

Draft Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the Homestead Township Board

July 9, 2025

Call to Order: Supervisor Cooley called to order at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited by all.

Roll Call: Cooley, Mead, Holbrook, Purchase & Wilson, Present.

Approval of Agenda: Cooley moves, Purchase supports to amend the agenda to add Acrisure Insurance under new business. All Ayes, no nays, motion carries.

Consent Agenda: Cooley moves, Holbrook supports to accept the consent agenda as submitted. All ayes, no nays, motion carries.

Public Comment: None

Reports:

Assessor: Gunnar Brow stated that the summer database was finalized, the summer tax warrant was signed on June 23 and tax bills had been mailed. The 2026 sales study is currently being reviewed by Benzie County equalization. All veterans forms for exemptions have been turned in.

Zoning: Marvin Radtke stated that he is responding to calls daily and working on zoning issues with some concerns being forwarded to the Benzie County health Department. He advised that the master plan should be placed on the August agenda and that notice be placed in the local newspaper 15 days prior to the meeting.

Parks: Mike Mead reported that the HARP meeting had been cancelled. The installer of the kayak launch has authorized a survey due to issues and hopes to reach a resolution quickly. Mowing of the Platte River Park will be done on a volunteer basis and kept to a minimum to maintain the natural environment.

Shannon Purchase reported that he is trying to arrange for the tanks need to be pumped at the ball field. The extension of a power line is going to be far too costly to proceed at this time. Holbrook moved, Cooley supported the expenditure of \$1700 for materials for new picnic tables. Roll call: Holbrook, yes; Cooley, yes; Mead, yes; Purchase, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Planning Commission: Last meeting was cancelled. Next meeting is July 21.

County Commission: Markey acknowledged that a settlement had been reached in regards to an accident involving a county vehicle. Benzie County will be switching much of their software programming to the BS&A cloud over the next year and one half. The Benzie County animal shelter doesn't meet State code so options are being explored to possibly partner with other Counties.

Fire Department: Chief Markey requested that the Board accept a new applicant, Abigail Malone. Cooley moved, Purchase supported the acceptance of Malone to the Homestead Township fire department. All ayes, no nays, motion carried. Markey reported on the number of runs over the past month. He also stated that he will upgrading the departments computers.

Clerk: Wilson filed a written report but specifically noted that she has hired her daughter, Christy Brow as her deputy. Supervisor Cooley advised that a third- party review Ms. Brow's timesheets due the personnel policy. It was also noted verbally that one refund for the hall rental was not being returned due to the condition the room was left in.

Treasurer: Holbrook also filed a written report but discussed the amount of time required for the input of cemetery data and that she would need additional funds for her deputy later this year. There was discussion about whether hourly employees should be paid travel time for educational courses. The personnel policy is silent in this matter.

Cooley moved, Purchase supported to accept the reports as submitted.

Finance:

Payables: The payables list was adjusted to include some late submissions. Cooley moved, Holbrook supported to pay the bills as adjusted in the amount of \$22,305.73. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Holbrook, yes; Purchase, yes; Mead, yes; Wilson, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Budget Amendments: None

New Business:

Weldon Road: Bob Rosa and Troy Hines of the Benzie County Road Commission presented a proposal for paving a portion of Weldon Road due to severe erosion. This project qualifies as a matching fund project with a total cost of \$96,266.63. There was much discussion in regards to the wishes of the property owners, whether the Township felt this was the best use of our matching funds, if repairing the entire road should be explored and quoted. It was determined that there was more research and discussion required before making a decision. The property owners will be sent letters to determine their wishes and the Road Commission will prepare a quote to improve the entire road.

Code Red: A lengthy discussion ensued as to how Homestead Township would implement and/or work with Code Red to be able to communicate emergency messages to property owners within our specific jurisdiction. It was generally felt that this service is better managed at the County level, that the Township didn't have the resources, equipment or staff to gather phone numbers of local residents.

PRP Mowing: Purchase Backhoe did some mowing at the Platte River Park as a temporary measure. Cooley moved & Wilson supported that they be paid for their work at a rate of \$75.00 per hour. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Wilson, yes; Mead, yes, Holbrook, yes, Purchase, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried. It was determined that Harp has a volunteer that will begin mowing later this month. In the event that this doesn't work out, Purchase Backhoe has agreed to be available for mowing and weed whacking at a rate of \$75.00 per hour.

Joint Delinquent Tax Collection: Holbrook explained that the Benzie County Treasurer's office coordinates with the local jurisdictions to appeal to the courts to remove delinquent uncollectible taxes from the tax rolls. It is far more cost effective to work together than for each jurisdiction to hire an attorney, petition the courts, absorb the notification costs, etc. Wilson moved Purchase supported to award \$600 to join in the group court proceedings. Roll call: Wilson, yes; Purchase, yes; Mead, yes; Cooley, yes; Holbrook, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Health Department/Cemetery: Holbrook relayed many of her discoveries from the MTA course that she and Cathy Brown took. Specifically issues regarding foundations for cemetery markers, health department approval needed on various issues, weaknesses in the cemetery ordinance.

Acrisure: Wilson presented the Acrisure proposal for insurances for the Townships buildings, equipment, liability, cyber security, etc. The policies renew on August 1. Cooley moved and Purchase supported to renew all policies inclusively in the amount of \$32,114.50. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Purchase, yes; Wilson, yes; Holbrook, yes; Mead, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried. Chief Markey asked for clarification on whether insurance was based on current replacement cost or based on original purchase price, Supervisor and Clerk will seek more information.

Old Business:

Earned Sick Time Act: Wilson, reviewed issues discussed at the MTA course and polled the Board for items to be included in the ESTA policy. Six specific items were decided. Wilson is to prepare a sample policy, present it for review to MTA and bring it to the August meeting for review.

Ad Response: Tractor: Only one bid was received, it was opened at the meeting. Holbrook moved, Cooley supported to accept the bid as submitted. All ayes, no nays, motion carried.

Contractor: Only one bid was submitted, Mike Volpe applied. He is not a licensed builder but is an experienced handyman. He has his own tools and transportation and is seeking insurance. Cooley Moved, Mead supported to hire Mr. Volpe. It was suggested that a 30- day probationary period be built into the motion and the contract be contingent on insurance being achieved. Motion carried.

Park Committee: Cooley asked that this matter be tabled until August.

Amazon Payments: Purchase moved, Cooley supported to reimburse Pat Delorme \$1232.06 for items she paid Amazon for that actually belonged to Homestead Township. The obligation was confirmed through Holbrooks review of the statements. Roll call: Purchase, yes; Cooley, yes; Holbrook, yes; Purchase, yes. Motion carried.

BS&A Tax Payment/Cloud: Holbrook discussed that Benzie County is converting to the BS&A cloud and that the Township will need to follow suit to be compatible. We need to pay a deposit to be placed on a waiting list for scheduling the conversion. Both assessing and tax will be converted. Cooley moved, Purchase supported to pay a \$1900 deposit to be placed on the waiting list. Roll Call: Cooley, yes; Purchase, yes; Mead, yes, Wilson, yes; Holbrook, yes. All ayes, no nays, motion carried

Public Comment: None

Adjourned at 8:57 pm.