

Breitung Township
Regular Board Meeting 07-21-2026, 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, Clerk Amber Zak

Public: Dianna Sundahl, Nathan Cvetan, John Jamnick (JPJ), Police Chief Daniel Reing, Stephanie Ukkola, Roger Skraba, Scarlet Stone (Timberjay), Laura Barton-Williams (arrived at 6:05 PM)

Call to Order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Tuchel

Pledge of Allegiance

Acceptance of Agenda

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to accept the agenda with modification of the date being 07-21-2026 instead of 07-18-2026

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion Passed 3-0

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to approve the minutes of the 06-16-2026 Regular Board Meeting, as presented

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Discussion on the Treasurers report: Supervisor Tekautz noted that he would be speaking with Campground Managers regarding unpaid seasonal sites; Chairman Tuchel noted that the December Apportionment is what is *expected*, not received

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to accept the June 2026 Treasurers Report as presented

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

Correspondence

- St. Louis County RE: Scott Lilya
- Lake Country Power: Operation Round Up
 - Chairman Tuchel noted that \$2500 had been granted by Lake Country Power toward the purchase of the radio for the Fire Department's Side x Side
- City of Tower: Airport Zoning Ordinance
 - Supervisors Tekautz and Peitso confirmed they would be in attendance at the Ordinance Hearing

Correspondence so noted.

Reports

- Police – Attached; Chief Reing again requested that drivers move over for law enforcement vehicles when their lights are on, noting that he had recently nearly been ran over during a traffic stop by another vehicle that did not move over.
- Fire& Rescue – Attached
- Road and Bridge – Attached, Chairman Tuchel noted that there had been 4 homes with water leaks found in the last 2 weeks, which accounted for over 20K gallons of water being lost
- Water – Attached
- Wastewater Board – Chairman Tuchel announced that advertisements for bids for the RIBS project had been sent out and that bid opening would happen on 07/30/2026
- Ambulance – Supervisor Peitso discussed possible scenarios for the future of the ambulance service at length; she noted that the Ambulance Commission had recommended re-chasseing the rig to the city, that the city had been pursuing a partnership with Ely Hospital which would lower the costs to the ambulance in supplies, more transfers to Ely, training opportunities, etc.; a partnership could potentially result in turning over billing to the hospital but the Ambulance Commission would still be in charge of the ambulance service. A partnership like this would be beneficial for grant funding. She further noted the next meeting would be on 10/05/2026 and the commission was hoping to discuss the matter with the attorney. On another note, Supervisor Peitso noted that the commission was still considering a Special Taxation District but that every time they came up with some answers, it opened up multiple more questions, it's a very difficult plan to put into action. Representative Skraba was in attendance and offered his insight; he noted that he had been trying to advocate for rural ambulance services, however they routinely face a lot of pushback, mainly from income-based ambulance services.
- Recreation – Supervisor Peitso noted that the trees had been planted, had received an assurance from Mesabi Bituminous that the paving of the bike trail would be completed by the end of the year, and requested that the clerk pull the grant-funded numbers to be able to judge how much more was left to spend. On another note, she explained that there had been some mischief up at the park concerning the township-provided balls; it was decided that trail cams could be of use in this matter. Chief Reing was directed to choose some trail cams that would also be beneficial to his use and order them. Further, Supervisor Tekautz noted that the trails group had not met and that the next Joint Powers Rec Board meeting was set for October.
- Noxious Weeds – Attached, ALWI Stephanie Ukkola reviewed her report and noted that in mid-August she would spend time making sure some of the problem spots had been taken care of.

Public Input

Dianna Sundahl of Diannaz Dreamz: Introduced herself as a resident and small-business owner and was in attendance to note the economic impact that the recent wildland fires and smoke had on business. At this time, she requested support from Breitung Township in her endeavor to reach out for emergency grants, temporary tax relief, low interest loans, or other mitigating tactics. Chairman Tuchel noted that the Breitung Board fully supports local business and would be happy to provide a Letter of Support for her endeavors. Representative Skraba discussed upcoming pop-up events for people affected by the wildfires.

