

# **PENTWATER TOWNSHIP BOARD**

## **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

### **OFFICIAL MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 19, 2026, Pentwater Township Hall, Pentwater, Michigan  
*Conducted pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act (MCL 15.261 et seq.) and Robert's Rules of Order*

**OPEN MEETINGS ACT COMPLIANCE NOTICE:** *This meeting was duly noticed and held in compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261 et seq. A public notice of this meeting was posted at Pentwater Township Hall and on the township website not less than 18 hours before the meeting. The meeting was open to the public. Members of the public were provided an opportunity to address the Board during the Public Comment period.*

### **1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Supervisor Cavazos called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Trustee Mike Flynn led the Board and those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **2. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

| <b>Board Member</b> | <b>Title</b>        | <b>Present</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Lynne Cavazos       | Township Supervisor | Yes            |
| Maureen Murphy      | Township Clerk      | Yes            |
| Heather Douglas     | Township Treasurer  | Yes            |
| Dean Holub          | Trustee             | Yes            |
| Mike Flynn          | Trustee             | Yes            |

A quorum was present. Staff Present: Keith Edwards, Zoning Administrator & Deputy Supervisor; Glenn Beavis, Deputy Clerk (non-voting).

Others Present: Ian Rees, CPA (Gabridge & Company, via Zoom), Jonathan Hughart, Fire Chief; Greg Hopkins (appointee, West Michigan Fire & Rescue Authority); Janet McKeivitt (North Central Beach Association); David Leonard (North Central Beach Association); Fred Kooistra (North Central Beach Association, via Zoom); Tom Roose; David Spitler; Chris & Elise Baker; Holly & David Reynolds

### **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda included: minutes from the July 8, 2026 Regular Board Meeting; correspondence (Consumers Energy regarding tree/line maintenance; 2026 Oceana County Day of Caring; and a resident letter to be read later in the meeting); monthly budgets; bank reconciliation documents; and payment of bills.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To approve the Consent Agenda as presented                                      |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Douglas                                                                         |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Holub                                                                           |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Roll call: Douglas — Yes; Holub — Yes; Flynn — Yes; Cavazos — Yes; Murphy — Yes |
| <b>Result:</b>      | <b>APPROVED</b>                                                                 |

### **4. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

The meeting agenda was presented as prepared, with no amendments.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To approve the meeting agenda as presented |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Flynn                                      |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Murphy                                     |

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| <b>Vote:</b>   | Roll call: Flynn — Yes; Murphy — Yes; Douglas — Yes; Holub — Yes; Cavazos — Yes |
| <b>Result:</b> | <b>APPROVED</b>                                                                 |

## 5. PUBLIC COMMENT — AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Janet McKeivitt, 8711 North Perry (North Central Beach Association), spoke on behalf of the Association regarding a fire ordinance agenda item. She asked the Board to consider amending the ordinance to more specifically address elevated, oil-burning devices such as tiki torches near dune grass and wooded areas, citing a neighbor's use of such torches near a cottage and the associated fire risk.

## 6. SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

### 6-A. Longbridge Road Project

The Supervisor reported the project is nearly complete; all temporary stoplights have been removed. The only outstanding item is replacement of railing fittings on both sides of the bridge, which had to be reordered after the Road Commission deemed the first batch of materials unacceptable. She commended both the Road Commission and area residents for their cooperation during construction.

### 6-B. Transfer Station Free Day

The Supervisor reminded residents of the free disposal day at the transfer station on Saturday, August 22nd. Transfer Station Operator Bob has recommended one load per family; residents were encouraged to arrive early, as bins fill quickly.

### 6-C. Cemetery Events

The Supervisor announced upcoming cemetery events organized with Shannon Larson and the Friends of the Cemetery:

- Fall Tour — "America 250: From Revolution to Community" — Saturday, September 26, 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m., and Sunday, September 27, 1:00 p.m. Free event; donations accepted.
- Wreaths Across America — Friday, December 19, 2026. The cemetery has identified approximately 374 veterans' graves; wreath sponsorships are \$17 each.

