

Turtle Lake Township Annual Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2025 8:30 p.m. Turtle Lake Town Hall 19143 Lake Julia Dr NW

Meeting called to order at 8:30 p.m. by Clerk Lynn Johnson. Also in attendance and signed in are Rich Harris, Christine Harris, Larry Schuette, Phil Verchota, Julie Verchota, Todd Haugen, Keni Johnson, Corey Wright, Mark Haugen, Kenneth McBride, Chad Jacobson, Leigh Sovde, Michelle Anderson, Marc Anderson, Dave Nelson, Scott Robbins, Carrie Jacobson, Glen Lindseth, Gail Mistic Dockendorf, Connie Degelder, Jerry Molacek, Nate Heim, Ben Long, Kate Tesar, Billy Ayers, David Harrington, Dave Close, Sherrie Clap, Margo Svoboda and Pat Svoboda.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Nominate and Elect a Moderator

Michelle Anderson nominated Mark Haugen as Moderator, with a second by David Harrington. Vote was called for. Motion passed by majority vote.

Approve Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented made by Ken McBride, with a second by Keni Johnson. Moderator Haugen asked if there were any additions or discussion, then called for the vote. Motion passed by majority vote.

Approve Minutes of March 12, 2024 Annual Meeting

Billy Ayers asked why the moderator didn't sign last years minutes. MN Stat 365.55 states that the minutes must be signed by the Clerk and the Moderator. 2024 Moderator David Harrington said he didn't agree with the minutes so he didn't sign them. He said that the vote tallies don't match actual votes as some voters abstained. This would not change the outcome of the votes. He also stated the minutes lack details on the proposed road vacations. 2024 Moderator Harrington added his changes to the minutes and sent them to the Clerk.

Motion was made by Billy Ayers to add Mr. Harrington's minutes as an addendum to the minutes from 2024. Second by Larry Schuette. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion, then called for the vote. Motion failed with 5 votes for and 17 against.

Moderator Haugen asked if there was a motion to add the first two bullet points made by Mr. Harrington as an addendum to the 2024 Minutes. Motion by Scott Robbins to approve adding the first two bullet points as an addendum to the 2024 minutes. Second by Larry Schuette. Motion passed with 16 votes for and 4 against.

Reading of Board of Audit Report

Clerk Lynn Johnson read the 2025 Board of Audit report to the attendees.

Township Road Discussion

Discussion concerning the estimates on the highest priority roads that need repair was had. Of the seven roads that were chosen as needing work, Turgi Hill Rd was put out for bids and the job was

awarded to Johnson Construction for approximately \$105,000.00 not including engineering costs. A question if there was any more discussion on Idlewild repairs and there has not been any. Residents living on the road want it to be left as it is with only some patching as needed. Years of patching can be done for way less than the estimated cost of reconstruction. With a total estimated cost of repairs around \$3,000,000.00 for all seven roads, it was questioned if the levy would stay at \$600,000.00 for six years to cover the cost. It was explained that the levy is set at this meeting by the constituents, not by the Board so there is no way to know what the levy will be year to year.

Annual Township Picnic

Motion by Scott Robbins not to hold the annual picnic. Second by Billy Ayers. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion passed with 20 votes for and 0 against.

2026 Annual Township Meeting

Motion to hold the 2026 Annual Meeting on March 10, 2026 at 8:30 p.m. at the Turtle Lake Township Hall, 19143 Lake Julia Drive NW made by Billy Ayers, second by Scott Robbins. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion passed with 21 votes for and 0 against.

2024 Donations

Question on what First Call 211 was. Clerk explained it was a help line for many different resources available for individuals in need. An attendee looked it up on her phone and read all the things that they provide help for. Clerk reminded the constituents that they are voting for a total dollar amount to allow the Board to spend on donations. Michelle Anderson explained that there are conditions that need to be met to donate money. All the organizations that were donated to in the past met these conditions. Motion made by Michelle Anderson to keep the donation amount the same at \$3,550.00 for 2025, with a second by Glen Lindseth. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion passed with 21 votes for and 0 against.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's report was reviewed by the attendees. A question on the what ARPA funds were. It was explained the they were money given out during Covid for use by government entities.

