

Breitung Township
Regular Board Meeting 04-21-2026, 6:00 PM
In Person Meeting at the Timothy Tomsich Community Center
33 First Avenue, Soudan MN 55782

Present In Person:

Board Members: Chairman Matthew Tuchel, Supervisor Erin Peitso, Supervisor Stephen Tekautz, Clerk Amber Zak, Treasurer Teresa Dolinar

Public: Police Chief Daniel Reing, Maintenance Supervisor Tom Gorsma, Stephanie Ukkola (Timberjay Newspaper), Mike Korpi, Randy Pratt, Julie Kranz, John Jamnick (JPJ), Margaret Stauty, Don Stauty, Pam Stauty, Jed Stauty, Delilah Stauty, Gideon Tomberline, Darren Letchworth, Pam Roper, William C Roper, Tiffany Sailstad, Joe Stauty, Cy Stauty, Thea White (Don Stauty – Thea White all in attendance for the swearing in of Officer Margaret Stauty).

Call to Order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Tuchel

Pledge of Allegiance

Acceptance of Agenda

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to accept the agenda as presented

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion Passed 3-0

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Supervisor Peitso to approve the minutes of the 02-17-2026 Board of Audit Meeting, 03-17-2026 Regular Board Meeting and the 03-17-2026 Reorganizational Meeting as presented

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Chairman Tuchel indicated that he would be interested in seeing the township eventually transition to direct deposit

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to accept the March 2026 Treasurers Report as presented

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Correspondence

- St. Louis County: Hazard Mitigation Planning Meeting
- Lake Country Power: Annual Meeting
- Tower-Soudan Historical Society: Thank You
- St Louis County Association of Townships: Agenda, Minutes & Notice
- State of MN: Department of Administration
 - Chairman Tuchel commented on this last piece of correspondence noting that a specific site within the Soudan Underground Mine Lake Vermilion State Park was being designated as a historic site; he was not informed where the site was, but understood that it contained rock that found to be used by Native Americans to make arrowheads

Correspondence so noted.

Reports

- Police – Attached, Chief Reing touched on spending significant time searching for leads for a missing person, that the squad car had arrived and had been taken to MacQueen for equipment installation, and reminded the public that pets need to be registered.
- Fire – Attached.
- Road and Bridge – Attached, Maint. Sup. Tom Gorsma mentioned that water temperatures were trending upwards, this year there had only been one frozen lateral. He also noted that the Spring Street culverts had heaved over the winter.
- Water – Attached.
- Wastewater Board – No report.
- Ambulance – Supervisor Peitso commented on the potential special tax district plan for the ambulance commission, noting that two other services have similar structures. The commission would be reaching out to these services for set up information and they would be posing the questions from the townships to their attorney. Chairman Tuchel noted that the State does have money to fund any deficit for ambulance commissions through the end of this year. Discussed the option of Ely ambulance covering this area, option of having continued sprint medic services. Noted that the other ambulance had been sold.
- Recreation – Maint. Sup. Gorsma noted that his crew had done a substantial amount of painting materials in preparation for installation; requested a rec meeting sooner than later. Supervisor Tekautz noted that the Joint Powers Rec Board will meet with the trails committee in July (7/14, 8:30 AM, Tower Civic Center). Notified board that a check had been written to BEST Baseball with the increased donation amount from Breitung Township.
- Lake Vermilion Lodging Tax Joint Powers Board – No meeting, rescheduled for May 4.

Public Input

Mike Korpi: Requested the brick pond be brushed out, noting historic significance. Chairman Tuchel said the township would need to look into who physically owns the property but that it would be a possibility.

Stephanie Ukkola: Notified the board that the Girl Scouts would be doing a beach clean up day at McKinley Park Campground in the near future

Randy Pratt & Julie Kranz: Introduced themselves as the new hosts of McKinley Park Campground, noted they appreciated the help from the township. Current progress: taking stock of sites for size/amenities.

Old Business:

Current Infrastructure Projects

- McKinley Loop Trail – Heard that the FAA had kicked back the plan with additional items required, still looking at a fall bid time. In the process of obtaining 6 Temporary Construction Easements. Center of trail is staked, will stake construction limits very soon.
Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to approve and pay the wetland credit fee and sign the related documents for sale of the wetland credits
2nd by Supervisor Peitso
Motion passed 3-0
- Thompson Farm Road Project – John Jamnick stated that he would set up a Pre-construction meeting with Mesabi Bituminous, noted that road restrictions were still in place. Chairman Tuchel noted that Mesabi Bituminous had agreed to get the ATV trail in ASAP for use this spring, and then do the full road in August
- Stuntz Bay Access Road – Nothing new to report

Flood/FEMA process – Nothing new.

Broadband Project – Nothing new.

