APPROVED	**MINUTES Thursday, September 10, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.**
REGULAR MEETING	**Whitewater Township Board** 5777 Vinton Rd. Williamsburg, MI 49690
CALL TO ORDER	Supervisor Slopsema called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
ROLL CALL **Quorum established**	**Members present**: Supervisor Linda Slopsema, Clerk Wendy Hoeksema, Treasurer Sara Quigley, Trustee Tim Arends, Trustee Randy Mielnik. **Members absent**: None **Also present**: Recording Secretary Kay Held.
SET/APPROVE AGENDA	-Move discussion under "Land Division Ordinance-Review Attorney Input" (J2) after first Public Comment. -"Land Division Ordinance Review Attorney-Review Attorney Input" should read: "Land Division Ordinance-Review Attorney and Assessor Input" -Pull Treasurer Report from Consent Agenda Motion by Quigley, seconded by Mielnik, to approve the agenda as amended. VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. ***Motion carried.***
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	None.
PUBLIC COMMENT	Mr. J. Fitzgerald: Has asked the Board multiple times regarding the disposition of the censure of the Clerk for additional compensation with no response. There have been questions regarding Township costs whether it was forwarded to law enforcement. Mr. Arends noted a Point of Order clarifying the Clerk was not censured as spoken by Mr. Fitzgerald. Ms. R. Steelman: Commented on the PC's 9/9/26 meeting discussion about a potential referendum and special election with a cost of $20-30k. Taxpayers petitioning for a referendum are not requesting a special election, referencing MCL 125.342c and MCL 168.358a. The ZA and Clerk appear to be deflecting expenses onto others while not disclosing other expenses; i.e., costs related to Clerk compensation matter. Ms. H. Vollmuth: Disagrees with using other township Ordinances without looking at the balance of demographics. She would like a breakdown from the new Assessor of homestead vs. non-homestead properties. Baggs Road land division remains a problem; the Township attorney should be consulted. Acme Township has an Ordinance for a moratorium on data centers.
PUBLIC HEARING	None

LAND DIVISION ORDINANCE REVIEW-ATTORNEY AND ASSESSOR INPUT:	**Land Division Ordinance-Review Attorney and Assessor Input:** Attorney Catherine Kaufman, who works closely with Township Attorney Peter Wendling, discussed at length Public Act 58 of 2025 regarding changes to the State of Michigan's Land Division Ordinance. Final changes will take effect March 2027. She spoke at length about the Land Division Act, procedures, minimum lot sizes, the division of properties of 10 acres or less, development of parcels and results of parcel division. She also addressed numerous points in Assessor Beach's material and recommendations. Whitewater Township Assessor Michael Beach spoke to the Board, referencing his memo in the packet. He outlined concerns in the Land Division Act, assessment roll consequence, the separation of zoning from land division, depth-to-ratio and irregularly shaped parcels, buildability findings, tax and special assessment conditions, approvals creating parcels under one acre, approval disclaimers and application fees. Mr. Beach provided suggested remedies and reasonings to each of these matters. He also suggested that Ordinances should be linked. Ms. Kaufman emphasized the importance of a Township Ordinance to closely mirror state law. She has some concerns about Whitewater Township's current Ordinance. Ms. Kaufman would like to review Assessor Beach's analysis in more depth and provide the Board with a written review of her assessment and recommendations. There was extensive Board discussion with Ms. Kaufman. There was Board consensus this matter is a priority given the March, 2027, effective date of State changes.
REPORTS	
Planning Commission Report (Verbal – Mielnik):	The PC met on 9/9/26. They held discussion on STRs and the survey as well as a combination of a licensing mechanism, enforcement and requirements for a rezoning district. The draft Wineries and Cideries Ordinance was reviewed with Giffels Webster; a Public Hearing will be held at the PC's 10/7/26 Regular Meeting. The PC discussed the ZBA's proposed amendments to Article 20. This has had legal review. Key issues include review of Use Variances and the authorization of the ZBA to grant them. The PC discussed moratoria on data centers; PC Chair Stratton will be addressing this in tonight's meeting.

