

Beltrami County Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment Meeting
Minutes for Monday, May 18, 2026
County Administration Building – County Board Room
701 Minnesota Ave NW
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

General Business

Members present: Don Hazeman
 Ed Fussy
 Bill Best
 Bruce Poppel

Members absent: Paul Nordby
 Doug Underthun
 Craig Gaasvig

Others Present: Brent Rud, Director, Beltrami County Environmental Services Department
 Greg Larson, Beltrami County Environmental Services Department
 Alec Wilcox, Beltrami County Environmental Services Department
 Shannon Schmidt, Beltrami County Environmental Services Department
 Lucille Granger, 1760 Grange Rd NW, Bemidji, MN 56601
 Kevin Peterson, 1760 Grange Rd NW, Bemidji, MN 56601
 Adam Olsen, 15228 Joe's Lodge Dr SE, Bemidji, MN 56601
 John Carlson, 2900 Birchmont Dr NE, Bemidji, MN 56601
 Michael Weiher, 1565 Bucktail Dr SW, Bemidji, MN 56601
 Kirsten Weiher, 1565 Bucktail Dr SW, Bemidji, MN 56601

Chairman called the Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment Meeting to order at 6:00 PM. **Board and staff introduced themselves to members of the audience. Brent reviewed the meeting procedures and process, as well as the agenda, for those in attendance.** The meeting minutes for April 27, 2026, were brought forward for approval. **Bill Best moved to approve the meeting minutes of April 27, 2026, after a small correction was made. Motion seconded by Bruce Poppel.**

Motion carried and approved.

Board of Adjustment

New Business

Variance Request of:

**Joe's Lodge Resort LLC –
Adam and Kelley Olsen
15228 Joe's Lodge Dr SE
Bemidji, MN 56601**

Township:

Ten Lake

Body of Water:

Andrusia Lake (4-038) RD

The Purpose of:

Applicant is requesting a variance from the Beltrami County Shoreland Management Ordinance to replace an existing septic system drainfield, not meeting the required setback on Andrusia Lake (RD 4-038). Andrusia Lake is classified as a recreational development lake, which requires a 100' SSTS setback from the OHWL. The existing drainfield is 75' from the OHWL. The proposed new drainfield to be constructed in the same location, 75' from the OHWL.

Legal Description:

Tax Parcel 46.00253.00

That part of Government Lot Four (4), Section Nineteen (19), Township One Hundred Forty-six (146), Range Thirty-one (31), which lies Southerly, Southwesterly and Southeasterly of the following described line: Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Section 19; thence on an assumed bearing of North 00°13'38" West, along the West line of said Section 19, a distance of 2,646.07 feet to the Northwest corner of Government Lot 5 of said Section 19; thence North 89°42'04" East, along the North line of said Government Lot 5, a distance of 1,273.80 feet to the Northwest corner of said Government Lot 4; thence South 00°24'46" East, along the West line of said Government Lot 4, a distance of 400.28 feet to the point of beginning of the line to be described; thence North 89°43'54" East a distance of 537.10 feet; thence South 63°20'24" East a distance of 297.12 feet; thence South 30°26'06" East a distance of 189.61 feet to an iron monument; thence North 50°53'54" East a distance of 296.97 feet to an iron monument; thence continuing North 50°53'54" East a distance of 310 feet, more or less, to the shoreline of Lake Andrusia and said line there terminating.

AND

Those parts of Government Lot Four (4) and Government Lot Seven (7), Section Nineteen (19), Township One Hundred Forty-six (146), Range Thirty-one (31), which lies Easterly and Northerly of the following described line: Beginning at the Northeast corner of Rivervista; thence South 00°00'22" East (assumed bearing) along the East line of said plat of Rivervista, a distance of 15.75 feet; thence North 88°36'10" East a distance of 1,387.54 feet; thence North 76°04'11" East a distance of 271.16 feet; thence South 83°46'05" East a distance of 65.06 feet; thence South 84°11'42" East a distance of 14.94 feet; thence South 61°02'48" East a distance of 123 feet, more or less, to the shoreline of Lake Andrusia and said line there terminating.

Greg Larson gave the staff report. GIS maps showing the 34.48-acre parcel location were viewed and photos of the seasonal resort failing septic, the shower house, and harbor locations were viewed. The actual installation date of this septic system is unknown. The existing drainfield will be replaced with a pressure bed. System is currently operating with a newly installed holding tank ONLY. Proposed SSTS to be installed in the exact same location, 75' feet from the OHWL. Proposed system will be used for the resorts laundry/shower house. The proposed SSTS also

meets the required Mississippi Headwaters Board Comprehensive Plan setback to the OHWL. A map showing the location of all current septic systems on the property was viewed. Physical constraints of the property limit alternate drainfield areas. Staff recommends approval of the variance request as proposed.

Adam Olsen approached the podium. The Board asked about the photo showing docks and lifts parked in the current drainfield area. The docks and lifts will not be there in the future. The Board asked if there were any other holding tanks servicing the resort. There are not. All septic systems have a treatment area.

