

PATRIOT

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• VOL. 6 • NO. 32 SAT., FEBRUARY 7, 2026



CLEARWATER FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY MEMBERS Joanne Lissom and Cyrene Bastian with their Valentine's Day themed book sale display. (Submitted Photo).

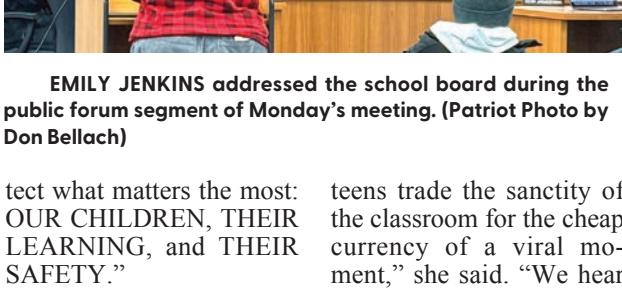
Few turn out for Becker School Board meeting

By Don Bellach,
Contributing Writer

A recent, controversial social media post has proven to be divisive.

Social media has been

awash with opinions, a situation Supt. Jeremy Schmidt addressed in a January 27 Facebook post. In a letter addressed to Becker staff, students, families and community, Schmidt tried to lower the temperature while acknowledging that emotions were running high. He called on everyone to resist "stereotyping, generalizing, or turning one moment into a blanket judgement." He called for unity, "We can demand accountability without abandoning decency. We can insist on high standards without tearing each other apart." Above all, he wanted to remind everyone of the school's mission, "...help us lower the temperature and pro-



EMILY JENKINS addressed the school board during the public forum segment of Monday's meeting. (Patriot Photo by Don Bellach)

tect what matters the most: OUR CHILDREN, THEIR LEARNING, and THEIR SAFETY."

Public Forum

Given the controversy, it was surprising that only one concerned resident spoke during the February 2, 2026, meeting. Emily Jenkins, who later identified herself as a concerned mother of twin first-graders, read from prepared remarks in support of teachers with targeted criticism of students.

"We are witnessing

teens trade the sanctity of the classroom for the cheap currency of a viral moment," she said. "We hear loud voices from those with no business teaching our children about ethics, yet who feel entitled to destroy an educator's career. It is time we stand firm in the default position of supporting our teachers."

Later, Jenkins spoke about the need for mutual respect in the classroom.

"Mutual respect requires a willingness to be uncomfortable, to approach

diversity of thought with curiosity, not combat," she concluded.

Sarah Colford, president of the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, a former student, and parent of children in the district, was surprised by the low turnout and remained hopeful that constructive discussions would be held soon. Though she did not speak at the meeting, she did send a statement to this reporter that acknowledged that the video between a teacher and her students, "is multifaceted and we would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge all of the parts of it."

"It's hard to know the intentions of this video and the reason it was posted to social media before being sent to the school, but I'm not going to assume anything and I'm asking you to do the same."

Acknowledging different perspectives, Colford

store," said Sue Valek. "A new committee has been formed and is excited to be working on it."

Although the library hadn't been accepting donations of used books for a while, that has changed, and FOL is asking everyone to bring in books they're done with that are in good condition.

"I'm happy to be back and involved in a new

CW LIBRARY
to page 4

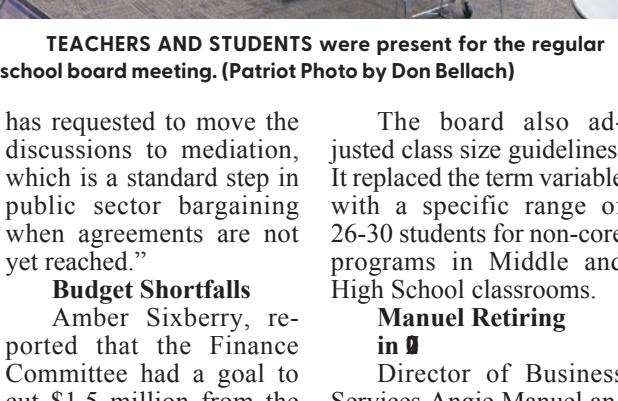
BL Teachers show up to support labor negotiations

By Don Bellach,
Contributing Writer

More than 50 people attended the January 28, 2026 meeting of the Big Lake School Board. When asked, many identified themselves as teachers. A few were students. One gentleman, when asked why he was there, said, "Solidarity."

The board had scheduled a closed session for negotiation strategy to immediately follow the regular meeting. Big Lake Education Minnesota Representative Chris Olson, who was present in the hallway after the meeting, declined to comment on ongoing negotiations.

Information found on the Big Lake Schools webpage under the heading, "Contract Negotiations", states the following: "Since May, the District and Big Lake Education Association have met nine times to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement. These meetings have included discussions on compensation, working conditions, and long-term sustainability for both our staff and the District. While progress has been made, the process has taken longer than we had hoped, and the teachers' union



TEACHERS AND STUDENTS were present for the regular school board meeting. (Patriot Photo by Don Bellach)

has requested to move the discussions to mediation, which is a standard step in public sector bargaining when agreements are not yet reached."

Budget Shortfalls

Amber Sixberry, reported that the Finance Committee had a goal to cut \$1.5 million from the budget before it is finalized in March of this year. Earlier, the board unanimously passed a resolution that directed the Superintendent to "consider the discontinuance of programs or positions to effectuate economies in the school district and reduce expenditures and make recommendations to the Board of Education."

