



Regular Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 7:00PM

The Orrock Township Board met in regular session, on Wednesday, July 23rd, 2025 at Orrock Town Hall, 26401 180th Street NW, Big Lake, MN.

In attendance were Chair Anne Felber, Supervisors: Paul Ellinger, Bryan Adams, Dalton Keiderling and Peter Owen, Treasurer Kellie McConville and Clerk Shelley Erickson. Also, in attendance were Sergeant Alex Dehn, Township Engineer Kevin Krueger, Molly Thompson & Riann Harpster of Schlenner Wenner, Katie Canton of the Patriot News and 6 members of the audience.

A quorum was present and the meeting was called to order by Chair Anne Felber at 7:00 PM.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Anne Felber called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF JUNE MEETING AGENDA

Supervisor Keiderling noted that item 8A, Golden Oaks Estates, should be removed from the agenda as the applicants were unable to get their drawing in time. They will be on the agenda for August.

Motion to approve the July agenda with the removal of item 8A made by Supervisor Owen, seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included routine claims, July 2025 payroll, and additional claims.

Motion to approve the consent agenda made by Supervisor Adams, seconded by Supervisor Owen. Motion carried unanimously.

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Sergeant Alex Dehn presented the June 2025 activity reports from the Sheriff's Office. In June 2025, the Sheriff's Office responded to 154 calls for service in Orrock Township. Notable incidents included:

- Two thefts at Sand Dune Food & Fuel gas station (one gas drive-off and one shoplift)
- An assault at Getaway Bar where the suspect was located, arrested, and charged

- Garbage dumping issues on 230th Avenue where trash and glass had been dumped on a driveway
- A welfare check at Ann Lake Beach involving an intoxicated adult who was caring for a juvenile; the juvenile was removed and placed with a relative, and the adult was charged with several offenses

Supervisor Keiderling asked about "paper service" which showed higher numbers than usual. Deputy Adams explained that paper service involves delivering harassment restraining orders, orders for protection, civil papers for lawsuits, divorce documents, and subpoenas for witnesses. The numbers vary without a particular pattern.

Sergeant Dehn then discussed options for providing Sheriff's deputies access to the Township building. He explained several possibilities:

1. Testing if deputies' access cards work with the existing card reader system, though this would create administrative challenges when deputies are hired or leave
2. Installing a secure lockbox containing a Township access card that deputies could use to enter the building

Chair Felber requested that Deputy Adams arrange for Matt Albrecht from IT services to meet with the clerk to discuss options and recommend the best solution. The Board expressed consensus to continue pursuing building access for deputies.

OPEN FORUM

Lisa Miller (23225 188th Street NW) spoke about an easement between her property and her neighbor's property. She explained that they both maintain the grassy easement area, which includes an irrigation system installed by a previous neighbor. No one has used the easement in at least 15 years. She and her neighbor would like to explore options for vacating the easement so they could make improvements like removing a dead tree in the lakefront area.

James Gerard (25368 164th ½ Street) also spoke about a Township road that only serves his driveway. He owns property on both sides of it, and the Township does not maintain it. When there is heavy rain, gravel washes out onto his lawn. He would like to pave it but needs to know if he can have it vacated or if he can pave it while it remains a Township road.

Supervisor Keiderling noted that both residents had contacted the Township about their situation, and the Board would be discussing easement policies later in the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve the June regular monthly meeting minutes made by Supervisor Ellinger, seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve the July special meeting minutes made by Supervisor Keiderling, seconded by Supervisor Ellinger. Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS

2024 Audit Presentation – Schlenner Wenner

Molly Johnson from Schlenner Wenner & Co. presented the 2024 audit results. She explained the audit process includes planning, fieldwork, and wrap-up phases. The Township received a clean (unmodified) opinion on its fund basis financials, and a qualified opinion on the government-wide statements because the Township elected not to record its proportionate share of PERA or Fire Relief Association liabilities.