Question on what the General Fund is used for was asked. It is used for administrative expenses including phone, electric, office supplies, and payroll.

How much is payroll was asked but the town treasurer was not at the meeting so that question could not be answered. The amount of the clerks pay was also asked and it is \$1,300.00 per month.

The possibility of moving some money into a money market account was also questioned. Again, that is a question for the treasurer and could not be answered.

2025 Levy

Discussion took place concerning these funds. The Board of Audit report and the treasurer's summary report was reviewed to see what was recommended by the Board and to see what was spent in 2024.

Motion by David Harrington to set the Cemetery Fund Levy at \$2,000.00, with a second by Michelle Anderson. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion passed with 22 votes for and 0 against.

Motion by Michelle Anderson to set the Fire Fund Levy at \$120,000.00, with a second by Ken McBride. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion. Question if the amount is set by the Rural Fire Association (RFA) and it is although this year the Board recommended setting it a little higher to cover the deficit of \$5,579.30 in the Fire Fund at the end of 2024. Does the RFA still owe money to the City of Bemidji for a fire truck was asked. Turtle Lake's RFA Representative Ken McBride said he has not seen that in any documents from the association. Moderator Haugen called for the vote. Motion passed with 21 votes for and 0 against.

Motion by Michelle Anderson to set the General Fund Levy at \$70,000.00, with a second by Keni Johnson. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion. It was questioned if that was enough as more than that was spent in 2024. With a fund balance of \$26,768.64 at the end of 2024 the Board felt it would be enough. Moderator Haugen called for the vote. Motion passed with 22 votes for and 1 against.

Motion by Scott Robbins to set the Building Fund Levy at \$25,000.00, with a second by Michelle Anderson. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion. Repairs needed to the town hall were discussed and the attendees were informed of grant money that has been awarded for an archeological survey which is needed before the foundation of the town hall can be repaired. There will be more grants applied for in the future including one for a new foundation and there may be matching funds required. This is a long process and the money from this grant cannot be spent on building maintenance. Moderator Haugen called for the vote. Motion passed with 16 votes for and 4 against.

Motion by Billy Ayers to set the Road & Bridge Fund Levy at \$150,000.00. Motion failed with no second.

Motion by Michelle Anderson to set the Road & Bridge Fund Levy at \$600,000.00. Second by Corey Wright. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion failed with 6 votes for and 18 against failed.

Motion by David Harrington to set the Road & Bridge Fund Levy at \$100,000.00. Second by Billy Ayers. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion failed with 4 votes for and 20 against.

Motion by Scott Robbins to set the Road & Bridge Fund Levy at \$400,000.00. Second by Larry Schuette. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion failed with 11 votes for and 13 against.

Motion by Kate Tsar to set the Road & Bridge Fund Levy at \$300,000.00. Second by David Harrington. Moderator Haugen asked for discussion then called for the vote. Motion passed with 12 votes for and 11 against.

2026 levy is set as follows:

General Fund	\$70,000.00
Road and Bridge	\$300,000.00
Building	\$25,000.00
Cemetery	\$2,000.00
Fire	\$120,000.00
Total:	\$517,000.00

Open Forum

An attendee stated that several questions were asked that the person was not here to answer. This should not happen. He also stated that the question on the Clerk's wages was not answered but it was.

David Harrington wanted to state for the record that 2 years ago the township electors voted to vacate Vista Forest Road and that a resolution that was read at the meeting should have been typed up and a meeting should have been held.

Adjourn


Motion to adjourn made by Scott Robbins, with a second by Michelle Anderson. Meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Date: 3/13/25

Submitted By:



2025 Annual Township Meeting Moderator Mark Haugen



Township Clerk Lynn Johnson