When addressing the Board, Superintendent Tim Truebenbach said it was a standard resolution given the current budget situation.

The board also adjusted class size guidelines. It replaced the term variable with a specific range of 26-30 students for non-core programs in Middle and High School classrooms.

Manuel Retiring in 2027

Director of Business Services Angie Manuel announced that she is hoping to retire in July 2027. She expressed a desire to give the board enough time for succession planning. She mentioned that the district has a strong internal candidate to replace her, but that would leave other staffing gaps in the department to be considered.

Enrollment

The district continued to gain enrollment for

BL SCHOOLS
to page 4

used a story from her Native American background about a wise woman who used a drum to unite Native peoples divided by settlers. The Dakota woman gave the drum to the Ojibwe people and said, "When we fight against each other, we all lose."

MULTI-UNIT
CONTRACT SIGNED

A tentative agreement with Becker's Multi-Unit team was reached in October 2025 and formally ratified when the board approved the consent agenda.

When asked to comment on the agreement, Schmidt wrote, "We appreciate the collaborative work that went into reaching this agreement in a timely manner and the School Board's approval. Our multi-unit team is important to the daily success of our schools, and we are

BECKER SCHOOLS
to page 2

County to improve communication system

By Ken Francis,
Contributing Writer

The Sherburne County Board Tuesday approved an agreement with Marco to provide additional safety-related countywide phone and communication services.

The current countywide VoIP phone system, which enables calling over the internet, was im-

plemented 2024. Since the system went live, the current cloud-based service provider has struggled to deliver the level of reliability required for mission-critical communications.

For a 24/7 law enforcement, corrections and emergency services agency, dependable phone service is essential to maintaining operational readiness and ensuring public safety. But over the past year, Sheriff Dept. staff have consistently reported a wide range of telephone issues, including phones continuing to ring after being answered, calls failing to connect,

SHERBURNE

COUNTY

incorrect caller ID information, dropped calls and an inability to place calls outside the county or reach certain internal extensions. In some cases, users have encountered a complete lack of a dial tone.

The ongoing problems significantly disrupt daily operations and hinder the agency's ability to communicate effectively.

Staff has recommended contracting with Marco to implement necessary system improvements and add additional countywide intercom communication capabilities.

The total project cost is \$183,382. One half of the expenses are contained within IT's budgeted departmental professional services and previously approved ARPA project funds (\$90,000 total). The additional costs will be covered by the Sheriff's Office's Commissary funds (\$3,400).

Labor Law
Agreement

COUNTY
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Call 763-275-0275 or email Bill at reporter.bill@patriotnewsmn.com

Addresses and phone numbers are required for verification purposes.

The deadline for all letters is 11 am Wednesday. Limit letters to 200 words or less.

Letters will be printed at the discretion of the Editor and are subject to editing for grammar, libel and brevity.

Two letters per writer per subject each year.

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EDITORIALS - NEWS

**Learning by Listening
(in-person) in Becker**By Becker Mayor,
Mark Kolbinger

One of my goals since becoming Mayor was to increase opportunities for residents and business owners to offer input into local government operations and other topics that affect our quality of life.

Through a new initiative called the Mayor's Round-table Series, I have enjoyed hearing opinions from many stakeholders. A couple of weeks ago, I hosted a meeting with business owners from our Industrial Park and this week, we held our third installment of the Local Government Roundtable. These feedback sessions are crucial to ensure that our priorities align with the expectations of our citizenry.

While I had pretty high expectations for these types of meetings and their potential impact, the results have far outpaced what I hoped to accomplish. Listening to the concerns and ideas of the participants has greatly impacted how I approach my job as Mayor, and has helped to sharpen my focus on serving the citizens of the Becker community.

In addition to these gatherings, there are other forums to offer input. For example, Sherburne County is currently asking for community input into its Hazard Mitigation Plan, which assesses the natural hazards that pose risk to the county. Whether it be flooding, drought, or other extreme weather, citizen input is one key to ensuring our disaster preparedness. Please consider visiting the Sherburne County website to participate in this important action.

Now, back to the topic of listening to learn.

I'll admit that I much prefer face to face meetings over the "input" that can be considered by perusing social media. There's a multitude of reasons for this, but the main argument I make is that social media often just isn't accurate.

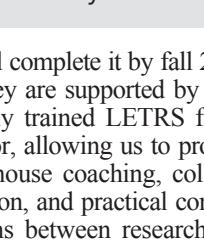
rate.

Over the past 12 months, I ran a little experiment and I'll be the first to admit that it wasn't scientific. I kept track of things that I ran across on social media that could be definitively proven as true or false (not an opinion or something that could be debatable). Here's an example: is Edgewood Street in Becker a city or county road? It's a city street, therefore any assertion that it is a county road is false. You get the idea.

Here's what I found: social media was "wrong" 52% of the time. This was based on me being able to verify the truthfulness of things I came across, and not my own personal opinion. Yes, there's many limitations to my research, but I think it taught me an important lesson.

So, what did I learn? Quite simply, that flipping a coin (50-50) would often lead to more accurate "fact checking" than what is posted on social media. This isn't an indictment on the people who post, but just a warning to us all that we need to think twice before we believe what we read.

The next opportunity for Becker residents to offer input will on Friday, February 27 at the next Citizens Roundtable. Please consider joining me at Pebble Creek at 6 p.m. It promises to be a great opportunity to learn from one another (face to face).