Joint Comprehensive Plan

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to approve & sign Resolution 2026-11 Resolution Authorizing Breitung Township to Make Application to and Accept Funds From IRRR Simplified Grant – Development Partnerships

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Police Badge Update – Chief Reing noted that the cost was under \$500 so he had ordered the patches

Fire Department Equipment Purchase – Chairman Tuchel notified the board that the Polaris Ranger Side x Side with Emergency Equipment/Skid Unit had been ordered, was expected to arrive in either September or October. Payment for the vehicle would come from the Equipment Replacement Fund and the sale of tender #2. Maint. Sup. Gorsma questioned whether all quotes had been received and considered; Supervisor Tekautz explained that a 2nd quote from Lossings had been received and would be sending in written quote. The Polaris quote was better because it was a package deal with warranty; the unit would not need to be sent out for installation of emergency components.

New Business:

Pay Bills as Presented

Motion by Supervisor Peitso to Pay Bills as Presented.

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion Passed 3-0

Resignation of Deputy Clerk

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to accept the resignation of Deputy Clerk Dianna Sundahl with regret and directed clerk to send a letter of thanks for her work for Breitung Township

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Swearing in of New Officer: Margaret Stauty

Chief Daniel Reing performed the swearing in of new peace officer Margaret Stauty. The Oath of Office was signed and notarized, many congratulations were given.

Blight

Supervisor Tekautz notified the board that the City of Cook was in the process of updating their Blight Ordinances; he noted that he'd like to see an update to Breitung's as well once theirs were in place. Suggested that the clerk could work with neighboring cities/towns to develop our blight ordinance to be more effective. Noted that last year, blight was not enforced as much as usual. Supervisor Tekautz agreed to work with Chief Reing to identify blighted properties and notify owners.

Radar Unit & CAD

The board had a lengthy discussion with Chief Reing concerning equipment. Noted that the dash camera would be \$9k subscription over the course of 4 years.

Motion by Supervisor Peitso to approve quotes from Trafera for the CAD, Motorola Solutions for the dash cam, Stalker for the radar, and MacQueen less the inclusion of radar on MacQueen's quote

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

Resolution 2026-10

Motion by Supervisor Peitso to approve and sign Resolution 2026-10 Resolution Accepting Donations

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

Propane

Clerk Zak presented a new letter calling for propane quotes as bids were unnecessary due to the total dollar amount having been under \$25k for the 3 previous years. Supervisors were in agreement of the wording of the call for quotes

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to advertise for propane quotes

2nd by Chairman Tichel

Motion passed 3-0

Local Weed Inspector: Job Description & Information

Stephanie Ukkola presented a job description and suggested motion from Reorganizational Meeting be changed so that all Supervisors were considered Local Weed Inspectors (LWI); it was noted that all three were already considered LWI in state statute, the designation of Chairman Tichel was more just that he would be the point-person/liaison for weed inspector duties. Lengthy discussion was had regarding the LWI role and responsibilities

Motion by Chairman Tichel to approve the LWI job description with adjustments to timing, notification method, inspection of weeds on private property and keeping of records

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Storage Building: Re-roofing quotes

Maint. Sup. Gorsma presented 3 quotes for the re-roofing of the storage shed, all with similar grades of metal roofing. Chairman Tichel noted that the steel could be offered as a donation to the State Park potentially

Motion by Chairman Tichel to accept the quote of Midway Builders of \$19,150, it being the lowest of the 3 received quotes

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz
Motion passed 3-0

Funds Transfer

Treasurer Dolinar noted that \$60k of General Funds had been used for the recently purchased fire truck; suggested transfer of \$60k from Equipment Fund to Projects to cover deficit, noted that general still has \$170k available. \$60k from Projects to eventually be moved back to General Funds

Motion by Supervisor Peitso to approve the funds transfer

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz
Motion passed 3-0

Community Picnic Date

The Breitung Community Picnic date was set for Sunday, July 5, 2026 from 12 PM – 3 PM

Babbitt Police Department Proposal

Chairman Tuchel spoke on a meeting he'd had with Chief Daniel Reing, Public Safety Commission, Babbitt's police chief. The Babbitt police force was suggesting a merger between Breitung and Babbitt to jointly administer and provide police services to the communities. Chairman Tuchel noted that the budgets (\$250k vs \$850k) and coverage hours (40 vs 168) were radically different; he further discussed that it was hard to see how it would work well with such a distance between the two communities. Stated that doing a joint force just didn't make sense but encouraged the Chiefs to continue to come up with ways to save money such as joint trainings and collaboration

City of Tower: Airport Zoning

With new airport regulations and needs coming in to play, the City of Tower had reached out to Breitung Township to legally notify the board that they were able to participate in a Joint Airport Zoning Board. Supervisors Tekautz and Peitso were both interested in taking part. Board directed clerk to notify the City of Tower of interest and to work up a resolution to be passed at the next board meeting.

Next Board Meetings

Regular Board Meeting: Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Adjourn

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 PM

2nd by Supervisor Peitso
Motion passed 3-0

Respectfully Submitted

Amber Zak
Clerk, Breitung Township