

Girard Township
Organizational and Regular Meeting -- MINUTES
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 – 6:00 p.m., Town Hall
Website: (www.girardtownship.us)

Oath of Office -- 2026 Head Election Judge Kathy Trites gave the Oath of Office to Clerk Debbie Irmen who won the township election on March 10th. The Oath of Office was given to Supervisors Blaine Larson and Peter Christianson, by Clerk Debbie Irmen. They won the township election on March 10th.

Supervisor Larson opened the meeting with the pledge to the flag.

Present: Supervisors Blaine Larson, Peter Christianson, Larry Estes, Treasurer Kathy Trites, Clerk Debbie Irmen, Road Worker Will Lunning, and Road Engineer Jeff Stabnow.

No visitors were present.

Supervisor Christianson moved to accept the Agenda for the March 17, 2026, Organizational/Regular meeting. Estes Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Peter Christianson nominated Blaine Larson to serve as Girard Board Chairman. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of committee jobs:

While all supervisors are to help in all areas, specific supervisors are volunteering to take the lead on the following committees:

Supervision of Roads – Larry

Weed Inspection — Larry

Fire Department Representative – (BL; attend Henning and Vining as needed) -- Blaine

Building and Approach Permits/Inspections – Peter

Safety Director -- Peter

Additional Tasks: Regulate Heat (regulated through WiFi app), windows, check humidifier in basement, turn water on, lock doors, Turn water on/off, vacuum floor main hall and bathroom as needed. -- All

Christianson moved to approve the appointments. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Wages

The Town Board is authorized to set wages of employed people and board members which has historically been reviewed at the organizational meeting, but it can be determined at any regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors.

Current wages:

- a. Election Judges - \$19.00 per hour
- b. Supervisors - \$100.00 per meeting and \$200.00 salary per month
- c. Treasurer - \$100.00 per meeting and \$250.00 salary per month
- d. Clerk - \$100.00 per meeting and \$525.00 salary per month
- e. Federal Mileage rate: 72.5 cents (set by federal government)

The road maintenance worker position will be reviewed at the regular May meeting (Hourly rate was increased \$1 in 2025 to \$32.00).

No action was taken in regard to wages or salary amounts.

Shared Road Maintenance rates

Shared road rates are presently billed at the same rate as BL Motor Patrol:

Snow plowing – Bill \$100/per hour / \$50/per half hour

Grading or Mowing -- \$82.50/per hour / \$41.25/per half hour

Henning also shares half the gravel expense on 460th which is billed in the third quarter.

Supervisor Christianson moved to keep shared maintenance billing at the present rate, following the Battle Lake Motor Patrol rates. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The clerk pointed out that since the approval of quarterly billing a couple years ago, the process is going well and the townships like it, too. Bills are sent out in April (1st Q), July (2nd Q), October (3rd Q), December (4th Q).

Supervisor Christianson moved to designate **Battle Lake Review, Citizen's Advocate, and Daily Journal as needed** as the official newspapers (only used Review and Advocate in 2025); **First National Bank -- Henning** as the official Depository; and **Girard Town Hall and the Township Website** (www.girardtownship.us) as the official posting sites. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Donations — The electorate approved a cap of \$2,500 for donations at the annual meeting conducted March 10, 2026, with Supervisors to decide the individual amounts and entities to fund. 2026 requests for donations include:

2025 Donation	Request from	2026 Approved donation
\$250.00	Battle Lake Summer Rec	\$250.00
\$250.00	Henning Summer Rec	\$250.00
\$150.00	Battle Lake Food Shelf	\$150.00
\$150.00	Henning Food Shelf	\$150.00
\$300.00	Glendalough Citizens Advisor Board	\$300.00
\$100.00	EOT County Fair	\$100.00
New	WOT County Fair	\$100.00
\$300.00	Otter Tail County Historical Society	200.00
New	Battle Lake Pickle Ball Court (City will match)	\$1,000.00
New	BL Business Association Comm. Events	declined
	Prospect House	declined
New	Perham Art Center	declined

Christianson moved to approve donations as noted for 2026. Larson seconded. Motion carried. Estes was against.

The board moved to the business of the regular meeting upon concluding the organizational meeting.

Road Report

Luhning reported that roads were in good condition and all equipment was in good working order. He requested three days of sick time April 1-3. Christianson will check with Alphas to cover in case road work is needed.

Minutes

Christianson moved to approve the MINUTES from the **regular monthly** meeting held Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026, at the Town Hall. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Christianson moved to approve the MINUTES from the **Board of Audit** meeting held Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026, at the Town Hall. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Christianson moved to approve the MINUTES from the **Annual Meeting** held Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at the Town Hall. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Trites presented the February Financials, which showed ending balances in the General Fund: \$117,186.57; Road and Bridge: \$405,169.53; Special Revenue: \$31,676.15; Fire Fund: \$12,196.58; Ambulance Fund: \$57,002.87; Special Assessment: \$24,094.26; Capital Projects: \$152,868.80; and Equipment: \$267,984.90; for a total of \$1,068,179.66.