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to provide a Letter of Support to Dianna Sundahl of Diannaz Dreamz

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Old Business:

Current Infrastructure Projects

- McKinley Loop Trail – Chairman Tuchel noted that 2 of 6 easements had been signed; John Jamnick stated that everything had been submitted back to the FAA; Chairman Tuchel emphasized that the money had to be encumbered by the end of year
- Thompson Farm Road Project – Chairman Tuchel noted that MBI was scheduled to start the construction some time in August
- Stuntz Bay Access Road – Chairman Tuchel noted that an additional \$5k was owed by Breitung Township to Mesabi Bituminous; he questioned this and requested that John Jamnick look into the matter
- McKinley Park: ADA Project – Attached: minutes of community meeting. Supervisor Tekautz noted that the project wasn't just about making the park better for those with movement disabilities, but also anyone that might be blind, deaf, or otherwise not very steady on their feet. The next step would be to set up a meeting with the consultant, this being organized by Nancy Larson.

Flood/FEMA process – No update

Broadband Project – Chairman Tuchel noted that some of the customers of CTC were now accessing their new Broadband Internet!!

Joint Comprehensive Plan – Supervisor Tekautz noted that there had been a remote meeting with Breitung, Tower, and ARDC. An in-person meeting was set for Thursday, July 30 at 10 AM, which would include a tour of the municipalities.

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to appoint Amber Zak (clerk), Steve Tekautz (Supervisor), and Stephanie Ukkola (public) to the JCP Committee

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Blight

Chief Reing sent blight letters out and noted a marked improvement in many of the properties; he stated he had received one piece of correspondence in return regarding the physical ability to work on the property. Discussion was had regarding what could be done to take care of blight; it was noted that the most basic option was to write a ticket and then assess to taxes once it went unpaid. A curb-side pick up idea was discussed to help with future blight issues, the option would be discussed with Maint. Sup. Gorsma.

Propane Bids

The board reviewed five offers of service once again. Clerk Zak included correspondence with Edwards Oil noting that going above the cap of 8500 gallons per year would not result in an increase in cost per gallon and that they would honor an employee discount at a rate of \$1.699.

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to approve the 3-year contract with Edwards Oil as it was the lowest possible price per gallon

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

New Business:

Pay Bills as Presented

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to Pay Bills as Presented.

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion Passed 3-0

Animal Permit Request: Aaylah Myers

A request from a resident was received for 3 Cayuga Ducks. Clerk Zak detailed the ordinance as stating that any animals besides dogs, cats, chickens, and quail would require a special permit issued by the town board.

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to issue a special permit for 3 Cayuga Ducks to Aaylah Myers with a revocation clause for a one-year period; if in such time, complaints were heard against the animals, the permit would be revoked.

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

Upon passing of the motion, Clerk Zak was directed to issue such permit

Resolution 2026-18: Accepting Donations

Motion by Supervisor Peitso to approve Resolution 2026-18

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Discussion: Clerk Zak took time to note the donations coming in specifically from Zup's Food Markets as they were of significant help to the Breitung Community Picnic

Motion passed 3-0

Fire Department Purchase: Tracks & Radio

Supervisors reviewed quotes for tracks and radio equipment for the Fire Department Side x Side, both of which were under the \$25k threshold

Motion by Supervisor Tekautz to approve the purchase of both the tracks and radio

2nd by Supervisor Peitso

Motion passed 3-0

Wildland Fire Pay

Chairman Tuchel took the time to update the board and the meeting attendees that Breitung Fire & Rescue had been providing services to the USFS/MN-DNR for the wildland fires in the Boundary Waters and surrounding communities. He noted that a contract stipulated payment to Breitung Township for the services, which included hourly payment to the attending fire fighters. Eight of the members had been doing the work in 12-hour, 2-man shifts for the last week. The attending fire fighters would be compensated for their time at the rate designated in the contract.

Project Labor Agreement

Chairman Tuchel put forth an opportunity for the board to approve a Project Labor Agreement. Such a document would come in to play if Breitung were to ever take on a project without the guidelines of a grant program. A Project Labor Agreement generally kicks in at a certain dollar amount, decided upon by the board, and dictates that prevailing wage be paid. Resident Cvetan questioned whether it was pertinent to put more restrictions on the township; Chairman Tuchel suggested it was a good way to make sure that incoming bids were fair. If the township were to take up a PLA, a resolution would be needed. Board members directed Clerk Zak to draw up a resolution for the next meeting; Chairman Tuchel would also try to have a union representative available that could discuss the benefits of passing such a resolution.

Next Board Meetings

Regular Board Meeting: Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Adjourn

Motion by Chairman Tuchel to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 PM

2nd by Supervisor Tekautz

Motion passed 3-0

Respectfully Submitted

Amber Zak

Clerk, Breitung Township