WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
BOARD MEETING
Tuesday March 24, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Supervisor Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

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

Absent: none

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda & additional items: Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Green seconded. All ayes.

Approve minutes of regular meeting February 10, 2026: Baker requested changing "*503c* to *501c3"* on page 2 of the mins along with clarification of Bakers' meeting with LTC regarding Township 80 meeting to "*meeting with Ed Murhpy regarding LTC Township 80 proposal*".
Green made the motion to approve the minutes with changes. Baker seconded. All ayes.

Visitors: Katie McGauley, Sally Olson, Joanne Murphy, Patrick O'Brien, Bill Brown, Lisa Morris, Israel Hernandez, Pat Lennon, John Gibbs, Alesandra Callavino, Kamron Bijeh-Apple, Tom Mough, Keith Hammond, Costis Skiadas, Robin Skiadas, Lee Ford, Constance Hicks, Shane Abe, Shannon Welsh, Garon Gopigian, Glenn Remus, John Fergus-Jean, Elizabeth Fergus-Jean, Karin Offield, Tim Kepford, Abigail Hackman, David Berryman, Kathy Cavanegh, Dick & Joanne Stewart, Cal Benjamin, Jeanne Benjamin, Fred Hackyl, Laurie Seltenright, Douglas Brown, Mackenzie Brown, Patrica Spaulding, Jill Jahn, Robin Couzens, Kris Neal, Renee McDuffee

Public Comments Supervisor Murphy reminded any speakers during public comment to keep their comments respectful and within the time limit. Renee McDuffee stated her objections to the hotel and that the "zoning specified amplified sound" is too vague and suggests it be changed to "no amplified sound." Glenn Remus discussed the proposal, the intensity of use, referred to ZO 604 and the five (5) conditions that were deemed satisfied were not discussed, he's not in favor of the project and asked that it be remanded back to Planning Commission. Fred Hackyl spoke in favor of the Otis noting the worthy charm, aesthetic value and how it will benefit the community. Mackenzie Brown said it has creative energy and will be a positive contribution to the community. Abigail Hackman understands the noise concern but wanted pointed out that it's no different than the noise coming from Birchwood Club House. Douglas Brown spoke in support of the Otis. Jill Jahn is in favor of the Otis noting that it will be a positive contribution to the area as well. Patrica Spaulding commented on the noise concern, noting it won't be every day, it isn't any different than the noise coming from Birchwood's Club House and appreciates the thoughtful nature of the Otis.

Review Correspondence not listed below: none.

Action Items:

a. Approve WTTS Board 2026-2027 Meeting Dates – Meeting dates for 2026-2027 will be: April 14, 2026, May 12, 2026, June 9, 2026, July 14, 2026, August 11, 2026, September 8, 2026, October 13, 2026, November 10, 2026, December 8, 2026 & January 12, 2027, February 9, 2027, and March 23, 2027. **Green made the motion to approve the WTTS Board 2026-2027 meeting dates. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.**

b. Approve 2026-2027 Burnham & Flowers FY WTTS Insurance Renewal – the Board discussed the annual renewal policy, the list of rates for the FY of 2026-2027 and Olson explained the slight increase. Baker asked if there were any things that could be removed to help reduce the cost. Green suggested the Township obtain quotes from other insurance companies. Olson will look into it for the next year. **Hollingsworth made the following motion:** "*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the West Traverse Township Board that the Supervisor be authorized to approve the Proposed FY 2026-2027 Township Insurance Proposal From Burnham & Flowers effective April 1, 2026, as presented."* **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

c. Approve West Traverse Township Master Plan – Zoning Administrator Lane presented the updated Master Plan detailing the Planning Commission's efforts and the public input received. Hollingsworth noted corrections to the sewage disposal system and the property count which Lane will correct. **Baker made the following motion**. *"NOW THEREFORE the West Traverse Township Board of Trustees hereby approves with corrections and adopts the 2026-2030 West Traverse Township Master Plan as submitted and amended at the public hearing, including all the text, charts, tables, maps and descriptive and other matter therein intended by the Planning Commission to form the complete Master Plan."* **Hollingsworth seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