### 6-D. Native American Burial Site Dedication

The Supervisor reported that Shannon Larson obtained a grant for a bronze marker dedicating the area in Block 4 where four identified Native American burials are located, including an infant and two individuals believed to have drowned in the Pentwater River. A dedication is planned for October 11. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk met with a fencing contractor (Straight Line Fencing) to obtain an estimate for site cleanup ahead of the dedication; estimates are pending.

## 7. CLERK'S REPORT

### 7-A. August 4, 2026 State Primary Election — Recap

The Clerk expressed appreciation to Deputy Clerk Glenn Beavis and all election inspectors for their work on the state primary election. Statistics reported:

- 1,555 registered voters.
- 894 voters cast ballots (55% turnout), compared with approximately 27% countywide and approximately 22% statewide.
- Of the 894 voters, 593 voted absentee and 21 took advantage of early in-person voting.

### 7-B. General Election — November 3, 2026

The Clerk reported that absentee voter ballot applications for the general election are being mailed (approximately 134 applications outstanding, separate from currently enrolled permanent absentee voters). The Township expects to receive absentee ballots from the county by approximately September 21, 2026.

## 8. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Douglas reported she attended a joint conference of the Association of Public Treasurers for the U.S. and Canada and the Michigan Municipal Treasurers Association in Grand Rapids. She

suggested the Township consider staff training on phishing and financial scams, noting she has begun discussing this with Deputy Supervisor Edwards. Summer taxes are due September 14, 2026; a penalty applies beginning September 15. The Treasurer distributed the updated cash summary report reflecting reconciled bank balances.

## **9. LIBRARY UPDATE**

No Library representative was present. The Supervisor noted, on behalf of the Library, that the library millage proposal passed.

## **10. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Monthly meeting agenda, minutes, and officers' report included in the Board packet. No substantive discussion held.

## **11. RECREATION REPORT**

No report received. The Supervisor noted the recreation program is now administered through Pentwater Schools and expects an update once the school year begins.

## **12. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **12-A. Zoning Administrator / Deputy Supervisor — Keith Edwards**

Report included in the Board packet. Zoning activity remains active for the season.

### **12-B. Township Assessor — Barbie Eaton**

No report submitted; the Board of Review was completed in July, and this period is the Assessor's off-season.

### **12-C. Cemetery Report**

Report included in the Board packet. Two cremains burials, two columbarium internments, four foundation sets and two gravesites were sold during the reporting period.

### **12-D. Transfer Station Report**

418 visitors for the reporting period, with continued strong participation from the Village.

## **13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **14. NEW BUSINESS**

### **New Business-A. FY2026 Audit Report — Gabridge & Company**

Ian Rees, CPA, of Gabridge & Company, presented the Township's FY2026 audit via Zoom screen share. He reported the Township received a clean (unmodified) opinion — the best opinion available. Financial highlights:

- Assets exceeded liabilities by approximately \$2.7 million; of that, approximately \$918,000 is unrestricted.
- Revenues were approximately \$1.4 million against expenses of approximately \$1.9 million, a net position decrease of about \$500,000, attributed primarily to the Library's separation from the Township during the fiscal year.
- Governmental fund balances totaled approximately \$1.4 million (a decrease of about \$418,000 from the prior year, also attributable to the Library separation). Approximately 56% (about \$800,000) is unassigned, entirely within the General Fund — equal to roughly 155% of annual General Fund expenditures.
- Sewer Fund: approximately \$115,000 in free cash flow; net position increased approximately \$203,000 for the year, aided by a settlement received from the Village. Mr. Rees cautioned the Sewer Fund is still operating at a loss and, at the current rate (~\$30,000/year), reserves would be exhausted in approximately five to six years; he recommended the Board monitor sewer rates and expenses going forward.

