

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
Thorne Swift/Parks & Recreation Committee
January 21, 2026 – 5:00 PM

1. Call to order

Member J. Baker called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: J. Baker, S. Baker, Mooradian, Hammond, Ford, DeCamp

Absent: Arbaugh, Corlew

Staff Present: Ken Lane, Zoning Administrator

Guests Present: Township Clerk, Jay Olson, Lisa Morris

3. Approve minutes of October 15, 2025

The meeting minutes were not available and will be presented at the next meeting.

4. Old Business

None.

5. New Business

Zoning Administrator Lane stated that as discussed at the October 2025, meeting there are difficult aspects associated with each of the projects the Recreation Committee had explored last year. He added that traditional sidewalks are ineligible for grant funding through the MDNR, and that the required 10' wide multi-use pathway will be difficult to construct along State and Cemetery Roads. Zoning Administrator Lane stated there have been recent staff changes in Harbor Springs, so the possibility of moving forward with a sidewalk concept along Fairview Road in the City is unknown.

Zoning Administrator Lane shared an email from Member Arbaugh that included communication with MDOT about a pathway along M-119 through the Tunnel of Trees. He added that in summary, MDOT suggested that a pathway will require a 20' setback that may change the character of the highway and require local maintenance and control. He added that those requirements will create significant obstacles, and he offered thanks to Member Arbaugh for sharing the communication.

Zoning Administrator Lane stated that consistent with the direction of the Recreation Committee in October, although there may be other avenues available for the sidewalk projects identified in the Township Recreation Plan, the Committee should focus on other projects to include in MDNR grant applications.

a. "Township 80"—improved access & parking areas

Zoning Administrator Lane showed an aerial view of the "Township 80" property, and spoke about improving access to the property from Griffen Drive. He added that the Committee had discussed a parking area near the Griffen Drive trail head and improvement to the existing trail network on the property. Zoning Administrator Lane described how these improvements align with some of the goals and actions items within the Recreation Plan.

After some discussion, the Committee directed Zoning Administrator Lane to research grant options to approve access, add parking, improve trails, and maybe acquire property, in support of the “Township 80.”

b. Project Centennial—Township property discussion

Zoning Administrator Lane stated that the Township Board is moving forward with plans for a new township hall on property owned by the Township across Lake Street, and the latest site plan was included in the meeting packet. He added that some Township Board members think that a recreational component, that may include use of the current Township Hall building and other adjacent properties owned by the Township, should be considered as part of a larger community campus. Zoning Administrator Lane stated that such a recreational component is ideal for a grant application to the MDNR and is consistent with the Township Recreation Plan.

The Committee discussed the recreational component, and agreed that additional information should be considered by the Committee at future meetings. The discussion focused on: the possibility of a dog park and walking trails, picnic, playground, and pavilion areas, and opportunities for recreational programs that use the existing Township Hall building. Zoning Administrator Lane was tasked with researching these ideas and coming back with additional information.

6. Set date for next meeting

February 18, 2026

7. Public comments

Lisa Morris discussed previous recreational plans for the Township property, operation and maintenance of the existing Township Hall by a non-profit entity, and her ideas for the large barn on Township owned property.

8. Committee member Comments

None.

9. Adjourn

The Committee adjourned the meeting at 6:18 PM.

Submitted by: Ken Lane, Planning & Zoning Administrator