ORROCK TOWNSHIP

Regular Board Meeting
July 22, 2026, 7:00PM

The Orrock Township Board met in regular session, on Wednesday July 22nd, 2026 at Orrock Town Hall, 26401 180th Street NW, Big Lake, MN.

In attendance were Chair Anne Felber, Supervisors: Paul Ellinger, Dalton Keiderling, and Peter Owen, Treasurer Kellie McConville, and Clerk Shelley Erickson. Also, in attendance were Sergeant Todd Schuster, Riann George of Schlenner Wenner, 18 members of the audience and the Patriot News. Supervisor Bryan Adams was absent.

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

The Chair called the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Orrock Town Board of Supervisors to order. Those in attendance were invited to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of July Meeting Agenda

No changes were requested to the agenda.

Motion to approve the July Meeting Agenda was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Owen. The motion carried.

Approve Consent Agenda

Review or approval of Treasurer's Reports, including routine claims and payroll, was presented with no changes or questions from the Board.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda, including the Treasurer's Reports, routine claims, and July 2026 payroll, was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. The motion carried.

Sheriff's Report

Sergeant Todd Schuster presented a comparative call volume summary for June. There were 140 calls for service in June 2026, compared to 154 in June 2025. Notable call categories included 33 traffic stops, 13 medicals, 4 disturbing the peace, 25 extra patrols, 7 security checks, 7 welfare checks, and 5 paper services. Sergeant Schuster noted that activity was consistent with an average June, with nothing unusual or out of the ordinary to report. The Board had no questions.

Open Forum

Chair Felber opened the floor to public comment, reminding attendees of the three-minute limit per speaker, the requirement to state their full name and address for the record, and that all remarks must be kept in statement form.

Cindy Mockenhaupt (16481 253½ Avenue NW, Big Lake) addressed the Board regarding the Ann Lake Improvement Club's agreement with Orrock Township. She made several points: that the township's attorney was fully aware of and involved in drafting the 2016 agreement; that the Ann Lake Improvement Club has maintained the Orrock Township landing at no cost to taxpayers for 70 years, saving tens of thousands of dollars; that the township's own attorney had previously indicated the Board could provide $1,200 in services without electoral authorization; and that a modification clause in the original agreement required written consent of both parties before termination. She further expressed concern that the Board appeared to be moving toward transferring a 1.87-acre property valued at approximately $250,000 to a state agency, which she characterized as contrary to the interests of the community. She stated that the Club is reviewing all documents and emails through a FOIA request and intends to return with a full accounting of the facts.

Barb Mann (23705 185th Street NW, Big Lake) invited the Board and community to a neighborhood National Night Out party on August 4th at Shores of Eagle Lake.

Clint Christianson (25176 64th Street, Big Lake) echoed the comments regarding Ann Lake, noting that the matter had not appeared on the agenda as old business, despite no decision having been reached. He also noted for the record that there are eight township-owned landings in Sherburne County alone and indicated that further discussion with the Board would be forthcoming.

Carol Spagenske (25070 165th Street NW, Big Lake) briefly addressed the Board regarding the Board's attentiveness during public comments. Chair Felber and Supervisor Ellinger both responded that they had been taking notes during the presentations.

Chair Felber closed the Open Forum, having called three times for additional speakers and hearing none.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

No changes or concerns were raised regarding the June Monthly Meeting minutes.

Motion to approve the June Monthly Meeting minutes was made by Supervisor Keiderling and seconded by Supervisor Owen. The motion carried.

Regular Business

2025 Audit Presentation – Schlenner Wenner – Discussion/Approve

Rian George of Schlenner Wenner presented the 2025 audit findings. The audit process was described as consisting of three phases: planning, testing, and wrap-up, utilizing the township's CTAS system and source document review.

The township received an **unmodified (clean) opinion** on its fund-level financial statements, covering the general fund, road and bridge fund, fire fund, and general capital projects fund. A **qualified opinion** was issued on the government-wide financial statements, as the township has elected not to record capital assets or GASB 68/71 pension balances. Ms. George noted these departures are not uncommon for a township of this size and that the cost of adoption would likely outweigh the benefits.

