

WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Whitewater Township Hall, 5177 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, MI 49690
231-267-5141 Phone

REGULAR MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
Thursday, January 8, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL: Clerk Hoeksema called Roll.

Present:

Clerk Wendy Hoeksema
Treasurer Jill Koester
Trustee Randy Mielnik

A quorum was established.

Board Action:

Ms. Koester made a motion to nominate Clerk Hoeksema to chair the meeting in the absence of the Supervisor. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Absent:

Supervisor Linda Slopsema (excused)
Trustee Tim Arends (excused)

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ALSO PRESENT:

Recording Secretary Kay Held

SET/ADJUST/APPROVE AGENDA:

Add to New Business "Clarification of Sale Method for Previously Declared Surplus Equipment"

Add to Correspondence:

-Vollmuth: STR
-Beam: ZBA

Board Action:

Mr. Mielnik made a motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Ms. Koester seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

H. Vollmuth: Concerned about the postcard mailer she received regarding the STR Workshop, and that its function was not explained well. Zoom participation is allowed during this workshop but not at regular meetings and concerns of the logistics of holding it at the school.

PUBLIC HEARING: None.

REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS:

Resident Outreach Work Group (ROWG) Update / Short-term Rental Community Workshop – Mr. Mielnik:

Mr. Mielnik reported the ROWG Community Workshop on STRs will be held on Wednesday, 1/21/26, at Mill Creek Academy with two facilitators from MSU. There will be a presentation, Q&A, and group work. Zoom will be available for those unable

to attend or who are out of the area for the winter. The ROWG is establishing how Zoom participation will work. The structure of this workshop will be similar to the prior Master Plan workshop. Comments will be recorded, and results will be made available.

MMR Monthly Report – November, 2025: Report in packet.

CONSENT CALENDAR – Receive and File:

Correspondence:

R. Steelman - STRs
H. Vollmuth - STRs
V. Beam - ZBA

Minutes for Approval: December 11, 2025, Regular Meeting.

<https://www.whitewatertownshipmi.gov/township-board--subcommittee-meeting-minutes.html>

Bills for Approval – Ms. Hoeksema:

Board Action:

Ms. Koester made a motion to accept the Consent Calendar as presented. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.
VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Any Parks & Recreation Items: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Consideration of an Intern from CMU for the Whitewater Township Park/Campground 2026 Season – Chief Morgan:

Chief Morgan explained the two-semester, 30 credit-hour, CMU internship program and the intern's function at the Township Park and Campground. This intern would be considered a Park Ranger. Their role would support Lead Rangers in daily Park operations. Chief Morgan included a document outlining prospective capstone projects the intern might participate in.

There was Board discussion. Locally, the Nationally Cherry Festival and area wineries have utilized this CMU internship program. Typically, candidates are CMU seniors, providing the possibility of potential Park employees after graduation. It is at the Township's discretion whether this is a paid or unpaid internship.

Board Action:

Mr. Mielnik made a motion to approve authorizing the Fire Chief to submit the 2026 Whitewater Township Park internship opportunity to Central Michigan University. Ms. Koester seconded the motion.
VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Consideration of General Ordinance #64 – Non-Resident Cost Recovery and Related Fee Schedule – Chief Morgan:

Chief Morgan provided an explanation of this proposal, which is designed to recover costs for services to non-Township residents, non-resident entities and tax-exempt facilities that receive direct benefit from Whitewater Township Fire Department. This also ensures Township taxpayers are not subsidizing those costs.

Ordinance #64 coordinates with Ordinance #57 (Fire Prevention Ordinance) including fee schedule implementation, by Resolution, where appropriate. This is not revenue-generating and does not replace any millages or taxes. Chief Morgan explained some of the more minute details and examples of cost recovery instances. Whitewater Township is the only one in the County not using a cost recovery fee system. Mr. Mielnik inquired the amount of third party cost recovery fee; Chief Morgan stated there is a 22%/minimum \$600 recovery fee. One service's recovery rate is 90%. The majority of recovery costs are from insurance companies. Whitewater Township legal counsel has reviewed the proposed Ordinance.

Ordinance No 64:

Board Action:

Ms. Hoeksema made a motion to approve and adopt Ordinance No. 64, entitled "Whitewater Township Fire Department Cost Recovery Ordinance" as presented, and to direct the Township Clerk to publish the Ordinance as required by law. This Ordinance shall take effect upon the publication or twenty (20) days following its final adoption, in accordance with applicable Michigan law. Ms. Koester seconded the motion.