Reading InstructionBy Supt.
Jeremy Schmidt

Learning to read is one of the most important milestones in a child's education. Strong reading skills open doors to academic success, confidence, and future opportunities, while gaps in reading can affect learning across all subject areas. That is why Becker Public Schools has made a sustained commitment to strengthening reading instruction for every student, beginning in our earliest grades and extending across our system.

In recent years, Minnesota has placed a renewed focus on evidence-based literacy instruction through the READ Act. Grounded in more than 50 years of research, this work centers on how children learn to read and how teachers can best support students at every stage of literacy development. Our district embraced this effort early and intentionally to ensure students receive strong, consistent reading instruction.

We are proud to share that 90% of Becker teachers required to complete Science of Reading training have finished Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS). These educators include kindergarten through grade 5 classroom teachers, preschool teachers responsible for literacy instruction, K-12 Special Education teachers, and K-12 English Learner teachers.

This broad participation matters because reading instruction does not exist in a single classroom or grade level. When educators share a common understanding of how reading develops, students benefit from consistent language, strategies, and expectations throughout their school experience.

A small group of 10 teachers newly hired this year began their LETRS training upon joining our district and

will complete it by fall 2026. They are supported by a locally trained LETRS facilitator, allowing us to provide in-house coaching, collaboration, and practical connections between research and daily classroom instruction.

So what does this mean for students? Science of Reading training strengthens teachers' understanding of essential reading components—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers learn how to identify reading challenges early and respond with targeted instruction before small gaps become long-term barriers.

Our commitment to literacy continues beyond the elementary years. In fall 2026, secondary teachers responsible for teaching reading will participate in a secondary-focused Science of Reading training facilitated by STRIVE, designed specifically to support adolescent learners.

These efforts reflect a simple belief: reading is everyone's responsibility, and every student deserves strong instruction. While much of this work happens behind the scenes, its impact is visible every day as students grow in confidence and teachers are equipped to meet their needs. Together, we are building a strong foundation in reading that will support our students for years to come.

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Funding for 6th District

We are back in Washington this week after a busy couple of weeks finishing the government funding process in the House. We're investing in new infrastructure for our district and restoring safety to our communities. Through our work, we are making Minnesota safer.

**Funding for
6th District**

Last week, the House of Representatives passed the remaining four of 12 appropriations bills to fund the government for fiscal year 2026, which included funding for six projects in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District. These investments will improve outdated roads and make necessary repairs, keeping both residents and visitors safer while driving. Securing funding for our district is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job, and it will always remain a priority of mine in Congress.

Once again, the House has done its job to secure necessary funding for FY 2026. It is now up to the Senate to pass the remaining appropriations bills by today's deadline in order to prevent a partial government shutdown.

**Securing
Our Country**

Make no mistake: the situation in the Twin Cities has been created by "sanctuary state and city" policies and local leaders who have refused to cooperate with federal law enforcement. They are responsible for enabling and encouraging the chaos and unrest that has been unfolding. After weeks of violent protests and obstruction of justice in Minneapolis, President Donald Trump made a good faith effort and spoke with Governor Tim Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey earlier last week about the cooperation that must happen between Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the state.

Despite President Trump's willingness to come to the table, Democrat state and local leaders continue to obstruct federal law

and the city.

The city government has an important job: providing the core services that keep our community safe, healthy, and running smoothly. That includes police and fire protection, safe streets, clean water and sewer systems, parks and trails, long-term planning, and responsible financial management.

These services are funded by property taxes collected through the city levy and are intended to serve the entire community. A good example of this is the public safety facility we're building now, which will house City Hall and a new Police Department—an investment focused squarely on essential city services.

It's just as important to be clear about what the city does not do. We value the Becker Big Lake Ice Association and recognize it as a strong, mission-driven organization with a very visible and positive presence in our community. Because of that visibility, it's understandable that some people might assume the city helps fund their facilities. It does not.

The city is not the builder or financer of Ice Association facilities. Projects like a new ice arena are private or semi-private efforts, paid for through gambling proceeds, donations, user fees, and grants—not city levy dollars.

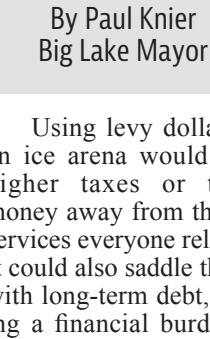
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By Rep.
Tom Emmer

enforcement. Last Tuesday, President Trump sent Border Czar Tom Homan to Minnesota to oversee ICE operations on the ground and meet with local leaders. Under the Obama administration, Homan was ICE's Executive Associate Director of Enforcement and Removal Operations, deporting over 900k illegal immigrants from 2013 to 2016. Homan is dedicated to restoring law and order to Minnesota through targeted and efficient operations, and I have faith he will do just that.

In just two days, Homan came to an understanding with Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison that Minnesota county jails may notify ICE of the release dates of criminal public safety risks so ICE can take custody of them upon their release from jails. This is safer for the community, safer for the agents, and it's safer for the criminals. It is a common-sense approach that should have been allowed to begin with like it is in other states across the country.

Governor Walz and Mayor Frey have created a hostile environment for federal officers, leading to tragedies across the state. It is time that local and state leaders stop instructing individuals to obstruct law enforcement and instead work with our federal agents to get rapists, murderers, abusers, and human and drug traffickers off our streets. We must enforce our immigration laws as we would any other law, and that starts here at home in Minnesota.

