

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
August 12, 2026

Chair Forster called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Hollerith, Remus, Thompson, Forster, Dohan, Green, Osetek

Absent: none

Visitors: Ed Taylor

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda as presented or with additions: Thompson motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Remus seconded. All aye.

Public Comment – none

Minutes: **Remus made the motion to approve the minutes of July 8, 2026, as presented. Osetek seconded. All aye.**

Unfinished Business:

a. Discussion – Data Center Moratorium Ordinance – Lane explained the draft Moratorium and noted it was drafted by the Township Attorney. Lane stated that the moratorium would pause applications or inquiries from Data Centers for one (1) year to allow for the Planning Commission to work on regulations and that a moratorium would be adopted in the same manner as an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Lane noted that if the Planning Commission was happy with the wording and duration of the moratorium, it would then go on to the County and then to the Township Board in October or November. Thompson asked for clarification on the duration of the moratorium with Lane stating it would be from the date the Township Board adopted it. Lane asked the Planning Commission if they were happy with the alternate language or if they would prefer to stay with the non-alternate language. Osetek agreed with the one-year duration. Dohan felt the standard language was too restrictive but is ok with it. After discussion, the Planning Commission agreed to use the alternate language, have Lane and the Township Attorney prepare the moratorium and schedule its approval for a Public Hearing meeting in September.

b. Discussion – Data Centers & Battery Storage Facilities – Lane provided studies from the Urban Land Institute and the University of Michigan noting each offered different perspectives regarding Data Centers with both highlighting concerns about energy/water usage, noise, and aesthetics. Thompson offered information about “Hyperscale Data Centers.” Hollerith suggested that Data Centers might be considered public utility facilities, which would require a separate definition or designation. Green inquired if there were any Data Centers or Battery Storage Facilities looking at Northern Michigan. Lane noted there were a few inquiries in areas such as Charlevoix and Hayes Townships. Thompson pointed out that Battery Storage Facilities

Proposed: 8-12-26

Approved: 9-9-26

require less grid dependency. Forster suggested having a moratorium in place for Battery Storage Facilities as well and wondered how Fire Departments would manage fires within those facilities. The Planning Commission agreed to focus on the Data Center Moratorium for now and revisit the Battery Storage Facility moratorium at a later date.

New Business:

- a. none

Other:

- a. Zoning Administrator Report – in packet
- b. Township Board Representative – Green updated the Planning Commission on the Bond bids for the new Township Hall noting that Huntington won the bid at 4.36% and that the construction agreement has been signed with construction scheduled to begin August 24, 2026. He also announced that there will be a Groundbreaking Ceremony in the parking lot on Monday August 24, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. Hollerith inquired about the future of the current Township Hall and if any plans were in place for it.
- c. Correspondence – none

Planning Commissioner Comments (open discussion) – Hollerith asked Lane about Beckett & Raeder's terminated contract with the City of Harbor Springs. Lane informed the Commissioners that Beckett & Raeder will stay on until a replacement is found. The Planning Commission discussed the potential for Data Centers in the Township and the importance of having regulations in place. Lane addressed a memo in the Commissioners packet from Emmet County Planning Commission regarding adoption of an amendment to the Township's Zoning Ordinance.

Public Comments – Ed Taylor asked Green about the low number of banks that bid on the Township Hall construction project with Green explaining it was likely due to the fifteen (15) year fixed rate nature of the bond. Taylor also questioned if there was a downside to having a moratorium in place for Data Centers and Battery Storage Facilities as well as asking if West Traverse Township is an attraction to these centers/facilities due to the availability of water, cooler temperatures, and the number of large parcels.

Next Meeting: Planning Commission next regular meeting will be held September 9, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: Forster asked for a motion to adjourn at 6:47 p.m. **Thompson made a motion to adjourn. Dohan seconded. All aye.**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Jim Osetek, Secretary

Transcribed by:
Amy Peters

Proposed: 8-12-26
Approved: 9-9-26