The report will be filed for audit. The Board of Audit will verify the 2026 financials in February 2027.

Monthly Claims

Christianson moved to approve claims as presented/audited, totaling \$56,900.14; plus payroll for Christianson, Estes, Irmen, Larson (includes Moderator's pay), Luhning (2), and K. Trites (she also served as head election judge); Donations to approved entities- \$2,500; Election Judges for Records Sorting, Poll Pad training, and Election Day work – Laurie Behr, Laurie Torgerson, and Sandy Gregg (who served as Absentee Ballot and election judge), and Debby Heidenson; and any additional claims that may be presented at this meeting. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports/Information

Clerk Irmen reported on the EOT Association of Township meeting held March 2, in Ottertail. She also reported that the Records Retention project was mostly complete. She distributed MAT Membership cards to all members; OTC increased its animal control reimbursement to \$2 which will be assessed this year and paid out in 2027. Girard received \$905 for 2025. She reminded the supervisors that she will attend the Spring Short Courses March 27 session in Alexandria, which was previously approved. Larson will also attend. She presented information regarding a land sale by the DNR for land near the East Battle Lake Public Access. Finally, she showed the supervisors a letter requesting any support for a broadband project.

She requested approval to attend the free Township Legal Seminar sponsored by Couri and Ruppe Law Office. Christianson moved to approve the clerk's attendance at the legal seminar and accept reimbursements as submitted for time and mileage incurred by the clerk. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

February Fire meeting – Larry

New Business

Christianson moved to approve a request from Arvig to install fiber optic cable beginning at County Road 5 and Ethel Lake Road, extending along the north side of Ethel Lake Road approximately 5,600 feet to 26700 Lake Ethel Road. The clerk provided the staking sheets for the project and the specific locations where work will take place along Ethel Lake Road. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Christian moved to approve the Battle Lake Fire and Rescue fire membership at \$40,000.00, and the Henning Fire Standby fee of \$14,020.28. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Christianson moved to approve the Dust Control Treatment Contract as provided by Fergus Power Pump at \$1.54 per gal for calcium chloride application in 2026. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The clerk presented information on requirements for procuring a Township Credit Card, including policy/authorization, etc. Action was tabled to the April meeting pending additional research.

Shredding of appropriately retired Township documents was tabled until the April meeting, pending research into cost, etc. There are 8 bags which will require shredding. The clerk learned burning was an acceptable way to dispose of the records, however, the supervisors wanted certification of disposal.

Following a brief discussion of switching Township elections to November, Christianson moved to start the process of moving to November elections sooner rather than later. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The clerk will work with the OTC Election official to move forward.

Old Business

Road Repair options (440th/230th) to include Liberty Drive section. Following the road check at the end of April, more will be determined regarding this project.

Regarding the Verizon Cell Tower which is in construction, Christianson will call to determine if the transponder will provide increased cell coverage for the residents of Girard Township.

Supervisor Estes presented a request from a resident to use goats to clear her property of unwanted vegetation. The county had directed her to the Township for action. He reported that Township ordinance only limits the number of livestock to 50 head. Since the ordinance doesn't restrict livestock, the clerk was asked to send a letter to the property owner, which should include a request to speak with her neighbors. The letter will be reviewed by a supervisor prior to sending.

Dates to remember

Wednesday, March 18, 2026 – BL Area Fire and Rescue Association Fire Dept. Appreciation Dinner, 6 p.m., Social Hour

Thursday, March 19, 2026 – BL Area Fire and Rescue Association regular meeting, 6 p.m.; 7 p.m. annual meeting

Thursday, March 26, 2026 -- East Otter Tail County Local Weed Inspectors Meeting, 8:30 a.m. at the EOT Soil and Water Conservation District office, 801 Jenny Ave., SW, Perham

Friday, March 27, 2026 – MAT Spring Short Courses, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center, 2100 Arrowwood Lane, Alexandria, MN

Tuesday, April 21, 2026 -- Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m., at Girard Town Hall

Friday, April 24, 2026 -- Board of Equalization 9:30 a.m. at the Town Hall

- Road Check Meeting to follow at approximately 10 a.m. (the first 4 hours are conducted on the roads, with a review of planned action to follow at the town hall)

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 – Regular Township Meeting, 6 p.m. at Girard Town Hall

Tuesday, October 27, 2026 – EOT Association of Townships Annual Meeting and Banquet in Deer Creek. Time TBD

With no further business to discuss, Christianson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Estes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Blaine Larson
Supervisor

Debbie Irmen
Clerk

Approved: