify the levy.

Motion/second to *tentatively set* the 2026 levy at the amounts and reconvene on September 10th at 6:00PM, for the purpose of finalizing the 2026 levy and certifying it to the County Auditor/Treasurer by: Laura Hayes/Dean Brenteson. Electors voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

Open Forum

None.

Recess

Motion/Second to *recess* 2025 Annual Town Meeting until September 10, 2025, at 6:00pm by: Laura Hayes/Mark Hedstrom. Electorate voted unanimously to approve. Motion Prevailed.

Meeting recessed at 6:37PM

The Town of Big Lake Electorate reconvened their Annual Meeting, on Wednesday September 10, 2025, at the Town of Big Lake Town Hall, located in the Big Lake Township's Lions Park at 21960 County Road 5 NW, Big Lake Township, Sherburne County, Minnesota.

The meeting was called to order by moderator Korby Guthrie, at 6:00pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Treasurer Ken Warneke, Deputy Treasurer Becky Guthrie, Clerk Brenda Kimberly-Maas, Deputy Clerk Debbie Workman, and five additional members of the town electorate (nine total including the meeting

moderator, treasurer, deputy treasurer, and deputy clerk), Sherburne County Sheriff's Sargeant Derek Barret, and newspaper reporter were in attendance.

Agenda Approval

Motion/Second to approve the presented agenda made by Bruce Aubol, seconded by Laura Hayes. Vote was taken. Unanimous approval by the electorate. Motion carried.

Updated Financial Report & Update to Proposed 2026 Levy

Treasurer Warneke presented the electorate with information regarding the 2026 levy. He noted there weren't any legislative changes made which affected the township too badly. When calculating the projected levy needs for the following year, the current budget and fund balances and known upcoming bills, are used to project the current year's ending fund balances. Those numbers and estimates for the following year's needs are used to make recommendations for the following year's levy amounts. The township is currently running under budget, and 2026 estimated expenses have not changed, resulting in no change to the overall levy amount presented at the March meeting. However, Treasurer Warneke recommended shifting \$86,000 from the Fire Building/Equipment (fire capital) fund to the Capital Expenditure (general capital) fund to allow for more flexibility.

The following amounts were presented to the Electorate, for consideration and approval:

General Fund:	\$ 266,000.00
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 1,923,000.00
Big Lake Fire Fund:	\$ 219,000.00
Fire District #1 Fund:	\$ 33,000.00
Fire Bldg/Fire Equip:	\$ 108,000.00
Cemetery Fund:	\$ -0-
Economic Development/Industrial Park:	\$ -0-
Fire Bond Redemption:	\$ -0-
Ind. Park Bond Redemption:	\$ 38,000.00
Capital Expenditure:	<u>\$ 86,000.00</u>
TOTAL LEVY	\$ 2,673,000.00

This will be a 0.52% reduction from the amount the electorate approved and certified for the 2025 levy.

Treasurer Warneke projected zero (0) change to the 2026 property tax rate and if the tax rate remains the same as 2025, the estimated tax rate change would be a net reduction of 0.52%.

Moderator Guthrie called for comment and discussion on the proposed levy amounts. There was no discussion or other comments from the electorate.

Approval & Certification of the 2026 Tax Levy (MS 365.10)

Laura Hayes moved to adopt the 2026 Levy amounts presented by Treasurer Warneke. Motion second by Mark Hedstrom. Electorate Vote: nine (9) approve. Zero (0) opposed. Zero (0) abstained. Motion carried.

Dean Brenteson moved to certify the approved 2026 Levy amounts to Sherburne County Auditor/Treasurer by September 30, 2025. Motion second by Laura Hayes. Electorate Vote: Nine (9) approve. Zero (0) opposed. Zero (0) abstained. Motion carried.

No other business was brought forth by the electorate.

Adjournment

Bruce Aubol moved to Adjourn the Reconvened 2025 Annual Town Meeting. Motion seconded by Laura Hayes. Electorate voted unanimously to approve. Motion carried adjourning the Reconvened Annual Meeting, at 6:05PM on September 10, 2025.

Recorded by:
Brenda Kimberly-Maas
Clerk Town of Big Lake

Ratified this 10th day of March 2026, by the Town of Big Lake Electors.

John Norgren
Meeting Moderator

Attest: _____
Debbie Workman, Town Deputy Clerk