



STEELE COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES

Steele County Administration Center – 630 Florence - Owatonna, MN 55060

*Steele County's Mission:
Driven to deliver quality services in a respectful and fiscally responsible way.*

Tuesday, April 7th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. – Steele County Boardroom

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Schmidt at 7:00 pm. Members present were Schmidt, Ulrich, Jaster, Hansen, Cole and staff member Brooks.

Agenda:

Motion by Ulrich, second by Hansen to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Minutes:

Motion by Jaster, second by Ulrich to approve the February 3rd 2026, minutes as printed. Motion passed 5 to 0.

Public Hearing – Variance #676 Vance (OHWL Setback)

This hearing is to consider a variance request from Brian Vance to reconstruct a cabin as close as 50 feet from the ordinary high-water level of Beaver Lake and construct a deck with stairs as close as 41 feet from the ordinary high-water level of Beaver Lake. The property is described as Block 1, Lot 28, Burnes Shores Acres Subdivision, No. 2. The property address is 64 Beaver Lake Road South.

Questions & Comments by board members:

Ulrich- The DNR comments are just covering the 9 foot deck, correct?

Schmidt- Yes

Ulrich- The current building is in the OHWL, and the new one will be just have the deck in the OHWL, correct?

Brooks- *Yes the new building will be back about 8 feet, just the deck will be in the OHWL.*

Schmidt- They are not saving any part of the old cabin, it all will be brand new construction, correct?

Brooks- Yes

Schmidt- It looks like there is room to move the new cabin back further.

Vance- *We would end up taking out a lot more of the mature trees that are on the property.*

Ulrich- Do any of the neighbors have any issue with this.

Brooks- *There have been no comments.*

Hansen- Are the other cabins on the lake in compliance?

Brooks- *Not all of them.*

Schmidt- When they need to be replaced they will be put in compliance?

Brooks- Yes

Cole- We have approve previous variances for cabins?

Brooks- *Yes, but they have different circumstances.*

The public hearing was opened.

As there were no other comments the public hearing was closed.

The board reviewed the criteria for considering variance request Variance #676 Vance (OHWL Setback)

- 1) Is the variance in harmony with the intent of the comprehensive plan and ordinance?
Members Schmidt, Jaster, Ulrich, found that the variance is not in harmony with the intent of the comprehensive plan and ordinance as there is room to push all structures back or turn structures to fit. Members, Hansen and Cole found that the variance is in harmony with the intent of the comprehensive plan and ordinance.
- 2) Is the property owner proposing to use the property in a reasonable manner?
All members felt the property owner was using the property in a reasonable manner.
- 3) The plight of the applicant is due to circumstances unique to the property.
Members Schmidt and Jaster found the plight of the applicant is not due to circumstances unique to the property because there are ways to make the proposed structure fit. Ulrich, Hansen and Cole found the plight of the applicant is due to circumstances unique to the property.
- 4) Was the plight of the landowner created by someone other than the landowner?
All members felt the circumstances were created by someone other than the landowner.
- 5) The variance will not alter the essential character of the locality.
All members felt the character of the locality would remain the same.
- 6) Economic considerations alone are not the only practical difficulty?
All members agreed economics were not the reason for the request.

Motion by Jaster, second by Ulrich to deny variance request Variance #676 Vance (OHWL Setback) based upon the findings of the board. Motion passed, 3 to 2.

Adjournment:

Motion by Hansen, second by Jaster to adjourn. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 07:49PM.