

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
BOARD MEETING
Tuesday December 9, 2025
6:00 p.m.**

Supervisor Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Olson, Murphy, Hollingsworth, Baker, Green

Absent:

Visitors: Lisa Morris, Ed Taylor, Garon Gopigian, Kathy & Steve Erber

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve agenda & additional items: Green asked to add “Approve Notice of Intent” in action item b. Olson asked to add approval of a resolution to declare the small Barn “surplus” along with approving Sally Olson’s formal application. **Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the agenda as amended. Olson seconded. All ayes.**

Public comments: none

Approve minutes of regular meeting on November 11, 2025: Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the minutes of November 11, 2025, as presented. Olson seconded. All ayes.

Review correspondence not included below:

Thorne Swift Manager Report: Hammond summarized the report included in the Board packet: the season is finished, had a great year, events and traffic increased from 2024, no incidents to report, and maintenance on the Board Walk is completed. The Board thanked Hammond for all his hard work and are looking forward to next season.

Action Items:

- a. **Project Centennial Committee Update** – Olson updated the Board on the recent Architectural Design Phase meetings noting it is on track and that Benchmark had been out to survey the property. The Design Phase committee members were given “bubble diagrams” which are steps to fine tune the floor plan, to look over and choose the best option.
- b. **Review Bond Counsel & Municipal Manager Candidates and Approve Notice of Intent** – Green informed the Board about the recent Project Centennial Finance Sub-Committee meeting where they discussed the roles of the Bond Counsel and Municipal Financial Manager, their responsibilities, how much fees would be and what their references were. The Finance committee reviewed three possible candidates for each position, discussed all in depth and are recommending to the Board for approval, Ron Liscombe of Miller Canfield as Bond Counsel and Andy Campbell of Bendzinski & Co. as Municipal Finance Manager. Hollingsworth asked for clarification on the role of the Municipal Manager. Baker asked if

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grants were available to help offset the cost. Green noted that the Bond Counsel and the Municipal Manager asked to have a committee of two Board members for financial meetings. The Board selected Supervisor Murphy and Trustee Green to be on the committee.

Hollingsworth inquired about what the banks will need from the Township in this process.

Green explained that two years of pre-forma budgets would be needed along with copies of audits and the list of 10-20 of the top taxpayers in the Township. **Hollingsworth made the motion to engage Ron Liscombe with Miller Canfield as Bond Counsel. Olson seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes. Five (5) yes. Motion approved.**

Hollingsworth made the motion to engage Andy Campbell as Municipal Finance Manager for Project Centennial as recommended by the Finance Committee. Baker seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes. Five (5) yes. Motion approved.

Hollingsworth made the motion to appoint Trustee Green and Supervisor Murphy to be the two-person committee to communicate with Bond Counsel and Municipal Financial Manager on behalf of West Traverse Township for Project Centennial. Olson seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes. Five (5) yes. Motion approved. Green explained the need for a Notice of Intent, the number of days it needs to be advertised in the newspaper, when it would go out and the maximum amount of money that the Township would be potentially borrowing. The Board would need to ask for an amount that would not be exceeded. Green made the following motion: **“I move for an approval of \$2 million dollars maximum, not to exceed, Notice of Intent on behalf of West Traverse Township”.** **Hollingsworth seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollingsworth – yes, Olson – yes. Five (5) yes. Motion approved.** The Board thanked Green and the Finance Committee for their diligence and hard work. Green volunteered to notify the Bond Counsel and Municipal Financial Manager applicants of the Townships decisions.

- c. Consideration of Committee/Board Rep re-appointments (3-year terms) – The Board discussed, reviewed, and appointed the following Committee and Board Representatives for three-year terms.

Hollingsworth made the motion to appoint Keith Hammond to replace John Baker as the Recreation Committee Chair. Baker seconded. All ayes.

Baker moved to appoint Thomas Cook to the Alternate Position on the West Traverse Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.

Green made the motion to appoint John Hall to the West Traverre Township Board of Review. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.

Hollingsworth made the motion to appoint Charlie Hollerith and Jim Osetek back to the West Traverse Township Planning Commission for a three-year term. Green seconded. All ayes.

- d. Big Barn discussion & Small Barn Identity Resolution – Olson pointed out to the Board that the small Barn is no longer of use and needs to be declared Surplus. The Board agreed. **Olson made the following resolution: “Now, therefore, it is resolved, that 1) the small barn is no longer needed for a public purpose and is hereby declared surplus, 2),” Township Supervisor is authorized to allow the Harbor Springs Area Fire Department to use the small Barn to**

practice Fire Rescue techniques and conduct a burning building exercise". Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes. Murphy passed along Fire Chief Cupps gratitude to the Township for the opportunity to use the small Barn for training purposes. The Board discussed the future of the big Barn property, considering options such as selling it, keeping it for future use, allowing a reclamation company to acquire it or to have the Barn torn down. The Board agreed to involve the Recreation Committee and to table a decision until next month.

Reports and Updates:

- a. Clerk – Olson discussed Sally Olson’s application explaining what roles she fills and asked for it to be approved. **Baker made the motion to accept Sally Olson’s application. Murphy seconded. All ayes.**
- b. Treasurer – Taxes were mailed and are coming in and winter sewer bills were mailed out as well. Hollingsworth asked Olson to send out a “Textymygov” msg asking people to call the office if their tax bills have not been received and updated the Board on the recent ZBA meeting.
- c. Planning Commission – Green informed the Board that the Otis Hotel SUP request will be on the Planning Commissions agenda Wednesday night.
- d. Zoning Administrator – Included in packet.
- e. Recreation/Thorne Swift Committee – No new updates, the committee will meet next week.
- f. Supervisor – Murphy gave the Board an update on the recent HSFA meeting. New gear was purchased, two new firefighters signed up, and the small Barn burn is scheduled for late December or early January.

Approve November payables & payroll –**Green made the motion to approve the November payables & payroll as presented. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.**

Public comments – Gopigian questioned Green on why the banks want to know who the top twelve taxpayers are. Green replied that it was a “risk management” issue. Morris reiterated how the Big Barn and the land are the fabric of the community and suggested options such as restore, deconstruct, or salvage and would the Board consider leasing the land with the Barn on it. Gopigian supported Morris’ comments on its historical significance.

Board comments – Green suggested holding a joint meeting with the Planning Commission and ZBA in the next few months to discuss the Master Plan, have an “Year in Review” presentation from the PC and to communicate appreciation for what everyone does on the separate committees. **Hollingsworth approved, Green seconded.** Green and Hollingsworth discussed financial institutes to investigate for future use. Hollingsworth commended the Board on the progress towards the new Township Hall.

Next Regular Meeting – January 13, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Adjourn – Murphy asked for a motion to adjourn the December 9, 2025, Township Board meeting. **Green made the motion to adjourn at 7:31 p.m. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jay Olson, Clerk

Transcribed by: Amy Peters

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