Trustee Holub asked about the absence of an audit recommendations letter; Mr. Rees confirmed there is a letter to the Board noting one finding related to routine material audit adjustments, which have since been made, with no significant findings.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To accept the FY2026 draft audit report from Gabridge & Company                 |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Douglas                                                                         |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Holub                                                                           |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Roll call: Douglas — Yes; Holub — Yes; Flynn — Yes; Cavazos — Yes; Murphy — Yes |
| <b>Result:</b>      | <b>APPROVED</b>                                                                 |

### **New Business-B. Great Lakes Energy — Metro Act Right-of-Way Permit Application**

The Clerk presented an application from Great Lakes Energy under the Metro Act (2002), which governs telecommunications providers' access to and use of local public rights-of-way, administered through the Michigan Public Service Commission. Upon legal counsel's review, two deficiencies were identified in the application: it did not include an anticipated construction schedule, and it did not identify other organizations or entities with an ownership interest in the applicant. Discussion noted the broadband infrastructure shown on the application's map has, in fact, already been installed (completed in late 2025 under a state grant the Board previously supported, covering Pentwater Township, Weir Township, Summit Township, and Riverton Township in Mason County), which explains the absence of a forward construction schedule.

The Board discussed the choice between a 5-year (unilateral) and 15-year (bilateral) permit term, and expressed a preference for the shorter 5-year term to allow more regular review. It was noted that the application itself may be administratively completed and approved by the Supervisor once the missing information is received, while the underlying right-of-way permit requires Board approval by resolution.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To approve the Great Lakes Energy Metro Act right-of-way permit (resolution), subject to Great Lakes Energy providing a list of related/affiliated entities and amending the application from the bilateral (15-year) form to the unilateral (5-year) form, per Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of the application |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Clerk Murphy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Treasurer Douglas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Roll call: Murphy — Yes ; Douglas — Yes; Holub — Yes; Flynn — Yes; Cavazos — Yes                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Result:</b>      | <b>APPROVED, subject to stated conditions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

### **New Business-C. Flock Safety Camera / License Plate Reader Update**

The Supervisor provided background: in spring 2025 the Township had agreed to participate, alongside the Oceana County Sheriff's Department, in a trial of automated license plate reader ("flock") cameras at two locations (Monroe/Longbridge and near the cemetery), separate from a related trial conducted independently by the Pentwater Village Police Department. As of the week of this meeting, the Oceana County Sheriff's Office announced it will not move forward with its planned countywide flock camera trial, citing lack of support among townships (of 16 townships, only Pentwater and one other township had agreed to participate). The Supervisor noted the Village's separate arrangement is unaffected by the County's decision and status there remains unclear.

A letter from a Township resident objecting to flock camera surveillance on privacy and Fourth Amendment grounds was read into the record by the Supervisor. The resident's letter cited concerns about accuracy and misuse of automated license plate reader data, referenced a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision addressing geofence warrants and location privacy, and urged the Board not to enter into any future contract for this technology.

No Board action was taken on this item, as the County's decision resolved the immediate matter. The Board discussed the possibility of consulting legal counsel about a local ordinance addressing use of this technology within the Township going forward.

### **New Business-D. West Michigan Fire & Rescue Authority — Update and Appointment of Representative**

Fire Chief Jonathan Hughart reported the Authority's intergovernmental agreement (IGA) documents are with legal counsel and were finalized the day of the meeting. Pentwater Village has voted to move forward with the Authority and has nominated a joint township/village representative.

The Supervisor explained that under the IGA, the Township and Village agreed to appoint one shared representative (rather than one from each entity separately) to avoid over-representation on the Authority board, consistent with legal counsel's advice that the Township, as the fiduciary agency, holds legal authority to make the appointment under Public Act 57. Greg Hopkins was recommended for this role. Mr. Hopkins, a Village resident since 2016, described his 34-year career as a career firefighter in Indianapolis, Indiana, including experience with a combination paid/volunteer township department, and expressed support for the Authority's goal of ensuring the firehouse is staffed.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To approve the appointment of Greg Hopkins as the Township/Village representative to the West Michigan Fire & Rescue Authority Board |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Holub                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Douglas                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Voice vote — Aye [all in favor]; no nays recorded                                                                                    |
| <b>Result:</b>      | <b>APPROVED</b>                                                                                                                      |

### **New Business-E. Data Centers and Battery Energy Storage Systems — Possible Moratorium**

The Supervisor opened discussion on whether the Township should adopt a temporary moratorium on data centers and associated battery storage facilities, similar to actions taken by other Michigan municipalities (e.g., Marquette Township) while communities assess impacts such as water use, energy demand, and effects on housing and energy prices. Legal counsel has suggested a 6-month moratorium, extendable to one year, as a starting point. The Board discussed that while Pentwater Township has limited vacant land suited to such development, a moratorium would still allow time to evaluate the issue, particularly given experiences in less-regulated neighboring townships (e.g., Leavitt Township / Walkerville area). It was noted that any such action should come from legal counsel as a specific resolution clearly stating its purpose and scope, and that a zoning ordinance amendment (requiring Planning Commission review and a public hearing) is a different, longer process than a general ordinance.