Key findings and observations included:

- The audit proceeded smoothly, with positive working relationships with Township Clerk and Treasurer, who were noted for timely and thorough responses.
- No unusual transactions or accounting policy concerns were identified.
- Internal control observations were unchanged from the prior year, including a lack of segregation of duties due to having only two office staff, and the firm's preparation of financial statements on behalf of the township.
- Audit adjustments were recommended to convert CTAS cash-basis entries to the accrual basis required for financial statement presentation.
- No instances of noncompliance with Minnesota statutes were identified across reviewed areas including contracting and bidding, depository of public funds, conflicts of interest, claims and disbursements, and miscellaneous provisions.

Regarding financial highlights for the **general fund**: revenues increased approximately $10,000 over the prior year; expenditures increased approximately $27,000, primarily due to additional personnel costs in 2025; the ending fund balance was approximately $355,000, an increase of roughly $72,000 from the prior year; and the unassigned fund balance stood at approximately 281% of budgeted expenditures, well above the township's 50% policy target. Cash in the general fund was just under $424,000 on December 31st.

For the **road and bridge fund**, cash ended the year at approximately $1,760,000, reflecting an increase tied to levied funds for planned road repair projects. The **fire fund** cash balance remained steady at approximately $141,000.

Supervisor Ellinger commented positively on the financial position, noting that the township carries no debt and that interest earnings were being well-managed through the money market. Supervisor Keiderling clarified the road and bridge fund balance increase was attributable to a project planned for later in the year. The 50% fund balance policy was discussed in context of the township's need to cover operating expenses for the first half of the year before tax revenues are received.

Motion to accept the 2025 audit as presented was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Owen. The motion carried.

MATIT Insurance Renewal & Coverages – Discussion/Action

The Board reviewed the MATIT insurance renewal. Supervisor Ellinger raised a question regarding the insured value of the township building, noting it appeared low. It was confirmed that an on-site physical inspection had been conducted by the insurer to establish the valuation, which satisfied the Board's concern.

Motion to approve the MATIT insurance renewal and coverage limits as presented was made by Supervisor Keiderling and seconded by Supervisor Owen. The motion carried.

Emergency Sirens – Discussion/TBD

The Board discussed the county's planned decommissioning of emergency sirens, which is set to begin in 2027, and considered options for resident notification tools, including weather alert radios.

Supervisor Keiderling expressed opposition to purchasing a stockpile of radios, citing the prevalence of cell phones, the shelf life of radios, and the administrative burden of managing distribution. He suggested that if radios were to be made available at all, it should be on a request basis only, similar to the gopher bounty program, rather than a broad distribution.

Supervisor Ellinger agreed, expressing reluctance to open a program that would be difficult to administer equitably and noting that cell phone alerts—such as the Wireless Emergency Alert test observed that day—provide adequate coverage for the majority of residents.

The Board reached a consensus that no radio stockpile would be purchased. If an individual resident demonstrates a specific need, such as a disability, a single radio could be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion then shifted to a proposed resident notification postcard regarding the siren decommissioning. The Clerk presented a draft postcard developed collaboratively among Sherburne County township clerks and provided a quote for printing and postage of $1,049. The Board noted that at least one neighboring township had already sent its version. Concerns about wording related to the decommissioning timeline were briefly discussed; it was clarified that sirens would not all be shut off on January 1st, but that the decommissioning process would begin and unfold over time, potentially lasting months to a year or more.

Motion to approve the printing and postage for the emergency siren notification postcard to be mailed to all property owners on the township's mailing list, at a cost of $1,049, was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. The motion carried.

Adobe Update – Discussion/Action

The Clerk presented the need to upgrade Adobe Acrobat software for both the Clerk and Treasurer workstations. The current free version of Adobe no longer supports the organizational tools, stamps, and other functions required for packet preparation on the Clerk's new laptop. The Treasurer's software would also need to be updated to ensure compatibility for document signing and editing between the two offices.

The Board was informed that the Adobe Acrobat Pro for Teams license requires individual licenses per user and cannot be shared. The Studio version was reviewed but deemed unnecessary, as the Pro version covers the current workflow. The combined cost for both licenses, installed simultaneously to save on installation fees, was quoted at $735.76. The Board confirmed that the Chair's ability to digitally sign documents sent from the office would not be affected.

Motion to approve the Adobe Acrobat Pro update for both the Clerk and the Treasurer, to be installed at the same time, at a combined cost of $735.76, was made by Supervisor Keiderling and seconded by Supervisor Ellinger. The motion carried.

Township Lawn Mower – Discuss/TBD

Supervisor Ellinger brought forward a proposal to sell the township's 1997 John Deere LX 176 riding lawnmower, which has not been used since the township changed its lawn maintenance approach. The mower is stored in the garage and noted in the township's insurance records. Supervisor Ellinger noted the mower occupies space needed by the road crew and proposed advertising it for sale to the highest bidder. The Board discussed the process, confirming that proceeds from the sale would be recorded as income on the township's books. Supervisor Ellinger agreed to attempt to charge the battery and start the mower prior to advertising.

Motion to sell the 1997 John Deere township lawnmower to the highest bidder and to work with the Clerk on advertising was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Felber. The motion carried.

Planning & Zoning

Joe Lemperes – Variance Request – PID 35-00031-3315 – Discussion/Action

Joe Lemperes, the contractor representing the property owners at PID 35-00031-3315, appeared before the Board to describe a proposed home renovation. The project involves removing an existing 5-foot deck on the front of the home facing the lake and replacing it with a covered porch extending 8 feet from the same face of the house, resulting in a net encroachment of 3 feet closer to the road. The garage below is to be converted to living space, with a detached garage continuing to serve that function.

The contractor noted that Sherburne County had requested confirmation of the septic system's proximity to the new footings; an on-site inspection by County Inspector Doug Maschler confirmed the distance to be approximately 9.6 feet—greater than the 6.3 feet shown on the site plan—which satisfied the county's concern.

Supervisor Ellinger, who had visited the site on multiple occasions, confirmed that the proposed porch would be approximately 67 feet from the center of the road and would be essentially flush with the existing neighboring garage, which already sits closer to the road. Supervisor Keiderling noted that while the property technically fronts a county road, the speed limit in the area is lower than typical county road standards, and the proposed encroachment is consistent with neighboring structures.

The Board expressed no concerns and indicated it would provide no objection to the county, forwarding comments to the Board of Adjustment.

Roads & Signs

Bahr Haunted Acres 2nd Driveway Request – Discussion/Action

Bret Bahr, the property owner of Bahr Haunted Acres, appeared before the Board to request approval for a second driveway access. The existing driveway sits directly across from the Peterson property, and the Petersons had previously complained about headlights shining into their house/driveway during Haunted Acres operations each October. The applicant proposed adding a new driveway near the north of the property and closing the existing driveway during operations using an existing gate, so that operational traffic would no longer impact the neighboring property.

The Board discussed the proposed location in relation to a nearby utility pole, with Supervisor Owen noting that the driveway must be set at least 10 feet from utility infrastructure, and that the standard driveway width requires a minimum of 20 feet. Based on measurements, the proposed location was estimated to require placement approximately 39 to 59 feet from the property line to satisfy setback and utility clearance requirements.

The Board also asked whether the driveway would be used for purposes beyond the October Haunted Acres event. The applicant indicated no other current plans, though a single Christmas weekend event was being considered.

The Board expressed general support for the concept, noting that the request is a standard property owner right and is not contingent upon the Haunted Acres operation. The Board directed the applicant to work with the township road committee to confirm the precise location, and to consult with the township engineer and Supervisors Owen & Adams. The applicant was also encouraged to communicate with the Peterson family, as the proposed driveway change is intended to address their complaint.

No formal vote was taken; the matter was moved forward for site review and follow-up.

