



FOREST TOWNSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time of Meeting: September 8, 2026; 6:30 pm

Present: Tim Holzkamm, Lynn Lindow, Barb Christiansen, Karen Hefner, Donna Waliczek

Absent:

Visitors: Rolf Christiansen, Mary Follett, Matt Hanson, Pat Sweeney, Kurt Withnell, John LaFord, Jeff

Rockwell, Monette Lundquist, Sten and Lisa Christiansen, Al Hefner, Cindy Lynn, Bill Spartz

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/Notes	Actions/Follow-up Needed
Pledge of Allegiance Visitor Sign in		
Consent agenda: • August 10, 2026 Minutes • Treasurers Report • Approval of Claims	• Review minutes. • Submit reports. • Submit claims.	
• Public Comment		
• Clerk's Report	Becker Co. Township Assoc. Directors meeting scheduled for Oct. 22, 2026, at 6:30 at the Becker Co. Courthouse, includes speakers that will be on the upcoming election ballot. Additional letter was received 8/24/2026 from a Bad Medicine Lake landowner in reference to wake boats after survey filing deadline – passed on to the Planning Committee member Public meeting announcement was put in the Park Rapids Enterprise prior to the 9/5/26 meeting. Minnesota general election ballot layout sign-off form was submitted.	

Board Member Reports • Town Hall • Trash/Recycle • Roads • Planning Commission • Weed Report • Website	No concerns Amnesty day was a success. All three dumpsters were filled. May need to order four dumpsters in the fall instead of three. Bill J. did a wonderful job. Still have a mess from spring with bears spreading garbage when people don't close and latch the lids. Barb contacted Thelen's and asked them to come out and grade the road from Co.129 to Veronen's Resort Road. It is pretty wash boarded. She also talked to the board about the MN Road Grant. The board decided not to pursue a grant because there is not currently a large road project that needs to be done and the grant process is lengthy and detailed. Tim talked about the letter that the supervisors received regarding the wake boat reg. issue. Barb said she had not seen the letter yet. The attorney that Tim contacted said that the statute that Vogel Law used, to request copy of township emails, applies only to the Twin Cities area townships. Lynn will do some spot checking for invasive plants No issues	Schedule a clean up day this fall at the dump to clean up garbage in the woods.
Old Business	Wake boat discussion – Lynn shared her comments (see attached). Barb expressed concerns about not even discussing the motion that was made at the Sept. 5th public meeting when a property owner made a motion to table the wake boat ordinance for two years. This motion passed with a majority of property owners at that meeting. Mary F. asked why the board isn't going to consider the motion made at the Sept. 5th meeting? With a two-year moratorium, you wouldn't be pressured to make a quick decision. Tim explained that we need to continue the process and not table it because a motion to do a survey was made by some residents at the annual meeting in March. Because of the survey results that the board received, Tim said we need to continue the process. Barb stated that the people that feel so strongly about having a wake boat ordinance need to attend these meetings then. She also asked how much the township is willing to pay for legal costs for this process. Barb expressed that she does not agree that the board should pursue a wake boat ordinance and it is the board's decision whether or not to continue the process. Any group could come, take it over and come to the board with ordinance recommendations. At that time, it would be up to the board whether or not to carry it forward to the DNR. Tim talked about boaters' responsibility when meeting other boaters, It will be hard to define. State says "not to endanger" but doesn't give requirements or	

	guidance. The board discussed the request from Vogel Law regarding copies of township emails. We need to get an estimate of costs from the attorney for pre-payment. Need estimated hours for each of us. Pat S. stated that at the annual meeting a motion was made by a resident to consider wake boat ordinance. The following month it came before the board. At the next meeting it was authorized to move this request to the planning committee. He asked why the annual meeting is more important than the open meeting held on Sept. 5th? Monette L. asked if she could make a motion to table it? Tim said that it was not allowed. The motion was strictly informational – it does not compel us to do anything. John L. was the moderator at the annual meeting, and he read the draft minutes from that meeting. Monette L. asked who was on the planning committee. Matt H. stated that no wake boat owners were included in creating the wake boat survey. Tim explained that the survey was done to see if there was a demand to make any ordinances to the DNR. He explained that Becker Co. Commissioners do NOT have to approve an ordinance. Only the town board and the DNR. Jeff R. asked what the DNR can do and Tim explained that they can deny, allow or send recommendation back to the board for changes. Matt H. acknowledged that the DNR has been informed. Kurt W. asked if the town board is going to pay any more attorney fees? Barb said that if the board is going to continue this process, then we should get internet at the town hall so property owners can take part in our meetings via zoom or other access. She will get some costs for making this possible and bring it to the Oct. meeting. Some property owners offered to donate some equipment. Pat S. told the board that there was an incident right after the Sept. 5th meeting and he wanted it documented in the minutes.	Lynn moved to table this until Oct. mtg. Tim second, motion carried. Barb will get estimated costs for internet at the town hall.
New Business		
Adjourn		Tim moved to adjourn, Lynn second, motion carried

Tim Holzkamm Date

Barb Christiansen Date

Lynn Lindow Date

Karen Hefner /Clerk Date

Saturday's Meeting

I have had some time to reflect on the meeting on Saturday morning. Here are some of the thoughts that I have.

I definitely hear the anger at the town board for sending out a survey to the community in order to gather information about the impact of wake surfing on our lake. There is anger that the Town Board would consider any regulation regarding wakesurfing. But here are some things I don't hear.

I hear the wake boat owners say they are in the middle of the lake and Matt Hanson stated that 200 ft. from shore is too close. But I have received a video from an individual on the lake who witnessed a wake board with a surfer travel between the big island and Christiansen point. The boat is closer to the point, in surf mode, less than 150 ft. from shore. The depth between the island and the point is between 8-10 ft. That is not in the middle of the lake. I witnessed a surf boat start its run with a surfer approximately 30 ft. from the tip of the north island. That would put the boat in 5-10 feet of water as it was very close to a large boulder that is only 4 feet below the surface. I appreciate the two wake boater owners who stated they stay to the middle of the lake but it is clear that not all wake boaters are doing that. Wake surfing close to shore causes soil erosion and surfing in shallow water disturbs the bottom.

Within the survey results individuals stated their experiences with wake surf waves and the two people shared their experiences effecting their safety and children's safety. I did not hear any acknowledgement from the wake boat owners showing any concern for what these people experienced. There is no sign of empathy that small children and adults are put at higher risk of injury when hit by wake surf waves. The wake boat supporters cheered the idea of building community but that becomes very difficult if the wake boat owners will not even acknowledge that there is any problem.

Mike Slette suggested that we work together as a community but, from what I am hearing, the wake boat owners feel it is the responsibility of the Town board to drop the issue and the wake boat owners can continue to surf as they have been and as they please. No compromise. The questions in the agenda were written to allow for alternatives to resolve the problems if regulations is not the way to proceed. There was a hope that the wake boat owners would volunteer their ideas on how to resolve the issue. Even though the question was on the floor to put forward ideas to resolve the issue, the wake boat owners did not volunteer anything that would help with the situation and to help the town board determine a path forward. To build community it takes both sides working together and there is no indication that the wake boat owners have any desire to solve problems created by enhanced waves.

At the end of the meeting, participants, asked if individuals could email ideas to the board. Tim invited their input and encouraged to send their thoughts to the clerk. This would include all participants, wake boat supporters and those that are impacted by the waves.