


Join the Founding Board

West Traverse Centennial Campus (WTCC)

Come Join Us: Preserving the Past, Building the Next Hundred Years.

One hundred and twenty-two years ago, West Traverse Township built the Historic Town Hall that became the heart of the community: township business, Grange meetings, dances on what many still call the best dance floor in Emmet County, weddings, birthdays, musical events, a farmers' market. Three hundred yards east, the Cook family ran a homestead and farm, and around 1910 built the barn that fed and milked their herd by hand. Today the Township is building a new Town Hall at the junction of M-119, the "Tunnel of Trees" Scenic Heritage Route, and Lake Road — restoring the 122-year-old Historic Town Hall, and preserving the Cook Family Barn, connected by a trail through the woods to a grassy glade, so that all three keep serving this community for a second century. That takes a founding board.

THE CAMPUS

New Town Hall *At the M-119 & Lake Road junction*	**Historic Town Hall** *122 years*	**Cook Family Barn** *circa 1910*
Already funded and under construction. Provides parking, the campus meeting place, and the trailhead for the walk to the Cook Family Barn.	Home of township business, the local Grange, dances, weddings, and a farmers market. Restored as a rentable meeting, dance, music, and event venue, with offices leased to WTCC for $10 a year.	A hand-built hay, feed, and milking barn on the Cook family's original 6-acre homestead. Self-guided, open to visitors during daylight hours, and linked by trail from the New Town Hall.

WHY A FOUNDING BOARD, WHY NOW

The Rotary Club of Petoskey's Centennial Grant Program can provide up to $277,000 toward this restoration, but it requires an established nonprofit partner to receive the funds and operate the campus going forward. The application is due November 1, 2026. We are working with the Township's legal counsel this fall to establish WTCC as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, and the Township Board has approved moving forward on the condition that it is self-supporting, with volunteer leadership carrying the work.

WHAT WE'RE ASKING

- **Founding board members** willing to help set up and govern a new nonprofit, roughly 5 to 9 people to start.
- **A mix of skills:** nonprofit governance or law, fundraising and grant writing, finance or treasury experience, historic preservation, event and rental operations, trades and facilities, and marketing or communications.
- **A shared commitment** to seeing the Hall and the Barn cared for and useful for the next hundred years, not just restored and left standing.

GET INVOLVED

Reach out to Karin Offield at karinoffield@icloud.com and cc the non-profit's new email westtraversecentennial@gmail.com to join the founding conversations. We're building the board and the nonprofit's founding documents now, ahead of the November 1 Rotary Centennial Grant deadline.