

# **EDWARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING**

**April 13, 2026 7:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Rob Kowalski, Clerk Korey Kripli, Treasurer Eileen Fournier, Trustee George Bodin, and Trustee Dan Zettel .

**ATTENDANCE:** County Commissioner Mark Surbrook, Zoning Administrator Bob Clayton, Deputy Treasurer Sydney Lademan (absent), and Deputy Clerk Kim Glasser (absent). Several residents of Edwards Township.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 9, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes and March 9, 2026 Budget Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Robert Kowalski to approve the March 9, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Robert Kowalski to approve the March 9, 2026 Budget Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

## **ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

Motion by Korey Kripli, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve the agenda with the addition of 6A Zoning Concerns. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA: N/A**

## **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR:**

Bob Clayton had zero permits and fielded some inquiries for upcoming building projects. There is a future court date for the house on M-30. The Amish want to build another school.

## **ZONING CONCERNS:**

Dan Zettel spoke to residents about concerns he had about his property value assessment increasing at his farm and about the current assessor situation with Edwards Township. Dan stated that his property value assessment had increased dramatically while other farmers in the area had seen lower assessments.

The Michigan Department of Agriculture was at Dan's farm with inspections regarding his water wells which have been USDA inspected since 2017. They have concerns about Dan's septic systems at Dan's house which is  $\frac{3}{8}$  of a mile from his cidery. Dennis Stephens provided Dan with the septic system permits from when it was installed in 2003. The well site was approved and now the MDA is saying that Dan's well is 60 feet from his septic tank and it needs to be 70 feet which means he will need to either drill a new well or move his septic tank. He paid the health department for a permit and they approved it. Dan was concerned why he is being targeted by DHHS all of a sudden and they are trying to ex post facto rezone him from agriculture to commercial. The meeting minutes from January 2026 were presented. In the minutes, it states that Rob Kowalski wanted to discuss The Cellars that Dan Zettel owns and if it is zoned properly. It is zoned Agriculture, but Rob asked the Planning Committee if it should be re-zoned as commercial. Rob stated that Zac Van Wormer told him about a lawsuit that was similar to Dan's situation where the person was serving what he had as Agriculture in a building atmosphere. The lawsuit went against them and anybody zoned Agriculture having a store or restaurant would lose that zoning. Rob asked Zac if that was going to affect Edwards Township and if we will be rezoned. Dan stated he had a \$105,000 increase in his property value assessment and that the health department could not explain to him why they were out at his farm. Dan's farm is inspected by USDA yearly. Dan brought up the issues at Tee Lake and stated how the health department did nothing about that situation, but the health department went through his house to check on every sink and faucet. Rob was at Dan's house with Dale Sheltroun during this investigation and brought up the situation with Tee Lake and how the health department did nothing. The health department stated that one of their workers went out to Tee Lake and investigated. Rob stated that was a lie because there was no report of an investigation and the residents never mentioned that a person from the health department came out to look at the issue with Tee Lake. Rob stated that the health department admitted they classified the septic system wrong assuming it was for the house. Dan said that he paid the permits and on the permits it states "apple building" where he has been storing and selling apples out of that specific building for 15 years. Rob said he doesn't understand how the health department approved it and now they are saying that it is no good even though they approved it. Dale Sheltroun stated that since Edwards Township does their own zoning, the health department cannot reclassify Dan's farm to commercial.

Larry Kartes asked if there were any building changes at Dan's farm due to his high tax assessment. Dan said the only change that he had made was putting up an old barn that he had rebuilt.

No new construction was on his property value assessment because Zac did not submit any new construction for his property among others. The only thing on Dan's property value assessment is "Market Adjustment". Rob stated that the Market Adjustment will be reassessed by the new assessor and it will not be the final property value assessment.

### **SEXTON REPORT:**

Mike sold two lots. Spring Cleanup will be done by the end of the week. Rob stated new cameras will be installed at the cemetery and new trash cans will be installed and chained to the trees. Mike suggested renting a porta john for the cemetery in the Summer months after what he had found in the cemetery. Rob said that he hopes with the new cameras being installed that the trash will be minuscule and other ordinance infractions will stop.

### **COUNTY COMMISSIONER:**

Mark Surbrook stated the county is establishing a capital improvement plan. County Administrator interviews have been finished. A person has been hired and will start on April 20th. Mark stated there will be five millages over the next two elections which involve MSU Extension, Animal Control, Ogemaw County Transit, Ogemaw County Road Commission, and the Northern Michigan Children's Assessment Center. An electrical upgrade is happening at the RV Park. The Game Refuge is now open. There will be a new Veteran's Park on 8th street across from the annex building. They are currently fundraising. The County Building is looking for additional security staff and interested parties should apply.

