

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
Thorne Swift/Parks & Recreation Committee
April 15, 2026 – 5:00 PM

1. Call to order

Chair Hammond called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: Hammond, Ford, Arbaugh, DeCamp

Absent: J. Baker, S. Baker, Mooradian, Corlew

Staff Present: None. Chair Hammond informed the Committee that Zoning Administrator Lane is unavailable to attend today's meeting.

Guests Present: Joseph Olson, Township Clerk, Lisa Morris

3. Approve minutes of: February 18, 2026.

Motion by Member Arbaugh, second by Member Ford, to approve the February 18, 2026, minutes as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Old Business

a. Recreation concept proposal—discussion

Chair Hammond suggested that discussion of the Beckett & Raeder proposal be postponed until Zoning Administrator Lane is in attendance. Member DeCamp agreed and suggested that this item be postponed until the next meeting.

b. "Township 80"—discussion

Member S. Baker had notified the Committee that she was unable to attend tonight's meeting. She had previously shared some information relating to the Little Traverse Conservancy purchasing the Township 80 to coincide with its acquisition of adjacent property.

Chair Hammond suggested that discussion on this agenda item be postponed until Member S. Baker is in attendance. The Recreation Committee agreed to postpone.

5. New Business

a. Playground discussion—Thorne Swift

Chair Hammond distributed two draft playground equipment designs to the Committee. He stated that he has been researching options to add playground equipment near the nature center building. He added that he is still collecting costs and design options, and he has been investigating insurance requirements and grant funding options.

Member DeCamp asked if the addition of playground equipment will require additional staff for supervision.

Chair Hammond responded that additional staff will not be needed because the proposed equipment is near the gate, and one staff member is always at the gate during operating hours.

Chair Hammond stated that he is sharing the playground equipment designs with the Committee to determine if the Committee believes he should continue investigating options.

Member DeCamp asked if Chair Hammond had received the support of the Township Board because ultimately the Township Board must approve any expenditure on this equipment.

Township Clerk Olson stated that Chair Hammond had informed the Township Board that he was researching playground equipment, so the Township Board is aware and did not ask him to stop his research.

Member Arbaugh asked if Chair Hammond has seen the proposed playground designs at other parks.

Chair Hammond responded that the playground equipment designs are unique, but so is Thorne Swift. He added that the equipment designs will match the people that commonly recreate at Thorne Swift.

Member DeCamp asked if the proposed playground equipment will require maintenance.

Chair Hammond responded that both designs have low maintenance requirements based on his research.

After some further discussion, the Recreation Committee agreed that Chair Hammond should continue his research and bring back updates when available.

6. Set date for next meeting

April 20, 2026

7. Public comments

Through use of the overhead projector, Lisa Morris presented proposed recreational improvements for the new Township Hall property and adjacent Township owned properties that included a dog park, athletic fields, multiple pavilions, and improved and unimproved trails.

Chair Hammond stated that due to liability issues, the Township will not be pursuing a dog park. He added that he does not envision multiple pavilions, but he said that one centralized pavilion is an option.

Member DeCamp stated that the budget will likely not allow paved trails, but maybe a crushed material could be considered.

Member Ford stated that she likes the park benches along the trails as depicted in the presentation.

After some further discussion, the Committee thanked Lisa Morris for her presentation.

8. Committee member Comments

Member DeCamp questioned whether any recreational improvements had to be constructed and completed consistent with the new Township Hall construction.

Township Clerk Olson stated that he will defer to the Zoning Administrator, but his understanding is that recreational improvements will be a separate project from the new Township Hall.

9. Adjourn

Motion by Member DeCamp, second by Member Arbaugh, to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

Submitted by: Ken Lane, Planning & Zoning Administrator

Proposed: April 16, 2026

Approved: June 17, 2026