Staying FocusedBy Paul Knier
Big Lake Mayor

The board approved a professional services agreement with Wiley Reber Law Office for labor and employment law services from March 1, 2026 - Feb. 28, 2029. The agreement provides for an increase from \$6,290/month to \$6,500/month, plus expenses. The Wiley Reber Law Office will receive a 3% increase on Jan. 1 of each year of the agreement.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

icy of the last 50+ years. You are treating our neighbors like Kristi Noem's dog. Connie Rutledge Big Lake, Mn

TO THE EDITOR: Statement from Connexus Energy included a flyer that headlined GO ELECTRIC SAVE BIG. Apparent purpose—stimulate interest—it said, Go Electric. (My Air Source Heat Pumps costs me 30% more to operate than N Gas, thus switch to N Gas. My previous Electric Water Heater cost me 20-25% more to operate than present gas WH.) Other advertised rebates on Electric: Vehicles, Bikes and Riding Lawn Mowers. I asked myself what they have to do with upgrading our home? Why should John and Mary Doe get a rebate on them from money collected from the rest of us? Replies provided: The State wants more (so-called green energy, emphasis added) thus the push and incentives. In other words, their green is paid for by our green. (Money must come from somewhere to pay land leases, solar mfg and installation.) I have a problem with tossing out clean coal and even cleaner natural gas, especially as I see some of the greatest irrigated high production farmland now covered with glass, with energy costs going up. There is a place for solar but not at the cost of destroying prime agriculture land. Sad!

**Tom Godlewski,
Clear Lake , MN**

TO THE EDITOR: A message to ICE and Border Patrol: If it's legal, why is your activity such a big dark secret? Make the names and bios of the worst of the worst public, à la FBI's most wanted list, and citizens will assist in their apprehension. But make that list current and accurate. Leave the hard working tax paying families who seek a path to citizenship in peace. They are victims of corrupt flawed U.S. immigration policy.

**Vanessa Davenport
Big Lake, MN**

**COUNTY
from page 1**

**Overseas Citizens Voting
Act) Absentee Ballot Board
for the 2026 Election Year.**

The ballot board will bring uniformity in processing, accepting or rejecting returned absentee ballots in Sherburne County.

Veterans Summit

The board approved out of state travel for the County Veterans Services Officer (CVSO) to attend the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. March 22-26, 2026.

The primary focus at the summit will be legislation to protect veterans and family members from fraud. Predatory actors, aka "claim sharks," target veterans with fraudulent promises of guaranteed benefits, violate federal and Minnesota law, and act without oversight by the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which results in an illegal, unregulated, disingenuous, profit-motivated business model that separates a disproportionate amount of benefits from veterans.

Other Business

In other actions the board:

- Approved the renewal of a multi-year agreement with Palo Alto Networks for firewall licensing and support through Jan. 2031 at a cost of \$316,519.46;
- Approved the donation of the remaining obsolete Sheriff's Office radios to Hand in Hand Logistics.
- Emergency Management has a supply of 73 XTL radios that are approximately 12-15 years old. The radios are no longer physically or electronically supported and have not been utilized by the Sheriff's Office or county staff for several years.
- Hand in Hand Logistics is a Minnesota based 501(c)(3) organization established to facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid internationally;
- Approved the Preliminary and Final Simple Plats of "Creekside Woods" and "Creekside Woods Two," consisting of two lots on 71.8 acres in the Agricultural District and the Transition River District of the St. Francis River at Co. Rd. 3 and Co. Rd. 11 in Santiago Twp.

**BECKER SCHOOLS
from page 1**

thankful for their dedication to our students and community."

Other News

Also on the consent agenda, a resolution was passed that allowed the Superintendent to consider discontinuing positions and programs for the next school year;

The district is required by state statute to establish the AIPAC to serve in an advisory role and to submit annual compliance to be submitted to the Commissioner of Education by March 1, 2026. That compliance was approved by the board.

The Elections Canvassing Board will consist of two County Commissioners, County Auditor/Treasurer, Court Administrator or appointee, and the Mayor or Board Chair of the City of Elk River.

Ballot Board

The board passed a resolution to establish an Absentee Ballot Board and UOCAVA (Uniformed

SPORTS NEWS

AUCTIONS

•••• UPCOMING AUCTIONS ••••

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 8TH @ 11:00 AM
ANTIQUES, MILITARY, HOUSEHOLD,
OUTDOOR & TOOLS

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 15TH @ 11:00 AM
ANTIQUES, HOUSEHOLD, OUTDOOR & TOOLS

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Eagles lose to Bluejackets in OT

By Maria Moore,
Contributing Writer

The Becker/Big Lake Eagles hockey team hosted rival Cambridge-Isanti Bluejackets January 27 at the Princeton Ice Arena and came away disappointed.

The first goal of the game was scored by the Bluejackets after they put pressure on the Eagles in the first period.

The Eagles then went further in the hole in the second period with the Bluejackets scoring another goal to make it 2-0. However, things improved for the home team late in the second period with senior forward Tate Spilde scoring an even strength goal to make it 2-1.

The Bluejackets came out of the break with a vengeance and scored immediately in the third period which brought their lead back up by two.

The Eagles didn't back down and added the pressure when senior Tanner



THE BECKER/BIG LAKE EAGLES huddle up before the game against Cambridge-Isanti Bluejackets. (Submitted Photo)

Felton scored to make it 3-2 with assists from senior Hayden Kipka and sophomore Owen Zahler. Soon after, Spilde tied the game at three with another goal and assists from senior Ethan Grafritz and Zahler.

The contest ended in the tie, with the game going into overtime. Unfortunately, the Bluejackets snuck a goal past junior goaltender Elliot Grafritz to capture the win.