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

Resolution #2026-01:

Chief Morgan read aloud Ordinance #64.

Board Action:

Ms. Hoeksema made a motion to approve and adopt Resolution #2026-01 entitled "Emergency Services Fee Schedule" as presented, establishing the Whitewater Township Fire Department Cost Recovery Fee Schedule for applicable emergency services, and to direct the Township Clerk to publish or post the Resolution as required by law and Township practice. This Resolution shall take effect upon publication or twenty (20) days following its adoption, as permitted by Michigan law and Township policy. Ms. Koester seconded the motion.

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

Consideration of Acceptance of a Grant from the Elk Rapids Lions Club:

Ms. Vickie Emerson spoke with Elk Rapids Lions Club President Shirley Hill. Whitewater Township was awarded a \$2,500 grant for Whitewater Township Park. The Township was approved for \$200 more than was asked for. These funds will replace more than 50% of the Park's chairs at the water's edge, as they are falling apart. Lead Ranger Bartnicki also suggested the purchase of corn hole games.

Ms. Emerson noted that additional chairs are necessary; the higher the quantity purchased, the lower the price. Anyone in the community who would like to contribute to the purchase of additional chairs would be welcomed.

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Board Action:

Ms. Hoeksema made a motion to accept the grant of \$2,500 from the Elk Rapids Lions Club to the Whitewater Township Campground and that the Clerk's Office send a letter of appreciation to the Lions Club and Ms. Vickie Emerson. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Clerk Hoeksema will contact Ms. Hill to arrange for the grant presentation and photo.

Clarification of Sale Method for Previously Declared Surplus Equipment:

Chief Morgan referenced recent approvals for surplus; however, no specific method of sale or price was noted in the motion. Both are required by Township policy. Chief Morgan will have the air truck appraised to calculate an asking price as it is a unique piece of equipment, and there are no comparables on auction websites. Chief Morgan reiterated the purpose of the apparatus and that it is rarely used. There are more cost-effective methods for filling air bottles through in-house systems or agreements with area Fire Departments.

Kodiak 5500 Air Truck:

Board Action:

Mr. Mielnik made a motion to authorize the sale of the previously declared surplus 2006 Kodiak 5500 Air Truck with integrated cascade and compressor system either through a recognized public auction platform or by direct negotiated sale, at a price deemed to reflect fair market value, with final sale documentation returned to the Township Clerk. Ms. Hoeksema seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

Kubota RTV-900:

The Kubota RTV-900 was also declared surplus. He consulted with Ginops to evaluate resale prices of like years/models. Their recommendation was to sell the Kubota for \$10,500 or Best Offer. This is a 2004 model with very low hours.

Board Action:

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Whitewater Township Board Regular Meeting, 1-8-26

Mr. Mielnik made a motion to authorize the sale of the previously declared surplus Kubota RVT-900 by negotiated sale with a listing price of \$10,500 or best offer, based on market recommendation from Ginop Sales and Service, with final sale documentation returned to the Township Clerk. Ms. Koester seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

TABLED ITEMS: None.

BOARD COMMENTS / DISCUSSION:

Ms. Koester inquired about the mileage of the Fire Department Kodiak air truck; it has 25,108 miles as of 1/3/26.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

TOWNSHIP BOARD SPECIAL MEETING:

Tuesday, JANUARY 20, 2026, 7:00 p.m., Public Hearing, Parks & Recreation 5-Year Plan, Whitewater Township Hall.

RESIDENT OUTREACH WORK GROUP (ROWG):

Wednesday, JANUARY 21, 2026, 7:00 p.m., Short-term Rental Community Workshop, Mill Creek Academy.

TOWNSHIP BOARD REGULAR MEETING:

Thursday, JANUARY 22, 2026, 9:00 a.m., Township Hall.

Board Member Announcements: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

H. Vollmuth: She is concerned about accountability and leadership in the Township. Public meetings should utilize Zoom. She will be submitting FOIA requests for multiple items.

She previously wrote a complaint about the Treasurer, who paid a court-ordered Civil Infraction fine regarding a Short-term Rental. Ms. Vollmuth asked the Treasurer to consider another form of employment.

Ms. Vickie Emerson: With the 5-year Parks & Recreation Plan coming up for approval, she would like to discuss the poor condition of Park Road and the possibility of paving/maintenance of it. It is highly traveled road to the Campground and has multiple complaints from the users.

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

Ms. Hoeksema made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mielnik seconded the motion.

VOTE: YEAS: All. NAYES: None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Submitted by Kay Z. Held, Recording Secretary