	He discussed amendments to Section 21.03 regarding which entity can approve or deny a zoning amendment; there are conflicts in the language. Verbiage will be reviewed with the attorney. The PC will move forward with Bundle #2 of the revision of the Zoning Ordinance. They will be collaborating with Giffels Webster. A Special Meeting will be held on Monday, 10/19/26 at 6:00 p.m. at the Township Hall.
Antrim County Drain Commissioner Report on Lake Levels & SAD:	Update in Meeting Packet.
Elections Update (Verbal – Hoeksema):	The Primary Election went well. Clerk Hoeksema attended a roundtable with local Clerks, the Attorney General and Department of State. There have been complaints about mailed ballots not being received; there is a proposal to add standardized barcoding on ballots for mailing purposes. She is preparing for the 11/3/26 election. Absentee ballots will be mailed by 9/24/26. Early voting will be held 10/24/26 through 11/1/26. She will be in the Township Hall on 10/31/26 for voter registration. The Attorney General, County Clerk and Township Attorney agree local election information should come from the local Clerk, not social media posts. She cautioned that third party organizations contacting the public regarding voter registration are not legitimate. Anyone being contacted should notify the Clerk. She asked Attorney Kaufman to speak about the local petition and process. Ms. Kaufman noted there has been a Notice of Intent to challenge a Zoning Ordinance Amendment and explained the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act process. Ms. Kaufman addressed Campaign Finance Act, specifying no Township resources may be used in advocating for or against a potential ballot issue. She discussed civil infraction violations, penalties and the goal of compliance over legal action. Clerk Hoeksema asked Ms. Kaufman to address security concerns and voter intimidation at the Primary Election. Ms. Kaufman discussed legal ramifications and a maintaining a fair polling site.
CORRESPONDENCE	Chadha-STR, Clark-speed, Fitzgerald-STR and Clerk, Rorhraff-zoning violations and Nolan-PO and CPA services. The Clerk reiterated a correspondence book is kept at the Clerk's office and is available for public viewing.
CONSENT CALENDAR	**Supervisor Report**: None. **Treasurer's Report:** Pulled from Consent Calendar.

	Trustee Report: None. **Fire / Emergency Services Report:** None. **Zoning Report**: In meeting packet. **Parks Report:** None. **MMR (Ambulance) Report:** In meeting packet. **GT County Sheriff Report:** In meeting packet. **PC Minutes:** https://www.whitewatertownshipmi.gov/planning-commission.html **ZBA Minutes:** https://www.whitewatertownshipmi.gov/zoning-board-of-appeals.html 9. **Minutes for Approval:** 8/11/26 Special Meeting and 8/13/26 Regular Meeting https://www.whitewatertownshipmi.gov/township-board-subcommittee-meeting-minutes.html **Bills for Approval:** Pulled from Consent Calendar. **Budget Amendments:** None. **Consideration of Deputy Clerk Wage:** In meeting packet. **Consideration of Deputy Treasurer Wage:** In meeting packet. **Revenue and Expenditure Report – July 31, 2026:** Pulled from Consent Calendar. Motion by Slopsema, seconded by Quigley, to approve the consent calendar as amended. VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. ***Motion carried.***
ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR Treasurer's Report Bills for Approval	Treasurer Quigley stated the Treasurer's Report in today's meeting packet was submitted by the former Treasurer. It has taken an extended amount of time for Ms. Quigley to gain access to bank accounts and subsequently has not been able to verify the content of the report. She will do so by the next meeting. It was clarified the expense for Bluewater Intelligence Website Chatbox is for a Zoning IOS web tool. Mr. Arends suggested holding payment for the 2nd half of the Greener Good invoice as there are issues with contract completion. There was Board discussion with consensus to hold payment at this time. Motion by Arends, seconded by Quigley, to approve the Bills Payable as amended.

Revenue and Expenditure Report – July 31, 2026	VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. ***Motion carried.*** Mr. Arends suggested permanently moving the "Revenue and Expense Report" to the "Reports" section of the Agenda, providing a dedicated heading to this topic. Supervisor Slopsema will do so moving forward. There was discussion regarding entries that need correcting; i.e., State revenue for heavy equipment and reversing Park entries for the Auditor's report. Budget Amendments will be needed for Audit, Accounting and Insurance expenditures. The Clerk will investigate whether an invoice was received for the second road brining application.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Approved under Consent Calendar
UNFINISHED BUSINESS **Any Parks and Rec Items**	None.
NEW BUSINESS **Private Road Ordinance Introduction (Mielnik):**	Memo in packet. The PC collaborated with Gourdie Fraser, a draft Private Road Ordinance has been prepared and was sent to the Board for legal review resulting in some edits. Mr. Mielnik will clarify points raised by Mr. Wendling and will provide additional information to the Board after the PC's next meeting. The Board agreed with Mr. Mielnik there is an increased sense of urgency given the upcoming State Land Division changes as explained by attorney Kaufman. There was additional discussion regarding complexities of private roads as well as road naming.
Consideration of Zoning Ordinance Amendment #2026-05 (Mielnik): (Amendments to Article 14 and Article 5 – information in packet)	Mr. Mielnik explained the contents of the proposed Amendments including the numerous included Exhibits with Findings of Fact clarifying whether something is a Special Use or not and removing administrative review related for major home occupations. The Board discussed requirements related to Home Occupations, Bed and Breakfast Establishments, Sexually Oriented Businesses and Commercial Campgrounds. The Amendment moves requirements from Article 13 to Article 5 to align with similar supplemental development standards and provisions. Text was added explaining that these standards apply whether permitted By Right or by Special Use approval. Motion by Slopsema, seconded by Mienik, that the Board finds based upon the Findings of Fact under Section 21.05 of the Zoning Ordinance and the recommendation from the Whitewater Township Planning Commission that Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZOA #2026-05 be adopted.

	ROLL CALL VOTE: Arends-Y, Mielnik-Y, Quigley-Y, Hoeksema-Y, Slopsema-Y. ***Motion carried.***
Consideration of Zoning Ordinance Amendment #2026-06 (Mielnik): (Repeal Article 6, Amend Articles 2 and 3 and Rezone 4 Parcels – information in packet)	Mr. Mielnik summarized the proposed Amendment's elimination of the COPUD District along M-72 and returning to conventional zoning of the four properties previously discussed. Motion by Mielnik, seconded by Hoeksema, that the Board finds based upon the Findings of Fact under Section 21.05 of the Zoning Ordinance and the recommendation from the Whitewater Township Planning Commission that Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZOA #2026-06 which repeals Article 6, amends Articles 2 and 3 and rezones Parcel ID 28-13-004-010-00 to N-1 Industrial, Parcel ID 28-13-004-001-01 to C-1 Commercial, Parcel ID 28-13-003-010-21 to C-1 Commercial and Parcel ID 28-13-003-010-02 to C-1 Commercial be adopted. ROLL CALL VOTE: Mielnik-Y, Quigley-Y, Arends-Y, Slopsema-Y, Hoeksema-Y. ***Motion carried.***
2026 L-4029 Tax Rate Request (Slopsema):	Supervisor Slopsema explained the annual L-4029 document, noting Ambulance renewal is absent from the form as it is on the upcoming ballot, and will be amended later. Motion by Slopsema, seconded by Quigley, to authorize the Clerk and Supervisor to sign the 2026 L4029 Tax Rate Request as presented. ROLL CALL VOTE: Hoeksema-Y, Mielnik-Y, Slopsema-Y, Arends-Y, Quigley-Y. ***Motion carried.***
Moratoria Ordinance Introduction (Mielnik/Stratton):	PC Chair Rene Stratton addressed the Board defining moratoria and passing a resolution for them to ensure the welfare and safety of the Township. She noted the essential elements of a moratorium. She explained a current concern is developing an Ordinance with a moratorium regarding data centers and creating a temporary pause for administrative review. MSUE suggests a new section in the Zoning Ordinance be added to Article 21 (Amendments of the Zoning Ordinance). The Township Board supported the Planning Commission advancing on this process, considering it a priority. Ms. Stratton responded the PC will do so in October with an objective of holding a Public Hearing in November.
Consideration of CPA Firm	

Purchase Order:	Supervisor Slopsema and Mr. Arends discussed the contract previously approved with Maner Costerisan and the need for additional funds to cover invoiced costs and anticipated services to wrap up the project. There was Board discussion whether a new PO is necessary or to continue under the existing contract for the remaining balance due. The Clerk prefers a new PO for the additional amount as policy states. Motion by Arends, seconded by Slopsema, to approve the Maner Costerisan invoice dated 8/10/26 in amount of $13,251.78. VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None ***Motion carried.*** There was further discussion about purchase orders as they relate to budget and audit.
TABLED ITEMS	None.
ANNOUNCEMENTS **Meetings** **Board Member Announcements**	Next Meeting: Thursday, September 24, 2026, 9:00 a.m., Whitewater Township Hall Mr. Arends spoke with former Treasurer Jill Koester who reiterated she remains available to answer any questions or assist with the new Treasurer's transition. Treasurer Quigley stated the last day to pay taxes is 9/14/26. As of 9/15/26 an automatic 1% penalty is applied to unpaid balances with an additional 1% penalty added each month thereafter on unpaid tax bills. The Treasurer will be in the office on 9/14/26 from 1-6 p.m. to personally receive payments or they may be placed in the exterior drop box.
PUBLIC COMMENT **(2nd)**	Ms. H. Vollmuth: A "PO" shows responsibility. A Private Road Ordinance protects residents of that road. She related problems she personally experienced regarding a private road. She filed a complaint with Parks and Recreation regarding damage on the posts at the boat launch and recommended cleats be added.
BOARD DISCUSSION	None.
ADJOURNMENT	Motion by Slopsema, seconded by Quigley, to adjourn the meeting. VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. ***Motion carried.*** Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.
Minutes submitted by: Kay Held, Recording Secretary	Wendy Hoeksema, Township Clerk Date