

Tofte Township Board Meeting Minutes  
April 9, 2026

**Present:** Chair Craig Horak (virtually), Supervisor Teresa Schmidt (virtually), Treasurer Gordon Engstrom, Deputy Treasurer Jennifer Yeary, Clerk Amy Brugge, Rescue Chief Kim Jahnke, Deputy Commissioner Ginny Storlie (virtually), and residents of Tofte.

**Absent:** Fire Chief Rich Nelson

**A. Call to Order:** Supervisor Horak called the board meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**B. Agenda Approval:**

**MOTION-** Chair Horak moved to approve the agenda with the additional item of Limited Use Permit for trail at Surfside. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Minutes Approval:**

**MOTION –** Chair Horak moved to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2026 meeting. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Clerk’s Report:**

1. Mail – Solicitation for parking lines at Birch Grove
2. MAT Training in Cloquet moved to 4/17/2026 after 4/3/26 cancellation due to inclement weather

**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: **\$99,485.50**
  - b. North Shore Federal Credit Union Combines Accounts: **\$65,099.45**
  - c. Charles Schwab Investment Account: **\$965,331.38**
  - d. Total Cash & Investments: **\$1,127,728.49**

**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 **\$10,048.87**

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

1. Review and approval of Unpaid Bills. Presented claims totaling **\$22,493.85**

**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 **\$11,568.50**

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

seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- G. Fire Department Report – 2 calls for mutual aid for townhome fire at Caribou Highlands; fire started in the chimney box of the middle townhome unit and burned through the roof.
- H. Rescue Squad Report – No calls this month; CPR Refresher course will occur on 4/17/2026. Clerk Brugge reported that 3 EMS bills were sent from the prior month’s rescue squad calls – no payments or inquiries about the bills have been received yet.
- I. County Commissioner – Tofte residents at the Annual Meeting had requested that Commissioner Storlie provide more information from the county about vacation rentals, so at the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting a representative from the county office will attend the regular Tofte monthly meeting to discuss the details, misconceptions, and realities of vacation rentals across the county. Commissioner Sullivan, Administrator Trebil, & Robbie Haas (Highway Dept) are at state capital lobbying for funds to finish paving the final 10 miles of the Gunflint Trail, which is estimated to cost \$10 million. Commissioner Storlie believes Lutsen will get their drone this month. She also discussed the septic ordinance review that occurred this week at the county level.
- J. Birch Grove Community Center
  - 1. Exterior Doors & Bathroom addition – the designer was supposed to provide a drawing this week, but have not yet heard back from him.
  - 2. Bathroom update – contractor intends to look at this next week to estimate what it would be to re-build the urinals in the boys’ bathroom
  - 3. Warming House spigot –contractor will cover this at the same time when looking at the boys’ bathroom
  - 4. Maintenance position – Chair Horak will develop a position description and provide it to the clerk for posting.
- K. Old Business
  - 1. Billboard Lease from Cook County HRA – Executive Director Jeff Brand has signed and now the township needs to execute their signatures & notarization and return.
  - 2. Snowmobile Route Options in Tofte – after Cole Wright of MNDOT declined the option preferred by the Tofte Town Board, Chair Horak called him to discuss. If snowmobilers are riding outside of the right of way, there is no need to permit snowmobile trail. Instead, the trail would only need a highway crossing permit; met with Dennis Rysdahl and measured to determine how much brush and/or trees would need to be cleared to make it work on the north side of the road outside the highway’s right-of-way. The proposed route would cross the highway at the unused driveway between Americinn & Sawtooth.
  - 3. Town Hall Roof Repair – Chair will reach out to contractor again
  - 4. Limited Use Permit & ADA accessibility for trail at Surfside – Chair Horak & James Taylor from Bluefin/Surfside Resort discussed the need to make accessibility updates to the trail connection by Surfside to the Gitchi Gami Trail in order for MNDOT to renew

the limited use permit, on which the township is the sponsoring agency. James Taylor will further discuss with Cole Wright from MNDOT and get quotes for the concrete work that would need to be done to make accessibility upgrades.

L. New Business

1. Billboard Lease with Sawtooth Canoe Outfitters – would like to do 5 years at the same rate; will need to work with a designer for the wrap; both agreed to verbiage in 2020; amount of \$4500

**MOTION** – Chair Horak motioned to approve the rental of the billboard at \$2250 per side for 5-years effective May 1, 2026. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. EMS Agreement with Schroeder

**MOTION** – Chair Horak motioned to approve the agreement for the provision of Rescue Services to Schroeder for a 3-yr term at \$12,000 per year. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Supervisor Position – Still recruiting potential replacements to fill the vacant supervisor role.

M. Board Reorganization & Annual Approvals

**MOTION** – Chair Horak motioned the follow board reorganization items. Supervisor Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Board Organization: **Chair – Craig Horak; Vice Chair – Teresa Schmidt**
2. Banking Institutions & Signatures: **GMSB, NSFCU, Charles Schwab**
  - a. Signatories – **Craig Horak, Teresa Schmidt, Gordon Engstrom, Jennifer Yeary, & Amy Brugge**
  - b. Re-affirmed that 2 signatures are necessary for banking actions.
  - c. Authorization on Charles Schwab account with **Jennifer Yeary** as the primary, and **Gordon Engstrom, Craig Horak, and Amy Brugge** as being authorized individuals on the account.
3. Publication Location – designated the official publication as Cook County Herald
4. 2026 wages rates will remain the same as 2025.

M. Citizen Comments – N/A

N. Next Meetings: Local Board of Appeals & Equalization on May 14, 2026 at 6pm and Regular Board Meeting at 7pm

O. Adjourned at 8:25pm