The Eagles' conference

record is 4-5 and overall they are 8-11.

Recaps

Other game recaps include an Eagles trouncing over Princeton Tigers, 8-0 followed by a loss to Sauk Rapids/Rice 1-3. Another loss for the Eagles occurred against Bagley/Fosston by a score of 2-6.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**Office of the Minnesota
Secretary of State
Certificate of Assumed Name
Minnesota Statutes,
Chapter 333**

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

**ASSUMED NAME: ORGANIC
PRAIRIE PROVISIONS**

PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 12925 PROSPERITY

AVE BECKER MN 55308 USA

NAMEHOLDER(S):

Name: TH Cattle Company, LLC

Address: 12925 PROSPERITY

AVE BECKER MN 55308 USA

If you submit an attachment, it will be incorporated into this document. If the attachment conflicts with the information specifically set forth in this document, this document supersedes the data referenced in the attachment.

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: David J. Zubke

MAILING ADDRESS:

None Provided

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL

NOTICES:

brobins@lifetimedgrazed.com

Work Item: 1624000000029

Original File Number: 1624000000029

STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED

01/26/2026 11:59 PM

/s/ Steve Simon

Secretary of State

(Published in the Patriot: 01/31/26, 02/07/26).

**ASSUMED NAME:
O'Briens Bar & Grill**
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 2120 165th Ave, Santiago MN 55377 USA
NAMEHOLDER(S):

P&R O'Brien Enterprises Inc.

Address: 2092 173rd Ave,

Princeton MN 55371 USA.

I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: Patrick O'Brien

MAILING ADDRESS:

None Provided

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL

NOTICES:

smokeyjoes@mymail.com

Work Item: 1618200800033

Original File Number:

1618200800033

STATE OF MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED

1/15/2026 11:59 PM

/s/ Steve Simon

Secretary of State

(Published in the Patriot: 02/07/26, 02/14/26).

**Sherburne County Board of Commissioners
January 2026 County Board Workshop Minutes**

The Board Chair opened the County Board Workshop Meeting.

Continue Discussion of County Policy Governing Board of Commissioners' Operating Rules.

Discussed the County policy governing Board of Commissioners' operating rules.

Discussion Regarding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities in Sherburne County.

Discussed U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities in Sherburne County.

The Board Chair adjourned the County Board Workshop Meeting.

/s/ Raeanne Danielowski,

Board Chairperson

/s/ Bruce Messelt,

County Administrator

(Published in the Patriot: 02/07/26).

**Sherburne County
WARRANTS FOR PUBLICATION**

Warrants Approved On 1/10/2026 or Payment 1/10/2026

Vendor Name

Amount

CenturyLink dba Lumen Tech. Group 26,232.04

Deano's Collision Specialists Inc 6,789.47

Keefe Supply Company 7,914.66

Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation 37,569.50

US Bank Voyager Fleet Systems 7,030.77

25 Payments less than 2000 20,391.54

Final Total: 97,500.00

■

(Published in the Patriot 02/07/26)

**Sherburne County
WARRANTS FOR PUBLICATION**

Warrants Approved On 1/10/2026 or Payment 1/10/2026

Vendor Name

Amount

Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) 44,366.00

Carol Schraut & Steve's Excavating, Inc 29,000.00

Ciresi Conlin LLP 47,375.60

Damon Farber Associates 11,917.70

East Central Regional Juvenile Center 11,398.00

El-Jay Plumbing & Heating, Inc. 9,508.00

Elk River Municipal Utilities 17,246.78

Emma & MacDonald Yanqui & CenterPoint 5,454.00

Greater St Cloud Development Corp 7,500.00

Group Health Non-Patient A-R 29,613.35

Joe Mendyka, LLC 20,000.00

Lexipol LLC 30,000.00

Mansfield Oil Co of Gainsville Inc 43,408.23

Nagel Appraisal & Consulting 7,200.00

Nintex USA Inc 26,377.00

Snap-on Industrial 3,517.13

Trees & Me LLC 3,650.00

Waite/Jason W 9,551.10

WSB LLC 57,877.75

47 Payments less than 2000 18,777.74

Final Total: 18,777.74

■

(Published in the Patriot 02/07/26)

**Sherburne County
WARRANTS FOR PUBLICATION**

Warrants Approved For Payment 1/10/2026

Vendor Name

Amount

State Of Minnesota 3,139.50

State Of Minnesota 3,386.50

State Of Minnesota 2,243.00

State Of Minnesota 4,022.00

State Of Minnesota 3,260.50

Final Total:

2,765.50

■

(Published in the Patriot 02/07/26)

**Sherburne County
WARRANTS FOR PUBLICATION**

Warrants Approved For Payment 1/10/2026

Vendor Name

Amount

State Of Minnesota 2,300.50

Final Total:

2,300.50

■

(Published in the Patriot 02/07/26)

**SHERBURNE COUNTY NOTICE OF
TAX-FORFEITED LAND
INITIAL PUBLIC SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the parcels of land described herein shall be sold to the highest bidder at a public sale in accordance with M.S. Chapter 282 for no less than the estimated market value, as determined by the most recent assessment. Any properties that do not sell will be offered on a subsequent public sale. The minimum bid price for the subsequent sale will be the sum of all delinquent taxes, special assessments, penalties, interest, and costs assigned to the parcel. The Subsequent Action Minimum bid is subject to change due to ongoing interest, penalties and costs.