Shoulder Work – Discuss/Action

Supervisor Owen reported that township handyman Darryl Waletzko had provided a quote of $2,300 to complete all shoulder work identified in the Spring Road Report, including corner repairs, edging, and installation of crushed asphalt. The Board confirmed this amount falls within the township's spending threshold and approved proceeding.

Motion to approve $2,300 for shoulder work as identified in the Spring Road Report was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. The motion carried.

Board Business/Updates – Committee Reports

Adams
Supervisor Adams was absent from the meeting.

Ellinger
Supervisor Paul Ellinger announced that he will not be seeking re-election and encouraged community members to consider filing for his supervisor position. Chair Felber thanked Supervisor Ellinger for his years of service and knowledge.

Felber
Chair Felber reported attending the Spudfest parade. She also noted that she had the honor of attending the Sherburne County Probation and Parole Officer Appreciation Day, where she served as a volunteer alongside commissioners, the county attorney, and administrative staff.

Owen

Supervisor Owen reported attending a legal seminar and raised a drainage issue on 253rd Avenue NW near Ann Lake, a dead-end road with a standing water problem at the bottom of the hill—despite the area currently being in drought conditions. He noted that a property at the end of the road is changing ownership and the new owner has inquired about a fix. Supervisor Owen indicated that a variance for a drain installation was reportedly granted to a prior homeowner years ago, but it is unknown whether the work was ever completed. He stated his intent to consult with Darryl Waletzko, Supervisor Adams, and possibly the township engineer Kevin Kruger, before returning with a proposal at a future meeting. The Board agreed that no temporary fix should be made given the likelihood of a more comprehensive road project in the area.

Keiderling

No report from Supervisor Keiderling

Treasurer Business

Cash Control Statement and Investment Update – Approve

The Treasurer presented the Cash Control Statement showing deposit and balance activity through the end of June. She noted that a Certificate of Deposit had matured the previous day and requested Board direction on reinvestment. The current CD specials offered by the bank were a 5-month CD at 3.60% and a 13-month CD at 3.40%. After brief discussion regarding interest rate trends, the Board directed the Treasurer to invest $250,000 (the maximum FDIC-insured amount) in the 5-month CD at 3.60%, and to transfer the remaining balance of approximately $21,023.41 to the money market account.

Motion to invest $250,000 in a 5-month CD at 3.60% was made by Chair Felber and seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. The motion carried.

Motion to transfer the remaining balance of approximately $21,023.41 to the money market account was made by Chair Felber and seconded by Supervisor Keiderling. The motion carried.

The Treasurer then requested approval of the Cash Control Statement and an investment transfer of $141,450.31, along with a routine debit card transfer.

Motion to approve the Cash Control Statement and the investment transfer of $141,450.31, including the routine debit card transfer, was made by Supervisor Ellinger and seconded by Supervisor Owen. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Approve

The Treasurer presented the Treasurer's Report detailing ending cash balances and disbursements by account number.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Chair Felber and seconded by Supervisor Ellinger. The motion carried.

Report of June Sherburne State Bank Securities Pledge Validation – Review

The Treasurer presented the June Sherburne State Bank Securities Pledge Validation for review. She noted that the report appeared short for the month due to a timing discrepancy between when the signed pledge form was submitted and the reporting date. She confirmed with the bank that the township's deposits are fully covered at $400,000, and that a signed updated pledge form had been obtained from the bank to document the coverage. No action was required; this item was for review only.

Announcements

A. August Board Meeting – Wednesday, August 26th @ 7PM
B. Candidate Filing Dates – Tuesday July 14th through Tuesday July 28th at 5PM; July 30th, last day to withdraw
C. Primary Election – Tuesday, August 11th

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Chair Felber and seconded by Supervisor Owen. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelley Erickson
Orrock Township Clerk

Accepted this **26th day of August, 2026**, by the Orrock Township Board of Supervisors.

___________________________________ Attest: ________________________________

Anne Felber, Chairperson Town Clerk