

APPROVED MINUTES
PINE TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Drews, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer.

PRESENT: William Drews, Supervisor; Marla Sprague, Clerk; Misty VanGessel, Treasurer; Darcy Krause, Trustee;
Rodney Palmer, Trustee

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Julie Drews, Deputy Supervisor; Barbara Kaaikala, Deputy Clerk; Steve Buchholz, Zoning
Administrator

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Drews requested the addition of Public Safety/Fire Funds to the agenda.

VanGessel moved, supported by Krause, to approve the amended agenda.

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Judy Graham requested that October regular board meeting minutes be placed on the township website. She
requested updates be given on the billboard structure and the Phillips property during the Zoning Administrator
report.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 10, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

VanGessel moved, supported by Krause, to approve the minutes as written.

MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS

• **Treasurer/Financial Reports/Bank Update (on file)**

Treasurer report was provided. Six online payments have been processed.

Sprague moved, supported by Krause, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

• **Zoning Administrator Report – Steve Buchholz, Zoning Administrator**

One zoning permit was issued and no land division applications in November. Payment will be turned in with
December receipts.

Second violation letter was sent to owner of cabin (Lichtman). Third violation letter was sent to Gordon Cross.
Construction has ceased on the billboard structure. Buchholz will follow up to have the structure removed.

Mr. Derek Korber reports Phillips fence is set 6 feet into the right of way that is the driveway to Korber's
property. Consumers Power set poles into the right of way, and a snowplow has pushed snow into the right of
way, all of which block access to his residence. This is private property. Korber is requesting signage to resolve
the issue.

VanGessel moved, supported by Palmer, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Road Report – Bill Drews, Township Supervisor**

Drews and Palmer met with the county road commission representative. The amount of matching funds that will be available from the State is not yet known.

VanGessel moved, supported by Krause, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Fire District Report – Bill Drews, Township Supervisor**

16 runs in November, 4 being in Pine Township.

Drews reported on training and financial decisions made at the recent meeting.

VanGessel moved, supported Sprague, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Cemetery Report – Marla Sprague, Township Clerk**

No burials in either cemetery due to weather. Cemeteries have been winterized. Stump grinding was done in Riverside to remove encroachment. Sprague still attempting to schedule meeting with Montcalm Township clerk to view cemetery software.

VanGessel moved, supported by Palmer, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Library Board Report – Deanna Riggleman, Tamarack District Library Director**

Riggleman reported on updates to the building and grounds, programming and circulation, and the library website. The library is a member of the Lakeland Library Cooperative and to MEL (statewide), providing access to books from many other libraries, as well as ebooks from 14 library partners. A bookmobile is expected to be operating by the second quarter of 2026 and will travel a regular route to township halls and assisted living centers throughout the district every three weeks.

VanGessel moved, supported by Palmer, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Supervisor Report – Bill Drews**

Was contacted regarding a property line dispute/setback issue.

Will seek a refuse service quote from a new Pine Township business to compare with the cost of current service.

There has been an EGLE violation on Youngman Road

Drews and Sprague attended a 3-hour training led by attorney Leslie Abdo at a cost of \$500.00 for a seminar on the Planning Commission and ZBA training.

Will meet with West Shore Services on Tuesday January 13, 2026 at 10:30 AM regarding the tornado siren. The public is invited to the meeting.

VanGessel moved, supported by Krause, to approve the report

MOTION CARRIED

- **Clerk Report – Marla Sprague**

A resolution placing fire millage renewal on the ballot of the first election to be held in 2026 will be voted on at the January 12, 2026 board meeting.

The local chapter MTA meeting will be tomorrow night and will have road commission update and election of officers.

During the first quarter of 2026 the board will move forward with making the township website ADA compliant.

VanGessel moved, supported by Palmer, to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Planning Commission Update – Darcy Krause**

Next meeting January 12, 2026 at 5:00 P.M. The firm that assisted Cato Township with their Master Plan has been contacted regarding potential survey questions and cost. Finalizing the noise ordinance and other ordinances that have been updated will be scheduled.

VanGessel moved, supported by Palmer to approve the report.

MOTION CARRIED

- **Lot 1 Birch Landing Attorney Report** - Attorney Tim Orlebeek has not yet completed the deeds.

- **Blight Ordinance Enforcement Decision**

Drews presented his findings that the Montcalm County Sheriff's Department will enforce violations of the Montcalm County blight ordinance and presented attorney options for representing Pine Township in court.

Drews has also spoken with Brian Bloomstrom, Montcalm Twp. Supervisor, about them hiring an outside enforcement person from the Village of Stanton and how their contract was written. Drews has also spoken with Darren Dood, Lakeview Village Manager, about ordinance enforcement and he has stated the need for "policing powers" being stipulated in any contract.

- **LEGAL FIRM CONDUCTING COMMUNICATION AND REPRESENTATION IN COURT**

Bill has talked with Tom ~~Christensen~~ Christian (corrected 1-12-26) from Dickinson/Wright and is confident in his approach dealing with blight issues.

VanGessel moved, supported by Krause, to hire Dickinson Wright attorney Tom ~~Christensen~~ Christian (corrected 1/12/26) to represent the Township with blight ordinance enforcement. MOTION CARRIED

Discussion in how any other ordinances are enforced, and it was decided to table that discussion until next month.

NEW BUSINESS

- **PUBLIC SAFETY FIRE FUND**

The District Fire Department informed Drews that a 2022 law created a Public Safety Fire Fund and that moneys were distributed to municipalities that were intended to be placed in fire or public safety accounts. Sprague will check with the township auditor to learn whether these monies can be used toward the tornado siren for the township.

VanGessel moved, supported by Drews, to table to the January 12, 2026 board meeting a decision on the use of the funds. MOTION CARRIED

- **FIRE DISTRICT AGREEMENT**

Drews presented the Fire District agreement that is up for renewal. The agreement as revised by Leslie Abdoo was accepted as the final agreement.

Vangessel moved, supported by Palmer, to accept the fire district agreement. MOTION CARRIED

PAYMENT OF MONTHLY BILLS

VanGessel moved, supported by Palmer, to pay checks 4348 – 4381 for monthly bills in the amount of \$16,951.61. MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT

James Hohler will seek further options for making the township website ADA compliant.

Judy Graham sought followup on the Phillips blight issue. Drews read the recent court order and enforcement was discussed.

Randy Robson commented on the difficulty of ordinance enforcement.

BOARD FINAL COMMENTS

Palmer requested a vote be taking at the January meeting whether to conduct an attorney-led workshop on ordinance enforcement.

ADJOURNMENT

Palmer moved, supported by VanGessel, to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 PM.

MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Sprague
Pine Township Clerk

Minutes typed by Barbara Kaaikala