### **LIBRARY UPDATE:**

Korey Kripli stated that the West Branch Library is currently looking for a new Library Director and interested parties should apply.

### **PLANNING UPDATE:**

Larry Kartes talked about DTE and possibly installing natural gas more in Edwards Township. Kevin White suggested putting out a survey to see what people in the township would like the Planning Committee to do. Rick

Stillwagon stated about the possibility of handing out surveys outside during the next election.

### **TREASURER REPORT:**

Eileen Fournier presented the Treasurer's Report. Motion by Dan Zettel, supported by George Bodin to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

Motion by Dan Zettel, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve bills with Payroll Checks 10,377 - 10,392 and Payable Checks 7662 - 7682 excluding check #7665 to MVW & Associates. Total is \$21,313.10.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y Bodin Y Zettel Y

Motion approved.

Eileen Fournier stated that she would like to table the check to MVW & Associates until the next board meeting. Eileen wanted MVW & Associates to provide a contract for their services and was concerned with the lack of field work in the township.

Roll Call: Kripli Y Fournier Y Kowalski Y Zettel A Bodin Y

Motion carried.

Dennis Stephens stated that as of 2012-2013 there was never a contract in his possession from MVW & Associates.

### **HALL DEPOSIT RETURNS:**

There were two hall returns for Amy Miller (\$100) and Tony Belinder (\$200) for a total of \$300. Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Korey Kripli to approve the hall returns for a total of \$300.

Motion carried.

### **MVW & ASSOCIATES:**

This was covered in the Approval of Bills.

### **OGEMAW QUARTERLY PRE:**

Quarterly PRE bill from Ogemaw County totalled \$50.62 for January 2026 to March 2026.

### **MTA BOR BOOKS:**

BOR Guide Books were purchased through MTA for a total of \$224.40.

### **AF GROUP:**

The township paid AF Group originally and the company did their audit on Edwards Township. They raised the fee due to including 1099 businesses the township contracts as part of our workman's compensation. The premium is now \$652.

### **ATTORNEY/COURT/CELL TOWER:**

The township received a complaint from Brandon Zimmerman about the new cell tower. Apparently lower red lights have been installed and they were flashing in his window at night. This was not discussed in our special use permit. Bob Clayton reached out to the tower company and said that regulations have changed and they needed to install lower lights. The township attorney says that this cannot be done and they are looking at the next steps for this situation.

### **BANNING ELECTRIC:**

The Generac generator was ordered during the pandemic and was installed in 2023. It has not been working right since it was installed. The red light is always flashing and the last time the power went out Rob Kowalski stated that the generator was not working. Rob is currently waiting on information from Banning and Generac to correct this problem.

### **J RAYMOND ELECTRIC:**

The light timer for the flag in the front of the township hall was not working. J Raymond charged the township \$400 to fix the timer. Rob Kowalski was confused about the warranty on the timer. J Raymond stated that there is a 90 day warranty on the labor and a year warranty on the part. Rob was not happy with this situation and is not sure if the township will use J Raymond Electric anymore for electrical work.

### **CLEAN CUT FENCE:**

There were two broken 4x4 wooden posts and Clean Cut Lawn Care fixed the fence for a total of \$504.31.

### **CLEAN CUT SPRING CLEANUP:**

The Spring Cemetery Cleanup was done by Clean Cut Lawn Care for a total of \$1,500.

### **SCOTT SIMMONS:**

Scott Simmons was not paid from last month. He had two snow plows at the hall and one at the cemetery in February. Total for the bill was \$300.

### **PROPANE:**

The last propane fill for the township hall from Webster Garner was for a total of \$725.07. This should last the township hall for the Summer and the township has saved \$485 since switching our propane company to Webster Garner.

### **STEPHENSON LETTER:**

Stephenson & Co. sent over a letter of engagement for the F-65. Rob Kowalski will sign it and send it back to Stephenson & Co in order to start the process for the F-65. The base price is \$2,000 as long as the information is correct.

### **ROAD COMMISSION BRINE:**

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Dan Zettel to approve \$0.27 per gallon for a double pass application for brine from the Ogemaw County Road Commission.

Roll Call: Fournier Y Kripli Y Kowalski Y Zettel Y Bodin Y

Motion carried.

### **ROAD COMMISSION UPGRADE:**

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Dan Zettel to approve of the Road Upgrade Agreement for Debby Lane, Windie Drive, and Vicki Drive at an estimated cost of \$13,370.30 from the Ogemaw County Road Commission as a Special Assessment.

Roll Call: Kripli Y Fournier Y Bodin Y Zettel Y Kowalski Y

Motion carried.

### **ROAD COMMISSION MAINTENANCE:**

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by George Bodin to approve of the Road Maintenance Agreement for Debby Lane, Windie Drive, and Vicki Drive from the Ogemaw County Road Commission.