d. Consider Special Use Request from the Otis – Lane presented the Planning Commissions' recommendation to approve the Otis' Special Use Permit with conditions and addressed points from letters submitted noting that all issues had been addressed. Israel Hernandez and Pat Lennon, Attorney for the Otis, discussed the Otis' history, current operations, and proposed expansion. The Board discussed the conditions imposed by the Planning Commission including noise restrictions and parking requirements. Hollingsworth noted her concerns about the amplified sound and stated she is inclined to represent the concerns of the Township residents that are opposed. Baker asked if there had been any complaints about the noise, Hernandez said there hadn't been any. Murphy complimented the PC on the excellent job with the project. Green pointed out that all the items are amendable in the future. Olson said there was a lot of thought put into the design and believes it meets the needs of the community.

Proposed: March 24, 2026
Accepted: May 12, 2026

Baker made the following motion. *"I, Stephanie Baker, based upon the recommendation of the Township Planning Commission, move to approve Case #3-2025, a site plan review and the expansion and enlargement of a legal non-conforming use by Special Use Permit, as submitted by Israel Hernandez, on behalf of JV North Shore Lodge LLC and the Otis Harbor Springs, for the property at 7291 S. Lakeshore Dr and 7707 S. Lakeshore Dr, tax parcel #24-16-15-09-100-031 and #24-16-09-100-032, as described and depicted in the submitted application materials, including the revised materials submitted on January 9, 2026, and the site plan dated November 18, 2025, the floor plan and elevation drawings by Michael Hsu, Architect, dated June 21, 2022, and the concept site plan dated January 9, 2026, because the applicable standards of the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance have been satisfied, subject to the following conditions: A) The number of parked vehicles at 7291 and 7707 S. Lakeshore shall not exceed 132. B) There shall a guest and event attendee limit of 300 people at any one time at 7291 and 7707 S. Lakeshore Dr. C) All required permits and approvals from all applicable regulatory agencies, including District Health Department #3,MDOT, and the Emmet County Building Department, shall be obtained and kept current by the applicants and a copy shall be provided to the Township and kept on file with the West Traverse Township Clerk. D) All outdoor activities and events shall commence no later than 7:00 a.m. and shall terminate no later than 9:00 p.m. All outdoor amplified sound shall commence no earlier than 12:00 p.m. and shall terminate no later than 9:00 p.m. E) All driveways and accessways on site shall be comprised of concrete. All parking spaces shall be comprised of the materials depicted and described in the concept site plan dated January 9, 2026, prepared by Michale Hsu, Architect. F) Landscaping and screening shall be provided as depicted in the concept site plan dated January 9, 2026, prepared by Michael Hsu, Architect, with additional landscaping for screening added along the rear property line of 7291 S. Lakeshore and continuing to the east property line of 7291 S. Lakeshore Dr. G) The detached cabins shall be used exclusively as hotel rooms, and shall be occupied and reserved in the same manner as rooms in the two other hotel buildings on the property. H) Day passes shall be limited to hotel guests for the first six (6) months after the issuance of certificates of occupancy by the Emmet County Building Department. I) Exterior lighting shall comply with the revised lighting details submitted by the applicants. J) the Planning Commission shall reevaluate this approval and these conditions within one (1) year of the issuance of certificates of occupancy by the Emmet County Building Department and determine if any negative effects have occurred. If no negative effects have occurred, the Planning Commission may extend this approval to a future date or indefinitely. No public hearing or further amendment of the Special Land Use permit is required for this review. K) The terms and conditions of this Special Use Permit shall be documented within a Special Use Permit agreement executed between the applicants and the Township before issuance of a zoning permit. The Township Board authorizes the Township Supervisor to sign such agreement on the Township's behalf."* **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Baker – yes, Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollingsworth – no, Olson – yes. Four (4) ayes, one (1) no.**