The County Auditor shall conduct the initial sale via online auction through Public Surplus starting on February 11, 2026, and closing on March 12, 2026, at 10:00am. The property listings will be available to preview on the Public Surplus website. The subsequent sale for unsold properties will start March 16th, 2026, and close March 31, 2026, at 10am.

PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	CITY/TOWNSHIP	Estimated MARKET VALUE	SUBSEQUENT ACTION MINIMUM BID
10-00417-0520	BIG LAKE TOWNSHIP	\$64,300.00	\$4,941.84
30-00403-0464	LIVONIA TOWNSHIP	\$7,200.00	\$712.83
35-004070135	ORROCK TOWNSHIP	\$4,200.00	\$456.48
60-00404-1120	CITY OF BECKER	\$1,600.00	\$155.08
75-00869-0030	CITY OF ELK RIVER	\$5,400.00	\$571.47

All property is sold "as is" and may not conform to local building and zoning ordinances. Sherburne County makes no warranty that the land is "buildable".

ALL SALES ARE FINAL. NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES ARE PERMITTED.

Contact the Sherburne County Property Tax office located at 13880 Business Center Dr. NW, Elk River, MN 55330 for a complete list of terms and conditions. Information can also be obtained on our website www.co.sherburne.mn.us, on the Public Surplus property listing or by calling 763-765-4361.

January 10, 2026

/s/ Loraine Rupp

Sherburne County, Auditor-Treasurer

(Published in the Patriot: 01/17/26, 01/24/26, 01/31/26, 02/07/26.)

**AMENDMENT TO THE SHERBURNE COUNTY
ZONING ORDINANCE
ORD NO -2**

The Sherburne County Board of Commissioners adopted ORD NO 291 by amending the Sherburne County Zoning Ordinance as it relates to Solar Farm Prohibition including amendments to:

Section 16.2 (Interim Use Permits), Subd 5.22 (Conditions-Solar Farm) A (A Solar Farm shall be prohibited in the following areas) to remove, Baldwin Township: areas within 1/2 mile of TH 169 and add Big Lake Township...except for those parcels that have an existing Solar Farm constructed prior to October 1, 2025 or share a boundary line with a parcel that has an existing Solar Farm constructed prior to October 1, 2025.

This provision was passed by the Sherburne County Board of Commissioners on the 20th day of

January, 2026. A complete copy of this Zoning Ordinance Amendment is available for viewing at the Sherburne County Planning and Zoning Office, 13880 Business Center Drive, Elk River, Mn, and is duly filed with the Sherburne County Auditor upon

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Becker Area Senior Center (BASC)
Open Mon. - Fri. 5am-5pm.
Becker Community Center: 763-200-4271. Planning meeting 3rd Wed. @ 1pm.

Becker American Legion Auxiliary

Auxiliary meetings from November to February are suspended. We will meet again in March of 2025. Contacts are Paula Hinds 763.691.4405 cell and Nellie Simpson 763.482.0619.

Becker American Legion Post 193

Becker Legion meets the second Tues. of every month at 7pm at Becker Legion (old fire hall).
Becker AA Meeting

Becker Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets Thurs., 8pm at Mary of the Visitation, 12100 Sherburne Ave, Becker. (320) 247-4732 or email beckeradgroupmn@gmail.com

Becker Lions Club

Meetings are held the second Mon. each month at 7pm at Becker City Park's Shelter.

Becker Sons of the American Legion Squadron 193

Meets the third Tues. of each month at 7pm at Becker Legion (old fire hall).
Looking for new members.

Andrew Lee (763) 482-9177.

Becker Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Meeting

The monthly meetings are held 6pm the third Thurs. of the month at Becker City Hall. (320) 980-2752 or see the state website at www.beyondtheyellowribbon.org.

Big Lake Senior Center

The Big Lake Senior Club meets Tues., 1-4pm, Big Lake City Hall, 160 Lake St. North.

For more information, call:

763-309-1010 or 612-219-1614.

Big Lake American Legion Post #147

Meets the first Thurs. of the month @ 7 pm. Tribune Building, 29 Lake St.

Big Lake OPEN AA Meetings

Mon., 7pm at Saron Lutheran Church, Big Lake. Big Book Study, Handicap Accessible, Questions? Contact: Rob, (763) 218-5328.

The Big Lake American Legion Auxiliary

Meets the first Tues. Mar.-Dec. at 6:30pm. Tribune Building, 29 Lake St. Kathy at (763) 263-6093 for information.

Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

The Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon meets at 6:30 pm on the third Mon., of each month in the Community Room adjacent to the Big Lake Police Dept. & the Big Lake Library.

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Sherburne County Board of Commissioners

January County Board Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Regular Meeting Proposed Agenda

Hulse/Felber unanimous to approve the proposed agenda. Roll Call Vote: Gray- Aye, Hulse- Aye, Danielowski-Aye, Felber-Aye, Schumacher-Aye.

Open Forum

No one spoke.

Consent Agenda

Hulse/Felber unanimous to approve the consent agenda, with the exception of item 12. Roll Call Vote: Hulse- Aye, Danielowski- Aye, Felber- Aye, Schumacher- Aye, Gray- Aye.

Consider Approval of the Official Minutes from the January 6th, 2026, Annual Organizational Meeting of the County Board.

Approved the official minutes from the January 6th, 2026, Annual Organization Meeting of the County Board, as presented.

Consider Approval of the Official Minutes from the January 6th, 2026, County Board Workshop.

Approved the official minutes from the January 6th, 2026, County Board Workshop, as presented.