The audit found that:

- The audit went smoothly despite the Township having new staff who weren't present during the audited year
- No unusual transactions or accounting policies were found
- Four findings were noted: help with cash-to-accrual basis adjustments, departure from GAAP regarding PERA liabilities, segregation of duties limitations due to small staff size, and bank accounts that were under-collateralized by \$450,000 at year-end

Johnson presented financial trends showing the general fund balance was strong. The general fund ended the year with a positive balance of about \$88,000 compared to \$290,000 the prior year. Expenditures were under budget by approximately \$17,000, and revenues were over budget by about \$31,000 primarily due to interest income.

The Township has a policy that the general fund balance should not be less than 50% of budgeted operating expenditure. The audit showed the Township is well within this metric, ranging from 92% to 201% over the last five years.

During questions, Supervisor Ellinger asked about the under-collateralization issue. Johnson recommended contacting the bank in advance of receiving tax payments in December to ensure proper collateralization is in place. There was also discussion about CD insurance coverage and the need to keep amounts within FDIC limits.

Motion to approve the 2024 audit made by Supervisor Owen, seconded by Supervisor Ellinger. Motion carried unanimously.

Variance Request

The Board reviewed a variance request for property owned by Cody Slocum with a shed currently on it. The owner plans to tear down the existing structure and build a house but needs a variance for the setback. The septic design had been updated and approved.

Supervisor Adams asked if there was any way to change the layout of the house to alleviate the need for the 8.5-9 foot variance. The applicant stated that based on his design, this wasn't possible. Supervisor Adams advised that the County would likely ask the same question and recommended having an answer prepared.

The Board agreed to provide positive comments on the variance request, and Chair Felber signed the paperwork to be forwarded to the County. The applicant will be on the County's docket for their August meeting.

IT Update

Clerk Erickson reported that the tablets for board members have been ordered and are nearly ready for distribution. Security updates have been completed for the treasurer's computer and town hall computer. The clerk's computer needs a few more updates, and the town hall computer needs Windows 11, but compatibility testing is needed first. Currently, about \$2,450.00 remains in the IT budget, which is significantly under the cap that was established.

Chair Felber commended Clerk Erickson for her work on this major project.

LBRP & LRIP Funding Available

Chair Felber noted that funding is now available to townships for road projects. The Board agreed to forward the information to their engineer to review and determine if any future township road projects could qualify for these funds.

Resolution 2025-06 Resolution Accepting Donations

Clerk Erickson explained that Chris Weber had donated a framed picture of the town hall to the Township. By statute, the Township must pass a resolution to accept any donations.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2025-06 accepting the donation made by Supervisor Keiderling, seconded by Supervisor Adams. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board agreed that Clerk Erickson should write a thank you letter on behalf of the entire Board and include a copy of the resolution.

EASEMENTS

Easement on 16376 230th Ave NW

Supervisor Keiderling presented information about a property where the owner, Shane Ware, discovered just before closing that there is an easement for utilities and a drainage pond on his property. The easement encompasses his driveway and an outbuilding. Both the house (built in 1991) and outbuilding (built in 1998) have permits from the county, but neither mentioned the easement. The owner requested to vacate the easement because he's concerned that utility companies could use his driveway or place utility boxes there since it's within the easement. The property owner, who works in utilities, explained that even though the easement was originally for drainage, it has since been designated as a utility easement as well.

Supervisor Adams suggested granting an encroachment agreement rather than vacating the easement entirely, as this would acknowledge the existing structures while preserving the Township's rights for the remainder of the easement area. There was extensive discussion about finding a solution that would allow the owner to maintain his driveway and building while preserving necessary drainage access.

The owner expressed concern that an encroachment agreement wouldn't prevent utility companies from building in his driveway, while Engineer Kevin Kruger explained that utilities couldn't just enter the easement without Township permission.

Motion to have the Township attorney draft an encroachment agreement for the property with the understanding that the property owner would pay all legal costs through a \$1,000 escrow, made by Supervisor Keiderling, seconded by Supervisor Adams. Motion carried unanimously.

Easement for drainage use on 233rd Ave NW

Supervisor Keiderling reported that the Township attorney confirmed the Township still has rights to the easement in question as long as it hasn't been formally vacated by the Township.

Engineer Kevin Kruger described the drainage issues in the area. Water pools up on one side of the road and, when it overflows, causes flooding problems. There was disagreement among residents about who caused the problem by filling in or berming their property.