No Board action was taken; the Supervisor and Treasurer will continue working with legal counsel on this issue.

### **New Business-F. North Central Beach Association — Request to Clarify Fire/Burning Ordinance**

The Supervisor read into the record a letter from the North Central Beach Association (NCBA) requesting that the Township's 1999 fire ordinance be amended to more specifically prohibit freestanding or staked open-flame devices, including tiki torches, on beaches, dunes, and in wooded areas due to fire danger. The letter noted the Association's membership voted unanimously at its July 25, 2026 annual meeting to raise this concern, referenced a July 3rd incident involving lit tiki torches near dune grass adjoining a cottage, and cited Michigan DNR and state park rules restricting open flames to contained fire rings.

David Leonard, NCBA board member, spoke in support of the request, describing dune grass fire risk in the limited-access dune community and referencing guidance from the Mason-Oceana 911 Limited Access Dune Community Forum and the national Firewise program. Fire Chief Jonathan Hughart recommended the Board have legal counsel review the 1999 ordinance to add specific definitions of "open flame" and to add an administration/enforcement section, rather than relying on general nuisance language.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To refer the Township's fire/burning ordinance to legal counsel for review and to research the Firewise Communities program |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Holub                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Douglas                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Roll call: Holub — Yes; Douglas — Yes; Murphy — Yes ; Flynn — Yes; Cavazos — Yes                                            |

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|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Result:</b> | <b>APPROVED</b> |
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### **New Business-G. Township Website — Selection of New Vendor**

Trustee Holub reported the Township's current website vendor is retiring. Based on a recommendation from the Township's current webmaster, two public-sector website vendors were identified: Civic Clarity and Revize. Discussion emphasized the Township's priorities of migrating existing content (rather than a full rebuild), retaining in-house editing ability, and prioritizing ADA/accessibility compliance, for which the Township has an extension to April 2028.

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| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To have Trustee Holub contact Civic Clarity and ReViZe and arrange a virtual workshop with the Board to evaluate both companies |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Cavazos                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Douglas                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Voice vote — Aye [all in favor]; no nays recorded                                                                               |
| <b>Result:</b>      | <b>APPROVED</b>                                                                                                                 |

### **15. OTHER ITEMS — BOARD MEMBERS**

None raised.

### **16. PUBLIC COMMENT — GENERAL (ANY TOPIC)**

Jonathan Hughart, Fire Chief, clarified the rationale for the single joint Township/Village representative appointment to the West Michigan Fire & Rescue Authority (see New Business-D), confirming legal counsel's advice that the Village is not itself a fiduciary agency under the Authority's intergovernmental agreement.

Tom Roose commented on concerns about a data center being constructed near his son's property in Fowlerville, citing noise and property value impacts, and referenced connections between such facilities and license plate reader camera networks.

David Spitler reported that the Oceana County Planning Commission did not meet this cycle due to election-related scheduling conflicts and expects to resume meeting in September. Supervisor Cavazos noted the County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority is currently without funding and is meeting approximately once per quarter; he highlighted the newly completed Walker Hill Market, a former brownfield project site, as a recent success.

### **17. ADJOURNMENT**

|                     |                                                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MOTION:</b>      | To adjourn the meeting                            |
| <b>Moved by:</b>    | Flynn                                             |
| <b>Seconded by:</b> | Douglas                                           |
| <b>Vote:</b>        | Voice vote — Aye [all in favor]; no nays recorded |
| <b>Result:</b>      | <b>MEETING ADJOURNED</b>                          |

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

### **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes the official minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Pentwater Township Board of Trustees held on August 19, 2026, recorded pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261 et seq.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Township Clerk, Pentwater Township

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date