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e. <u>Approve WTTS Financial Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget</u> – The Township Board approved the WTTS Financial Fiscal Year Budget. The following resolutions were approved by the Board:
<u>Resolution to Amend the FY 2026-2026 Budget – March 24, 2026</u>. Motion by Olson – *"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township's FY 2025-2026 operating budget is hereby amending account, New Hall Consulting and Contract Services, GL 101-265-965.007 with an increase of $95,000.00: FROM $25,000.00 to $120,000.00."* **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**
<u>Resolution to adopt the West Traverse Township General Fund Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027</u>. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Traverse Township Board, that the General Fund draft budget dated March 24, 2026, be adopted for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, with no changes."*
Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.
<u>Resolution to approve Township Millage for Fiscal Year 2026-2027</u>. Motion by Baker – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Traverse Township Board, that the Township millage for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, be set at 1.40 mils, with .9751 not .90 mils designated for the Township General Fund and .4249 not .050 mils designated for the Road Fund with changes*." **Hollingsworth seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**
<u>Resolution to adopt the West Traverse Township Road Fund Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027. Motion by Hollingsworth</u> – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the West Traverse Township Board, that the Road Fund draft budget dated March 24, 2026, be adopted for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, with no changes*."
Seconded by Baker. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.
<u>Resolution to adopt the West Traverse Township Sewer Fund Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027.</u> Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Traverse Township Board, that the Sewer Fund draft budget dated March 24, 2026, be adopted for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, with no changes*."
Olson seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.

Resolution to adopt the West Traverse Township Water Fund Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Traverse Township Bord, that the Water Fund draft budget dated March 24, 2026, be adopted for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, with no changes."* **Baker seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to adopt the West Traverse Township Thorne Swift Preserve Fund Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027. Motion by Baker - "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Traverse Township Board, that the Thorne Swift Nature Preserve Fund draft budget dated March 24, 2026, be adopted for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, with no changes."* **Hollingsworth seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to approve the Thorne Swift Nature Preserve Millage for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the West Traverse Township Board, that the Thorne Swift Nature Preserve millage for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2027, be set at 0.2437 mils*." **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish West Traverse Township Supervisor's salary. Motion by Hollingsworth - "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the salary of the West Traverse Township Supervisor shall be increased approximately 2.7% from $23,159.00 to $23,784.29 effective April 1, 2026."* **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish West Traverse Township Clerk's salary. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the salary of the West Traverse Township Clerk shall be increased approximately 2.7% from $23,159.00 to $23,784.29 effective April 1, 2026."* **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish West Traverse Township Treasurer's salary. Motion by Baker – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the salary of the West Traverse Township Treasurer shall be increased approximately 2.7% from $23,159.00 to $23,784.29 effective April 1, 2026.*" **Olson seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish West Traverse Township Trustee's salary. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that he salary of the West Traverse Township Trustee's shall be increased approximately 2.7% from $6588.00 to $6765.87 effective April 1, 2026.*" **Baker seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish Thorne Swift Manager Keith Hammond's salary for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Motion by Hollingsworth- "*BE IT RESOLVED that Keith Hammonds salary shall be $44,000.00 for the Fiscal Year of April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027.*" **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish Secretary Amy Peters' Compensation for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Motion by Baker – "*BE IT RESOLVED that as of April 1, 2026, Amy Peters' hourly rate shall be increased by 4% from $21.00 to $21.84 per hour.*" **Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish Compensation for Appointed Positions for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the compensation for these positions, Board of Review, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals & Water Committee, be increased 20% for the Fiscal Year of April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027.*" **Baker seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

Resolution to Establish Election Inspector Compensation for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Motion by Hollingsworth – "*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that as of April 1, 2026, compensation for the Election Inspector Chair shall be $185.00 per session and Election Inspectors shall be $180.00 per session with sessions being 7.5 to 8 hours.*" **Baker seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

f. Resolution Authorizing Issuance of 2026 Capital Improvement Bonds – Green discussed the 2026 Capital Bonds Improvement Bonds paperwork, the competitive nature of the sale, how it is negotiated, summarized the disclosure, length of the term of the loan, what account requirements are needed from Hollingsworth for establishing the account, that the loan cannot exceed $2 million, the interest rate, that the successful bidder will get a "funding provided by" signage paid for by the financial institute, not the Township, and that the Board needs to approve signers for the paperwork. Olson inquired about the timeline for bids. **Hollingsworth made a motion to adopt the Resolution authorizing issuance of 2026 Capital Improvement Bonds limited tax general obligation as presented. Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes. The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted.**

