

Tofte Township Board Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2026

Present: Chair Craig Horak, Supervisor Sam Crowley, Supervisor Teresa Schmidt, Treasurer Gordon Engstrom, Clerk Amy Brugge, Rescue Chief Kim Jahnke

Virtually: Commissioner Ginny Storlie

Absent: Fire Chief Rich Nelson

A. Call to Order: Supervisor Horak called the board meeting to order at 7:02pm.

B. Agenda Approval:

MOTION- Chair Horak moved to approve the agenda. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Minutes Approval:

MOTION – Supervisor Crowley moved to approve the minutes from the January 8, 2026 meeting. Chair Horak seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Clerk’s Report:

1. Mail – Cook County SS4A Task Force – Clerk Brugge will serve as township’s representative
2. MNDOT Hwy 61 Corridor Study Committees & Open House on 2/26
3. MAT Training in Cloquet on 4/3/2026
4. 2026 Township Election Judges
5. Funding Request Process

MOTION – Chair Horak motioned to approve Tammy Rude, Holly Schroeder, and Mary Jane Huggins as 2026 election judges. Supervisor Crowley seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Treasurer’s Report:

1. Treasurer Engstrom, presented the Treasurer’s Report that showed ending balances as follows:
 - a. Grand Marais State Bank Checking Account: **\$ 122,461.80**
 - ii. North Shore Federal Credit Union Combined Accounts: **\$67,282.67**
 - iii. Charles Schwab Investment Account: **\$954,701.04**
 - v. Total Cash and Investments: **\$1,142,762.33**

MOTION- Chair Horak motioned to accept the Treasurer’s report as presented. Supervisor Schmidt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Receipts registered for the past month totaled **\$5,960.37**

F. Claims, Payroll, and Transfers of Funds/ Transaction Report:

1. Review and approval of Unpaid Bills. Presented claims totaling **\$15,133.91**

MOTION- Supervisor Horak moved to approve the claims lists. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval of payroll register – Gross regular monthly pay of **\$9,901.10**

MOTION- Supervisor Horak moved to approve the payroll register. Supervisor Schmidt

seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- G. Fire Department Report – 2 false alarms in Jan; Tim Norman & Rich drove out and picked up the tanker truck. Filled it earlier this week & it is all ready for use
- H. Rescue Squad Report – 3 medical calls last month; Chief Jahnke recently completed a 9-hour zoom training completed by Kim
- I. County Commissioner – Commissioner Storlie was reelected as Chair, Commissioner Dave Mills as Vice Chair, Report about the golf course – a letter of intent was brought before the EDA – Bradley Hatcher (already owns a golf course north of Brainerd); EDA came before the board seeking \$200K from County’s funds (revolving loan fund) with the idea of that being repaid by 9/2027 – money will be used to re-do septic and update irrigation. Will return before the board on 2/24
- J. Birch Grove Community Center
 - 1. Roof Replacement Bids – Bids are being submitted for the March 6, 2026 deadline
 - 2. Exterior Doors & Bathroom addition – Chair Horak discussed things with drafting company and met with Diane Blanchette about what would work best for the school. Need a Seedlings bathroom and a lockable entrance. Articulated that Clerk Brugge should expect to receive more information from the drafting company in the days ahead. Same company as that drew the addition Swarthout – Jason – the draft source
 - 3. Bathroom update – have not heard back from County Plumbing & Heating
 - 4. Warming House water – will include when County Plumbing & Heating comes out
 - 5. Gymnasium – Clerk Brugge noted that a request had been made to use the Birch Grove Gymnasium for Community Basketball and inquired what the rental process and/or fee structure should be. The Board stated that no rental fee should be charged, but that all participants must sign a hold harmless agreement for liability purposes.
- K. Old Business
 - 1. Snowmobile Route Options in Tofte – Dennis Rysdahl presented ideas for snowmobile route options through the center of town, which include the possibility of using Homestead Drive. Township residents expressed concern about safety and conflict with pedestrian traffic along both the Gitchi Gami Trail. Tofte Township Supervisors were not in favor of directing snowmobilers down Homestead Road. Chair Horak suggested that snowmobilers should cross the road at Circle K and that the snowmobile route should then run along the lakeside ditch of Hwy 61 to Bluefin Resort. Dennis Rysdahl stated that MNDOT will need a local government entity as a sponsoring agency and inquired if the board would pass a resolution supporting the potential route discussed. The Board instructed Clerk Brugge to author a letter to MNDOT & the DNR articulating their opinion on potential snowmobile routes through town.

MOTION - Chair Horak motioned to support a snowmobile route crossing Hwy 61 at the AmericInn driveway and take the south side of Hwy 61 ditch to Bluefin Resort. Supervisor Crowley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Town Hall Roof Repair – project is still not complete. The board discussed potential options for other contractors to finish the roof repair.

MOTION - Supervisor Crowley motion to have Skildum & Company to repair the roof; Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Chair Horak abstained. Motion carried.

L. New Business

1. Review of Cell Phone Tower Lease with SBA Communication – will continue with monthly payment option and reject the lumpsum cash option.
2. Billboard Noncompliance Notification from Cook County – Communicated about the billboard lease process with Cook County and will be in touch during next steps.
3. Billboard Lease from Cook County HRA – send to Rich Furlong & will have him review
4. Heat in Town Hall Office – Will contact Goettl’s Furnace for an estimate

M. Citizen Comments – N/A

N. Next Meetings: Annual Meeting & Election on March 10, 2026 and Regular Monthly Meeting on March 12, 2026

O. Adjourned at 8:49pm

Craig Horak, Chair Date

Sam Crowley, Vice Chair Date

Teresa Schmidt, Supervisor Date

Amy Brugge, Clerk Date

Tofte Township

February 12, 2026

2025 Audit and 2027 Budget Meeting Minutes

Present: Supervisor Craig Horak, Supervisor Sam Crowley, Supervisor Teresa Schmitdt, Treasurer Gordon Engstrom, Clerk Amy Brugge

A. Call to Order: Supervisor Craig called the board meeting to order at 8:55PM.
Unless otherwise stated, all actions have been approved by unanimous yeas.

B. 2025 Audit

The Board examined the Treasurer's Annual Report and fund balances. In 2025, the township showed a beginning balance of \$1,259,161.59 across all funds with \$504,173.86 being dedicated to capital project funds. Total receipts on the year equaled \$369,273.36 and disbursements totaled \$460,589.25. As of December 31, 2025, total financial assets equaled \$1,220,019.12 with liabilities of \$13,242.88 resulting in a total equity of \$1,206,776.24. The annual report financial report was compared to 2025 bank statements by the board and all was found to be in agreement.

MOTION- Chair Horak motioned to certify the 2025 Annual Audit report as presented by Treasurer Engstrom. Supervisor Crowley seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.

D. 2027 Budget Planning

1. Clerk Brugge to submit a \$5,000 donation requests to Lutsen and Schroeder for the Tofte Senior Lunch
2. Clerk Brugge to submit \$1500 donation requests to Lutsen and Schroeder for 4th of July fireworks.

The board reviewed the proposed budget prepared by Treasurer Engstrom and discussed potential foreseeable adjustments. The board will continue the budget discussion during the Continuation of the Annual Meeting on the second Thursday in August.

MOTION- Chair Horak motioned to approve presenting the budget at the annual meeting. Supervisor Crowley seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.

E. Adjourn: Chair Horak motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Supervisor Crowley. Meeting adjourned at 9:35pm