



Fish Lake Township

2170 Brunswick Road
Harris, MN 55032
(651) 674-7709
www.fishlaketownship.com

Town Board Meeting Minutes June 8, 2026

Board Members and Staff Present

Chair Bruce Fitzwater, Vice-Chair Jim Thill, Supervisor Donna Ferguson, Treasurer Corey Johnson, Clerk Andrea Nekowitsch, Gary Guse Road Superintendent

Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Fitzwater called the Regular Monthly Fish Lake Town Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Township Office at 2170 Brunswick Road, Harris, MN. The pledge of allegiance was recited by all. Motion made Thill by and seconded by Ferguson to approve the agenda as presented. Approved unanimously.

Road Report

Gary Guse presented the road report and updated the Board on projects that have been completed and in process from the last month and projects planned for the upcoming month.

Gopher Bounty Program:

The Board discussed implementing a township gopher bounty program to assist with controlling gopher populations and reducing impacts to township road right-of-way areas. After discussion, the Board approved initiating a gopher bounty program with the following requirements:

- Participants must provide proof of residency within the township.
- The bounty shall be limited to a maximum of 50 pairs of gopher claws per household, per month.
- Payment shall be made at a rate of \$5.00 per pair of gopher claws submitted.

The Board directed township staff to administer the program and establish procedures for verification and payment processing.

Treasurers Report

The Board reviewed the treasurer's report.

Bank Balances as of: May 31, 2026

Checking	\$17,571.69	Broadband Debt. Service	\$118,346.62
Savings (Camb. State)	\$490,805.18	Anchor Ave. Debt Service	\$33,690.60

Motion made by Ferguson and seconded by Thill to accept the Treasurer's report approve bills for \$207,376.39, and the current month's payroll of \$ 10,368.72 and transfer funds between the following bank accounts: \$200,000.00 from Savings to Checking. Approved unanimously.

Minutes

Motion made by Ferguson and seconded by Thill to approve the minutes as amended for April 13, 2026 and May 11, 2026 regular monthly meetings. Approved unanimously.

Schedule Appointments

Variance Request – 2340 Stark Road, Harris, MN 55032

The Board reviewed a variance request for the property located at 2340 Stark Road, Harris, MN 55032, for the installation of a holding tank septic system to serve a proposed coffee shop/café and seven-bedroom residence.

Representative, Shane Steinbrecher or Steinbrecher Companies, Inc. explained that multiple rounds of MPD infiltration testing were conducted on the property on April 21, 2026, and May 7, 2026. Testing indicated little to no soil infiltration capacity, and it was determined that the site would not adequately support a conventional drain field or dispersal bed system. Based on these findings, the applicant's designer recommended installation of a holding tank system in lieu of a drain field system.

The proposed system includes requirements for water usage monitoring through installation of a water meter with quarterly reporting and ongoing pumping verification. Additional alarm systems were also recommended to monitor tank capacity levels.

Information presented indicated that the system was designed for a peak daily flow of 2,940 gallons per day based on residential and commercial use calculations completed in coordination with Chisago County. The proposed design consists of one 18,000-gallon holding tank sized to meet applicable code requirements.

Following discussion and review of the submitted information, the Board approved the variance request for the proposed holding tank system subject to final approval and permitting requirements through Chisago County.

Motion made by Thill and seconded by Ferguson to approve the variance as presented without any conditions. Approved unanimously.

Clerk Report

Clerk Nekowitsch informed the Board that she recommends transitioning payroll processing back to Patriot Software effective July 1, 2026. The recommendation was based on changes to QuickBooks Online Payroll requiring customers to utilize tax payment and filing services directly through the platform.

Clerk Nekowitsch explained that this process would require payroll tax funds to be withdrawn from township accounts at the time payroll is processed rather than when payments are due to the appropriate agencies. Additional concerns were discussed regarding limited flexibility within the system for government payroll reporting requirements, which could result in unnecessary filings or payments for returns not applicable to township operations.

Following discussion, the Board agreed that transitioning away from QuickBooks Online Payroll would allow the township to maintain greater control over payroll processing and management of township funds.

Board Member Reports

None

Old Business

None

New Business

Motion made by Thill and seconded by Ferguson to approve Resolution 2026-08 Approving the Vacation of Canal Court and a portion of Sherwood Avenue. Approved unanimously.

Clerk Nekowitsch will file the proper paperwork with the Chisago County Recorder and send notices of completion of proceedings to the affected property owners for their records.

Citizen Comment

Adjourn

Motion made by Thill and seconded by Ferguson to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Approved unanimously.

Bruce Fitzwater, Chair

Date

Andrea Nekowitsch, Clerk

Date