The Board opened the floor for public comment. Emailed comments received were read aloud by Greg Larson.

- **Mississippi Headwaters Board email:** Tim Terrill expressed that this variance request “meets the standards of the Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) Comprehensive Plan. The current setback requirement from the Ordinary High-Water Mark for a Recreational Development lake is 75 feet under the MHB Plan.”

Finding no further public comment, the Chairman closed the floor for public comment on the Joe’s Lodge Resort LLC variance request.

Findings of Fact

1. Is the variance in harmony with the intent of the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and State Shoreline Management Ordinance rules?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? The current septic system is failing and a new SSTS will need to be installed.
2. Without the variance is the owner deprived of a reasonable use of the property?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? The laundry/shower house is an integral part of the resort for the guests.
3. Is the alleged hardship due to circumstances unique to this property?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? There is no other place to put the system that services the laundry/shower house.
4. Were the circumstances causing the hardship created by someone or something other than the landowner or previous landowners?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? Septic system of an unknown age has failed.
5. Will the issuance of the variance maintain the essential character of the locality?
Yes(x) No ()
Why? Nothing is changing. The new septic system will be installed in exactly the same location as the present failing system.

6. Does the alleged hardship involve more than economic consideration?

Yes (x) No ()

Why? Economics was not a consideration. This is the only logical place to install the replacement system.

If all answers are "yes" the criteria for granting the variance request have been met.

Motion by Don Hazeman to approve the variance request of Joe's Lodge Land LLC as proposed. Bill Best seconded the motion.

Motion unanimously carried and approved.

Chairman then closed the Board of Adjustment Public Hearing on the proposed Variance request of Joe's Lodge Land LLC.

Variance Request of:

B.O.D. Construction Inc
TBD Grange Rd NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

Township:

Northern

Body of Water:

N/A

The Purpose of:

Applicant is requesting a variance from the Beltrami County Subdivision Controls Ordinance No 5 Section 3.04 to deviate from the minimum lot width of 150' of frontage. Applicant proposes two new parcels having 87' and 101' of frontage in the proposed plat of Orange May.

Legal Description:

Tax Parcel 31.00095.05

That part of Government Lot Three (03), Section Five (05), Township One Hundred Forty-seven (147) North, Range Thirty-three (33) West, Beltrami County, Minnesota, described as follows: Beginning at the northwest corner of said Government Lot 3; thence South 00°46'39" East, bearing based on the Beltrami County Coordinate System, along the west line of said Government Lot 3, a distance of 600.00 feet; thence South 89°57'37" East, along a line parallel with the said north line of Government Lot 3, a distance of 535.95 feet; thence North 05°34'33" East a distance of 602.75 feet to the intersection with the north line of said Government Lot 3; thence North 89°57'37" West, along said north line, a distance of 602.65 feet to the point of beginning.

Alec Wilcox gave the staff report. B.O.D. Construction purchased this 7.80-acre lot in 2025. This lot in Northern Township is proposed to be divided into six individual residential parcels in a separate hearing. The Beltrami County Subdivision Controls Ordinance No. 5 Section 3.04 requires a minimum lot width standard of 150 feet of frontage. Applicant is requesting approval

to deviate from the standard frontage width on two lots. Lot 3 has 87.5' of frontage; Lot 4 has 101' of frontage. Northern Township Planning and Zoning does not have a minimum standard of frontage. GIS maps showing the property location were viewed. A site survey showing how the lots would be divided was also viewed. Photos of the current non-shoreland property were viewed. Staff recommends approval of this variance request as proposed.

Michael Weiher approached the podium. The Board asked why Beltrami County has the 150' of frontage as a requirement. Brent explained that this is one way to limit the number of individual driveways. The Board asked if the Fire Department was notified of this meeting. Yes, they were, but they did not send comments. Michael Weiher stated that Mike Yavarow of the Bemidji Fire Department wrote a letter of approval for the initial Northern Township meeting. The Board asked why lots could not be made narrower to meet frontage requirements. Michael explained that the topography dictated the size of the lots. They do not want any residence sitting in a low spot.

The Board opened the floor for public comment.

Finding no public comment, the Chairman closed the floor for public comment on the B.O.D. Construction Inc variance request.

Findings of Fact

1. Is the variance in harmony with the intent of the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and Beltrami County Subdivision Ordinance rules?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? Topography makes this division the best use of the property. All lots meet Northern Township's requirements.
2. Without the variance is the owner deprived of a reasonable use of the property?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? The individual lots are shaped the way they are due to topography.
3. Is the alleged hardship due to circumstances unique to this property?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? The topography limits the buildable areas and areas needed for SSTS locations.
4. Were the circumstances causing the hardship created by someone or something other than the landowner or previous landowners?
Yes (x) No ()
Why? Again, topography limits the use of this property.
5. Will the issuance of the variance maintain the essential character of the locality?
Yes(x) No ()
Why? Northern Township has already given their approval. Other plats in the area are similar.

