WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meeting held at East Bay Charter Township Hall
1965 North Three Mile Road, Traverse City, MI 49696
231-267-5141 Phone (Whitewater Township Hall)

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
Tuesday, September 9, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:
Supervisor Slopsema called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Wendy Hoeksema called Roll.

Present:
Supervisor Linda Slopsema
Clerk Wendy Hoeksema
Trustee Tim Arends
Trustee Randy Mielnik

A quorum was established.

Absent: Treasurer Jill Koester (unexcused)

ALSO PRESENT:
Recording Secretary Kay Held

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SET/ADJUST/APPROVE AGENDA: None.

Board Action:
Ms. Hoeksema made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.
VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Mike Jacobson:
Mr. Jacobson does not believe Whitewater Township should be compared to larger communities like Charlevoix and Petoskey with regard to STR's and the PC's ROS committee.

PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED SKEGEMOG POINT SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT (SAD):

Board Action:
Mr. Mielnik made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Ms. Hoeksema seconded the motion.
VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Note: The Public Hearing opened at 6:36 p.m.

State Dates of Pubic Hearing Notice Publication:
The Public Hearing was published in the Traverse City Record Eagle on August 21, 2025, and in the Elk Rapids News on both August 28th and September 4th, 2025.

State Purpose of Public Hearing:
Skegemog Point Road Special Assessment District (SAD)

Written Comments Received:
Correspondence was received from the Lenzini family, stating they opposed the SAD due to road speed increase impact.

Receive Public Comment: (attendees were asked to sign in)

Mr. Mark Taylor:
Mr. Taylor inquired about SAD funds per parcel. Based on an assumption of $2k per parcel, it appears there would be a surplus of funds collected based on the total number of parcels. He owns three parcels and doesn't believe it is fair to pay triple over what others may be paying. He explained his current taxes and asked the Board for an exception on the one parcel that generates minimal taxes.

Mr. Mike Jacobson:
He is against having the road paved due to excessive speed and witnessing accidents involving pedestrians and pets. He encouraged people to write their State Representatives. Cook Road residents are not being assessed for that new road. He doesn't believe Whitewater residents should all have to pay the same amount, but understands it is State law. He also questioned why it appears there is a surplus.

Mr. Bruce Brown:
Mr. Brown is concerned with high pedestrian and bike traffic on Skegemog Point Road. This road work needs to last a long time. He hasn't heard much about berms in the design discussion. He asked if there is pavement outside of the white line so that people don't have to walk in the lane of traffic.

Mr. Joe Butcko:
Mr. Butcko owns more than one parcel and he is not sure the assessment is fair. The road has not been maintained well and hopes there is improved future maintenance. The last half mile is in rough shape; he is uncertain about redoing the entire road to take care of that end of it. He inquired if Fairview Road residents are being assessed the same amount as they use all of Skegemog Pt Rd to access Fairview. He opposes the SAD without looking at other improvements that might be made to current road.

Via Zoom: None.

Board Action:
Ms. Slopsema made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Mr. Arends seconded the motion.
VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Note: The Public Hearing closed at 6:55 p.m.

BOARD DISCUSSION – SKEGEMOG POINT ROAD SPECIAL ASSESSMENT:
Supervisor Slopsema reported the current response to the SAD is 104 parcels (63%) in favor of the project. The number of parcels opposed is 20 (11%). There is a total of 167 parcels in the Special Assessment District. In order to move forward, at least 51% of total parcels need to be in support of SAD.

There was Board discussion regarding early data as compared to the current parcel figures. Supervisor Slopsema confirmed that any map errors were corrected with the Assessor and property owners were notified.

The SAD is estimated to be $248,000; $238,000 is for the project and $10,000 is for administrative costs, i.e., legal service parcel owner notifications, publishing, etc. The $238,000 engineering estimate will be bid out this fall, with a goal of starting construction next spring.

Road Commission Manager Dan Watkins reports that a speed study of Skegemog Point Rd has been requested of the Michigan State Police, but they have not provided an analysis yet.

In response to fairness inquiries, Supervisor Slopsema reported State law requires the assessment be calculated by parcel or road frontage. The Township attorney has evaluated the properties included in the SAD and agrees with the Road Commission and Michigan Township Association (MTA) who advise the SAD to be assessed per parcel. The assessment is not made based on the value of a property and will be distributed equally by parcel. Improvement to the road provides value to a parcel. Whitewater Township is not exempt from the SAD. There are no exempt properties in this assessment.