g. METRO Act Right-of-Way Permit Application – Lane gave an overview of the METRO Act Right-of-Way (Metropolitan Extension Tele-Communications Right of Way), the permit process for Surf Internet to erect a cell tower on Hughston Rd, detailed the application, the fee, the need for Board approval and for the Supervisor to sign the agreement. **Hollingsworth made the motion to approve a Metro Act permit for Surf Internet and authorize the Township Supervisor to sign. Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
h. Project Centennial Updates – Olson provided an update on Project Centennial, noting the completion of the site plans, the upcoming interior design meeting and outlined the timeline. Olson requested a motion to approve the plans for the new Township Hall noting that if approved, it will be on the April Planning Commission agenda. **Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the Project Centennial new Township Hall site plan dated 3-13-26. Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Olson – yes, Baker – yes, Murphy – yes, Green – yes, Hollingsworth – yes. Five (5) ayes.**
i. Existing Township Hall Discussion – Olson reported that there is no new information regarding anyone acquiring the current Township Hall. Baker asked if it could be repurposed as a business. Leasing the building to non-profit organizations was discussed as well. Baker asked about the process required for leasing to an interested party. The Board agreed to explore proposals.
j. Big Barn Discussion – Murphy referenced Lisa Morris' letter to the Board regarding her offer to have the roof of the barn repaired at her cost. The Board expressed concerns about private citizens investing in Township assets and the need for a formal process for the two (2) barn's future. Olson stated that both barns were discovered to have creosote and so they cannot be burned. The Board agreed to seek estimates from barn restoration companies.
k. Township 80 Proposal for Little Traverse Conservancy – Baker informed the Board of the recent Conservancy meeting and the discussion regarding the sale of the Township 80. The Board considered the impact of a Park restriction on the Township 80's value and the need to follow a public bidding process after an appraisal is completed, should the Board decide to sell the property. Hollingsworth stated her concern about the presumption and timing of the selling the property at this time.

Reports & Updates

a. Clerk – Olson updated the Board on the May 5 election; there will be no early voting and ballots have been mailed. Olson also stated that he was able to get the Phase One Environmental Company to price match the other company and they will be out to assess the property after the snow is gone.
b. Treasurer – Hollingsworth presented her End of the Year report, explained how and where the money, brought in from taxes, are distributed and asked to have the following comment read into the minutes. "*Out of the $13 million collected from the Summer and Winter 2025 taxes, the Township receives $402K of which is distributed amongst various funds, operating costs, etc., and has $1.5 million dollars in savings*". Green complimented Hollingsworth on her diligence and hard work.

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Accepted: May 12, 2026

c. Planning Commission – Green reported on the March PC meeting where a Special Use Permit for Ann's Nest, an Assisted Living Community for Developmentally Delayed persons, was proposed and noted that the Polo Field had been re-scheduled to May's agenda.
d. Zoning Administrator – Provided in packet
e. Recreation/Thorne Swift Committee – The Recreation Committee met in February, discussed expanding the committee members to include members from other municipalities, they reviewed plans for potential new projects and will continue to work on the Recreation plan.
f. Supervisor – Murphy informed the Board members of a proposal from a cell tower company to lease property on Hughston Rd for a new tower. The Board agreed to review the proposed lease agreement.

Approve February payables & payroll – Green made the motion to approve the February payables & payroll. Hollingsworth seconded. All ayes.

Public Comments – Lisa Morris commented on the Capital Improvement Bonds. She also proposed that the money the Township receives from the METRO Act be used to bury power/cable lines as the overhead lines are a deterrent to individuals who would like to preserve historical homes by moving them to another property. Morris also touched on moving the new Township Hall to a different location so as to save the large Township parking lot for events where parking is needed. Garon Gopigian suggested ZA Lane speak with Chief Knight about how he negotiated the contract with Surf Internet and the right to use lines for the City of Harbor Springs.

Board comments – Members of the Township Board commented on what a great meeting it was.

Next Regular Meeting – The Board agreed to not hold an April Board meeting. **May 12, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. will be the next regular meeting.**

Adjourn – Murphy asked for a motion to adjourn the March 24, 2026, Township Board meeting. **Hollingsworth made the motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. Green seconded. Five (5) ayes**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Jay Olson, Clerk
Transcribed by: Amy Peters

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Accepted: May 12, 2026