6. Does the alleged hardship involve more than economic consideration?

Yes (x) No ()

Why? Economics were not discussed.

If all answers are "yes" the criteria for granting the variance request have been met.

Motion by Bruce Poppel to approve the variance request of B.O.D. Construction Inc as proposed. Bill Best seconded the motion.

Motion unanimously carried and approved.

Chairman then closed the Board of Adjustment Public Hearing on the proposed Variance request of B.O.D. Construction Inc.

Planning Commission

New Business

Proposed Plat Request of:

Orange May
BOD Construction Inc
TBD Grange Rd NW
Bemidji, MN 56601

Township:

Northern

Body of Water:

N/A

The Purpose of:

Applicant is seeking approval of a proposed plat to subdivide approximately 7.8 acres into 6 residential lots in Northern Township on Grange Rd NW. The proposed lots meet the requirements of the Beltrami County Subdivision Controls Ordinance #5.

Legal Description:

Tax Parcel 31.00095.05

That part of Government Lot Three (03), Section Five (05), Township One Hundred Forty-seven (147) North, Range Thirty-three (33) West, Beltrami County, Minnesota, described as follows: Beginning at the northwest corner of said Government Lot 3; thence South 00°46'39" East, bearing based on the Beltrami County Coordinate System, along the west line of said Government Lot 3, a distance of 600.00 feet; thence South 89°57'37" East, along a line parallel with the said north line of Government Lot 3, a distance of 535.95 feet; thence North 05°34'33" East a distance of 602.75 feet to the intersection with the north line of said Government Lot 3;

thence North 89°57'37" West, along said north line, a distance of 602-65 feet to the point of beginning.

Alec Wilcox gave the staff report for the proposed Orange May plat which will cover 7.8 acres in Northern Township and be divided into 6 residential lots. GIS maps of the parcel were viewed, maps of the land contours were viewed, photos of the undeveloped land were viewed, and survey maps were reviewed. B.O.D. Construction Inc purchased this parcel in 2025. Orange May Ct NW will provide 6 individual driveway approaches with a Hammerhead "T" turn around within the plat. Each lot will be developed to accommodate a house, well, septic system and a driveway.

Section 3.04 of the Beltrami County Subdivision Ordinance requires all lots be at least 150' wide and contain a minimum of 45,000 square feet of contiguous land that is not a Type 1-8 wetland. Lots 1, 2, 5, and 6 meet these ordinance requirements. Lots 3 and 4 were granted a variance to deviate from the minimum frontage width. All lots meet Northern Township zoning requirements. Staff recommend approval as proposed to the County Board.

Michael Weiher, applicant, approached the Board. The Board asked about drainage on the property. Michael confirmed that culverts, retention ponds, and/or detention ponds are part of the proposed plan. Michael will be working with Mark Fuller to create a road agreement with Northern Township for Orange May Ct NW.

Chairman opened the Planning Commission Public Hearing for public comments on the Orange May plat request.

 **Beltrami County GIS Department** - Kevin Trappe sent an email. Kevin worked with Matt Murray on approving the road name. Kevin asked that the applicant be sure to coordinate with the Bemidji Post Office regarding mailbox requirements.

 **Beltrami County Highway Department** – Bruce Hasbargen sent an email. The Highway Department does not have any comments or concerns with this preliminary plat request.

 **Robert Murray, Beltrami County Surveyor** – sent a letter stating, "The boundary of the preliminary plat of Orange May has been checked and found to meet the mathematical closure tolerance as defined in Beltrami County Subdivision Controls Ordinance No. 5, Section 5, Subd. 5.01, Subsection 3."

Brent Rud went over the plat checklist in the Beltrami County Subdivision Controls Ordinance No. 5. There are no issues with soils, wetlands, or lot sizes – all good for the preliminary plat request.

Finding no further public comment, the Chairman closed the Planning Commission Public Hearing on the preliminary plat request of Orange May.

Motion by Bruce Poppel to recommend the approval of the preliminary plat request of Orange May. Motion seconded by Don Hazeman.

Motion unanimously carried and approved.

Brent Rud discussed the need for the Beltrami County Comprehensive Plan to be updated. The Plan was last addressed in 2002 and needs to be updated every 20 years, at a minimum. Craig Gaasvig will be spearheading the move forward. The current Plan lists no goals nor objectives. We may need to hold a separate meeting to update the data in the Plan and add some general goals and objectives. We can look at the City of Bemidji or Itasca County for examples of goals and objectives in their Comprehensive Plans to get some ideas.

Old Business – None

Motion by Ed Fussy to adjourn the Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment Public Hearing for May 18, 2026. Motion seconded by Bill Best. Motion carried and approved. Chair called the meeting for May 18, 2026, officially adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Brent Rud
Beltrami County ESD Director



Chairman
Beltrami County Planning Commission