Kevin Kruger explained that the possible solution would be to install a catch basin with pipe to direct water to the wetlands area where the Township has a full easement. This would require obtaining right-of-entry permission from a property owner who has been resistant to Township involvement. The estimated cost would be approximately \$150 per foot of pipe.

Motion to authorize Supervisor Keiderling, Supervisor Owen, and Engineer Kevin Kruger (or at least one of those three) to approach the resident for right-of-entry permission, and if granted, have Engineer Kevin Kruger solicit bids for the work, made by Supervisor Keiderling, seconded by Supervisor Owen. Motion carried unanimously.

Greenways

Supervisor Keiderling explained that three different property owners had contacted the Township about easements between properties that provide lake access. The questions centered around how these greenways should be used, who is responsible for maintaining them, and what improvements can be made.

He shared that in Big Lake and Big Lake Township, greenways along the lakes are actively managed with signage, trash cans, and clear policies about allowed uses. In contrast, Orrock Township doesn't have policies for their greenways, nor do they maintain them or have signage indicating they're public property.

The Board agreed that before developing policies, they needed to identify all the greenways and assess their current state.

Motion to have the Township engineer create a map of greenways on Ann Lake and Eagle Lake made by Chair Felber, seconded by Supervisor Owen. Motion carried unanimously.

ROADS

Tree Trimming Update

Supervisor Owen reported that he has been working with township handyman Darryl Waletzko on tree trimming plans but doesn't yet have a bid. He plans to meet with residents who have areas needing tree trimming, particularly around stop signs where visibility is a safety concern.

Darryl Waletzko cannot start oak tree trimming until mid-August due to oak wilt concerns. Once areas are identified for trimming, letters will be sent to affected property owners. The Township's policy is to trim 6 feet from the edge of the road and up to the sky.

Pothole Patching Update

Supervisor Owen reported that he had not realized a down payment was required to schedule pothole patching work. The payment was included in the consent agenda approved earlier in the meeting. He has been in contact with Eli Erickson of Erickson Asphalt, and the work should be completed within a couple of weeks once the down payment is received.

West Eagle Lake Road Improvement Update

Engineer Kevin Kruger reported that work is progressing on the plans following the July Special Meeting. The plans incorporate adjustments discussed at the special meeting, including narrowing and widening the road as appropriate and shifting its position in certain areas. Kevin Kruger and Supervisor Ellinger have scheduled meetings with two residents to discuss drainage and building issues.

BOARD BUSINESS/UPDATES – COMMITTEE REPORTS

Supervisors Adams, Ellinger, Owen, and Keiderling had nothing to report. Chair Felber mentioned she attended the county fair and viewed the exhibits.

TREASURER BUSINESS

Cash Control Statement and Investment Update

Treasurer McConville reported that the balancing was completed with no discrepancies. The CD was renewed for another 13-month term. There was discussion about whether the CD amount exceeded FDIC insurance limits and whether part of it should be moved to ensure it is fully insured.

Motion to approve the cash control statement made by Supervisor Adams, seconded by Supervisor Owen. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer McConville explained that the report now shows the entire year's financials rather than just the current month.

Motion to approve the treasurer's report made by Chair Felber, seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. Motion carried unanimously.

Report of June Sherburne State Bank Securities Pledge Validation

Treasurer McConville noted that the bank appeared to be short on collateralization at the end of June, but this was due to timing issues with documentation. She had contacted the bank, and the matter was resolved.

Treasurer McConville also requested approval to transfer \$132,739.33 from checking to the money market account.

Motion to approve the transfer made by Supervisor Ellinger, seconded by Supervisor Owen. Motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The August Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 27th at 7:00 PM.

The SWCD Tour of Conservation Practices will be held on August 28th from 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM. Chair Felber encouraged board members to attend, noting it was a free event with lunch provided and an excellent way to learn about soil stratification and meet SWCD staff.

Chair Felber reiterated thanks to Chris Weber for donating the framed photo of the Town Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Supervisor Owen, seconded by Supervisor Adams. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelley Erickson
Town of Orrock, Clerk

Accepted this 27th day of August 2025 by the Orrock Township Board of Supervisors.

Anne Felber, Chair

Attest: _____
Shelley Erickson, Town Clerk