Consider Approval of a Gambling Premises Permit for Travelers Country Club on the Mississippi (Clear Lake Township).

Approved a Gambling Premises Permit for Travelers Country Club on the Mississippi.

Consider Approval of an Amended Agreement for Janitorial Services with Carefree Cleaning.

Approved Amended Agreement for Janitorial Services with Carefree Cleaning.

Consider Approval of Commissioner & Manual Warrants Dated December 31st, 2025, and January 2nd and 9th, 2026.

Approved Commissioner & Manual Warrants dated December 31st, 2025, and January 2nd and 9th, 2026 as follows:

January 2, 2025, Commissioner Warrants \$33,738.38

January 2, 2025, Manual Warrants \$3,00.50

January 9, 2025 Commissioner Warrants \$800,527.58

January 9, 2025 Manual Warrants \$6,051.50

December 31, 2025, Commissioner Warrants \$05, 927.98

December 31, 2025, Manual Warrants \$,992.00

Consider Approval of HHS IFS Warrants Dated December 31st, 2025, and January 9th, 2026.

Approved HHS IFS Warrants dated December 31st, 2025, and January 9th, 2026 as follows:

December 31, 2025, HHS IFS Admin Warrants \$6,356.72

January 7, 2026, HHS IFS Admin Warrants \$72,667.17

Consider Approval of HHS OBO Warrants Dated December 30th, 2025.

Approved HHS OBO Warrants dated December 30th, 2025 as follows:

December 30, 2025, HHS OBO Warrants \$1,448.42

Consider Approval of a Health Partners Microgrant.

Approved Health Partners Microgrant as presented.

Consider Approval of 4th Quarter 2025 Donations Received by the Health and Human Services Department.

Approved 4th Quarter 2025 donations received by Health and Human Services Department.

Consider Approval of the 2026 Pay Equity Report to MN Management & Budget, as Required by the Local Government Pay Equity Act.

Approved the 2026 Pay Equity Report to MN Management & Budget, as presented.

Consider Approval of a Renewal and Major Modification to the County Solid Waste License for Vonco II.

Approved a renewal and major modification to the County Solid Waste License for Vonco II as presented.

Consider Approval of a Professional Service Agreement with Bolton & Menk for Preliminary Design Services for TH 10 and CSAH 11.

Approved a Professional Service Agreement with Bolton & Menk for Preliminary Design Services for TH 10 and CSAH 11.

Consider Approval of a Legacy Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Great Northern Regional Trail Project.

Schumacher/Hulse unanimous to approve the Legacy Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Roll Call Vote: Danielowski- Aye, Felber- Aye, Schumacher- Aye, Gray- Aye, Hulse- Aye.

Announcements

Finalize travel arrangements to Washington, D.C.; cold weather preparation.

Sherburne County History Center Executive Director resignation.

Regular Agenda

Consider Approval of Resolution No. 012026-AD-3263 to Acquire

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Age 55+ workers needed for PT light custodial work at the Fuller Lake & Enfield Rest Areas located on 1-94. Apply online at: www.greenviewmn.com or call Green View at 651-639-1913.

Bulldog boys tame Magic

By Mark Kolbinger,
Contributing Writer

The Becker boys basketball team won the battle of the M8 Conference undefeated teams last Friday, going on the road and winning convincingly, 67-55 over the Monticello Magic.

The Bulldogs brought a 13-3 overall record into the game and Monticello was 12-4, as both teams boasted a perfect conference record.

Coach Cory Nuest described his team as "poised and disciplined" as the Bulldogs performed well in front of the huge crowd.

"I was very proud of our boys in their biggest win of the season," said Nuest. "They competed at a high level, stayed composed under pressure, and played for each other."

Becker's defense was stellar, as the team executed Nuest's game plan to perfection in racing to a 35-21 halftime lead.

The Bulldogs consistently guarded the arc, walled up in the paint, and forced Monticello to score in the half court. Offensively, the Bulldogs were unselfish while sharing the ball.

Monticello made a late push, cutting the lead to eight with two minutes remaining, but Becker stayed composed.

Bulldogs Isiah Boyer and Troy Nuest sealed the game at the free-throw line, closing out the win and taking the lead in the M8 title race.

Becker played true team basketball, finishing with 21 assists and just eight turnovers while consistently winning 50-50 balls and controlling momentum.

Nathan Weiss led Becker with 19 points (seven rebounds, three assists), while Bryce Paumen added 19 points, (seven rebounds, five assists) and provided a strong presence on both ends of the floor.

Isiah Boyer was steady with 12 points (seven rebounds, eight assists) and Troy Nuest finished with eight points, (seven rebounds, four assists, and four steals).

Other stats included Saul Kreft with four points and three rebounds, while Nila Burau provided a

spark off the bench with five points in 16 minutes of action. Paumen also drew praise from his coach for his defensive effort, holding Magic big-man Hunter Miller to just four points.

"Being connected is one of our core values, and our guys showed that all night — defending together, sharing the ball, and trusting one another in big moments," Nuest said of his team. "When you do those things on the road against a great team, good things happen."

Vs. Saints

Earlier last week, Becker took down the St. Francis Saints in another convincing road win, 75-52.

It was a good gauge of the Bulldogs' improvement, as they had defeated the Saints by just eight points in a home game earlier in the season.

Isiah Boyer finished with 12 points, eight assists, and six steals, while Paumen dominated the interior with 20 points and eight rebounds. Nate Weiss anchored the defense, holding St. Francis' leading scorer to just eight points, well below his 23-point-per-game average.