The Board reiterated the planned service to Skegemog Point Road. The first two miles will have the edges of the road repaired and there will be a crush and chip seal repair. The last mile will be completely ground with added material and paved. The Road Commission will re-chip seal the entire road the following year as part of the maintenance plan at no additional fee. The current width of the road will remain the same.

The Supervisor reported that Cook Road is not being assessed as part of the SAD as it is a significant through fare road; Skegemog Pt Road is a dead-end road beyond Lossie. Fairview and Drake Lane parcels are included in the SAD. A County parcel map is included in the SAD packet.

A required second Public Hearing will be held regarding this Special Assessment. Once a date is determined, parcel owners will be notified. State law mandates if the final estimate is more than 10% of the original estimate, another new Public Hearing is required. A hardship process is available, and deferred payment is determined on a financial basis. Mr. Arends noted $420k of the Township's budget is dedicated to roads. The Road Commission will be matching the Township's contribution to this project.

The Supervisor had discussion with Elmer's regarding the possibility of paying more than the standard assessment due to their heavy equipment use of the road; however, they declined. They will however bid on the project with the intention of submitting the lowest quote.

Supervisor Slopsema addressed safety concerns about pedestrians, bikes, etc. Paved shoulders would be ideal; however, unattainable financially. She reiterated discussion from the informational meeting held at Samels Farm with regard to trees. Some tree removal and canopy trimming is necessary to divert and mitigate water issues that would contribute to premature road failure.

RESOLUTIONS FOR SKEGEMOG POINT SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT (SAD):
Complete Project, Establish SAD:

Proposed Resolution #2025-16
Clerk Hoeksema read aloud proposed Resolution #2025-16 in its entirety.

Board Action:
Mr. Arends made a motion to adopt the Skegemog Point Special Assessment District (SAD), Resolution #2025-16, Act 188, Resolution 2 of 4, as presented. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Slopsema-Y, Mielnik-Y, Arends-Y, Hoeksema-Y. Motion carried.

Proposed Resolution #2025-17:
Trustee Arends read aloud proposed Resolution #2025-17 in its entirety.

Board Action:
Ms. Slopsema made a motion to adopt the Skegemog Point Special Assessment District (SAD), Resolution #2025-17, Act 188 Resolution 3 of 4, as presented to include a Public Hearing of Thursday, 10/9/25, at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Hoeksema seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Hoeksema-Y, Arends-Y, Mielnik-Y, Slopsema-Y. Motion carried.

Set Assessment Public Hearing:
There was Board consensus to schedule the required second Public Hearing related to the Skegemog Point Road Special Assessment District (SAD) during the Township Board Regular Meeting of Thursday, 10/9/25, at 6:30 p.m., to be held at the Township Hall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Township Special Board Meeting: **Thursday, 9/11/25, 6:30 p.m., Whitewater Township Hall**

Township Regular Board Meeting: **Thursday, 9/25/25, 9:00 a.m., Whitewater Township Hall**

Township Special Meeting – Civil Infraction Ordinance Public Hearing:
Tuesday, 9/30/25, 6:00 p.m., Mill Creek Academy

Township Regular Meeting with 2nd Public Hearing on the Skegemog Point Road Special Assessment (SAD):
Thursday, 10/9/25, 6:30 p.m., Whitewater Township Hall

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Mark Taylor:
Mr. Taylor noted regarding his 3 parcels that he even shares a driveway. He asks the Board if vacant land can be exempt from a SAD. He expressed frustration regarding heavy trucks that cause a great deal of damage, whom should take responsibility for how much they impact the road.

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Mr. Taylor asked for confirmation that this project is to the end of the point. He concluded that past estimates for repaving Skegemog Point Road were much higher and included more tree removal than in the current proposal. He believes this type of offer won't be seen again and supports it.

Supervisor Slopsema responded the original estimate did not include the final 391 feet however, the Road Commission will be including the furthest North portion of the road, or "to the point".

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:
Ms. Slopsema made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.
VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Submitted by: Kay Z. Held, Recording Secretary
Wendy Hoeksema, Clerk