Troy Nuest knocked down four three-pointers and finished with 16 points, four assists, and four steals.

Saul Kreft added eight points and set several strong screens that led directly to scoring opportunities for teammates. Nolan Burau distributed the ball effectively, while senior Owen Reinking provided quality minutes off the bench and scored five points.

"This was a great conference road victory," said Coach Nuest. "It was a solid defensive performance and team basketball. We finished with 25 assists, limited them to 52 points, and allowed only five offensive rebounds."

Joseph Andrew Bragg, 28, is charged with kidnapping and sexual assault related to a Jan. 21 incident involving a 7-year-old child. The child was ultimately recovered alive.

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will in the second half.

Andie Changamire was sensational, scoring 23

points and grabbing eight boards for Becker, as her sister Adele added nine points.

Vs. Tigers

On Saturday, Becker fell to an excellent Delano team, 71-47. The Tigers are 15-6 on the season and like the Bulldogs, play a grueling schedule, with most of their losses coming against must larger schools.

The Tigers took a 35-25 halftime lead and never looked back.

Becker was led by Andie Changamire's 14 points, while Tess Brown added 13.

Bulldog girls stand at 11-7 on season

By Mark Kolbinger,
Contributing Writer

The young but talented Becker girls basketball team last week went 1-2 in a brutal three game stretch of back-to-back-to-back games to move to 11-7 on the season.

Vs. Chisago Lakes

Last Thursday, the team played great defense in a 68-26 win over Chisago Lakes.

"We continued to rebound well, out-rebounding a taller team for the second consecutive game," Head Coach Dan Baird said.

"We secured 37 rebounds to 24 by Chisago Lakes."

Isiah Boyer finished with 12 points, eight assists, and six steals, while Paumen dominated the interior with 20 points and eight rebounds. Nate Weiss anchored the defense, holding St. Francis' leading scorer to just eight points, well below his 23-point-per-game average.

Troy Nuest knocked down four three-pointers and finished with 16 points, four assists, and four steals.

Saul Kreft added eight points and set several strong screens that led directly to scoring opportunities for teammates. Nolan Burau distributed the ball effectively, while senior Owen Reinking provided quality minutes off the bench and scored five points.

"This was a great conference road victory," said Coach Nuest. "It was a solid defensive performance and team basketball. We finished with 25 assists, limited them to 52 points, and allowed only five offensive rebounds."

Isiah Boyer was steady with 12 points (seven rebounds, eight assists) and Troy Nuest finished with eight points, (seven rebounds, four assists, and four steals).

Other stats included Saul Kreft with four points and three rebounds, while Nila Burau provided a

spark off the bench with five points in 16 minutes of action. Paumen also drew praise from his coach for his defensive effort, holding Magic big-man Hunter Miller to just four points.

"Being connected is one of our core values, and our guys showed that all night — defending together, sharing the ball, and trusting one another in big moments," Nuest said of his team. "When you do those things on the road against a great team, good things happen."

As the Bulldogs move to 11-7 on the season, they will look to continue their success in the conference and beyond.

The Bulldogs picked up 16 boards on the offensive end of the court, and won the second chance points stat 18-0 over the Wildcats. Becker also used its team quickness to go around the Wildcat defenders, which led to a 40-10 scoring advantage in the paint.

Andie Changamire was dominant in this contest for Becker as the freshman scored 19 points and added six rebounds and five assists.

"Andie has been a beast on the boards lately," Baird said. "She just played great in this contest."

Adele Changamire added 15 points for Becker,

while Tess Brown added nine points to give the Bulldogs three scorers in double figures.

Eilidh Mrnak added nine points, while Julianna Stach had four and Aysa Johnson scored three points.

Ady Petty, Rowan Haussmann and Ella Otteson each chipped in a bucket for the Bulldogs.

Vs. Magic

Friday night, Becker fell to Conference leader and Class AAAA Monticello, 47-62.

Becker kept it close at halftime, trailing by just four points, 27-23 on the road before Monticello's

veteran team asserted their

schools moving down.

"The amount of work the team and coaching staff put in to make sure we earned another trip state this year was unbelievable," said Head Coach Nadia Fischer-Danzeisen. "I'm extremely proud of everyone!"

The team is ready to represent Becker at the Target Center on February 13-14. Thank you's go out to the community and the Becker administration for all of the support and encouragement.

Becker Kick advance to State



THE BECKER KICK TEAM CELEBRATED after winning third place in sections and moving on to the state tournament. (Submitted Photo).

County seeking tips on suspect in Zimmerman abduction

Submitted Article

The Sherburne County Sheriff's Office is requesting information from the public as part of its ongoing investigation of a child abduction case.

Joseph Andrew Bragg, 28, is charged with kidnapping and sexual assault related to a Jan. 21 incident involving a 7-year-old child. The child was ultimately recovered alive.

Investigators have de-

termined that Bragg communicated with parents through social media, offering to provide nanny or daycare services. Investigators are asking anyone who employed Joseph Bragg as a nanny for their children to contact investigators through the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) tipline at (651) 793-2465.

The Sherburne County Sheriff's Office is leading the investigation with as-

sistance from the BCA and FBI.

JOSEPH ANDREW

BRAGG - shown in his Sherburne County booking photo - is facing charges in the Jan. 21 abduction case involving a 7-year-old child. The county is seeking tips from the public on Bragg and his provision of nanny or daycare services through the years. (Submitted Photo).