Motion carried.

### **SCRAP TIRE GRANT:**

Rob Kowalski presented the idea for the Scrap Tire Grant at Edwards Township. Rob has applied for this \$3,000 grant that pays for one semi-trailer for Edwards Township residents to discard their tires. Passenger tires would be \$1, tires with a rim would be \$2, light truck tires would be \$3, and heavy truck and tractor tires would be \$5. This money comes to the township and in the past has donated the money to Shop With a Cop. Tentative date would be in September if Edwards Township receives the grant and this event would be only for residents that live in Edwards Township.

### **OGEMAW TOWNSHIP/HORSE SIGNS:**

Rob Kowalski stated that the horse signs for Brewer and Green Roads are \$275 per sign. Rob would like to purchase three signs for a total of \$825. The signs would be located on Brewer Road, North side of Green Road, and on the South side of Green Road. Rob stated that we had to get permission from Ogemaw Township in order to install a sign on the road sides that Edwards Township shares with Ogemaw Township. Rob provided a letter from Ogemaw Township Supervisor, Bruce Tyree. This letter gives permission for the signs to be installed.

Motion by Korey Kripli, supported by Eileen Fournier to purchase three horse caution signs for a total of \$825.

Roll Call: Kripli Y Bodin Y Fournier Y Kowalski Y Zettel Y

Motion carried.

### **UP NORTH VOICE BIDS:**

Korey Kripli stated that the Up North Voice had asked the township if we wanted to have our bids posted in their newspaper. Kripli stated that we don't post many things anymore in the paper now that we post on the township website.

Also, he was concerned that this particular paper does not post on a weekly basis. Currently the township uses the Ogemaw Herald when posting Ordinances and Resolutions.

### **UP NORTH SECURITY QUOTE:**

Rob Kowalski stated that the plan is to move the absentee voter box to the East side of the township hall. Currently, our security camera does not have a zoom feature. Rob reached out to Up North Security and received a quote for a zoom camera for \$490 which includes installation, training, and a two year warranty.

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by George Bodin to purchase the zoom camera from Up North Security for a total of \$490.

Roll Call: Kowalski Y Kripli Y Zettel Y Bodin Y Fournier Y

Motion carried.

### **STING:**

Rob Kowalski presented an invoice from STING asking for a donation of \$2,065.50. The board did not approve of the invoice.

### **CEMETERY:**

Rob Kowalski brought up the pricing for cremations at the cemetery. He had a resident that had four urns in her closet that she wanted to have buried at the cemetery. The cost for a cremation is \$350. Rob thought that was a pretty high figure. Mike Laier stated that he works with residents for cremation remains and gives them a deal especially when they have more than one.

### **ASSESSOR INFORMATION:**

Allison Thompson is the new Assessor for Edwards Township. Rob Kowalski, Eileen Fournier, and Dale Sheltroun met with Allison for a few hours to discuss assessing in Edwards Township. Allison asked them why the township is not using land use permits. Rob stated that the purpose of land use permits is to notify the assessor of new buildings on your property.

Rob Kowalski stated that BOR had 12 petitions. Zac Van Wormer was supposed to fix those before he left after the last session of BOR. Allison stated that she had received those files from Zac and that she would go through those and update them.

Allison's plan is to look at the farming community and make sure their property cards match what is on their property. She recommends land use permits instead of building permits for farmers. Land use permits are submitted to Equalization, then they are sent to the Assessor, and then they are updated on the property tax cards. Six townships did not report new construction in 2025 for the year of 2026. Allison will start looking at the 67 building permits that Bob Clayton has completed for this past year and then she will start doing field work for 20% of the township each year and hopefully have 100% of the township assessed in five years.

Dale Sheltroun stated that the County Equalization Director or the Assessor can request a 154 Form. He also stated that the BOR notices did not go out on time which is a major violation by Zac Van Wormer. Dale was concerned on how Allison was going to determine the value of the 67 building permits.

Rob stated that she can check the permits against the building inspections. The board would like to avoid the 154 and have the new Assessor fix the current problems at Edwards Township. The board is looking for more information from Allison at this time.

Rob stated that Allison would like the township to pay for marketing material in order for her to send postcards to township residents letting them know that she will be in the area on certain dates in order to communicate effectively.

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve \$500 for the marketing materials for the Assessor.

Roll Call: Bodin Y Zettel Y Kowalski Y Kripli Y Fournier Y

Motion carried.

#### **HALL:**

Rob Kowalski stated that there has been an increase in Hall Revenue by \$870 from 2024-2025 to 2025-2026.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

- Township Board Meeting: Monday, May 11, 2026 7:30pm

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by George Bodin to adjourn at 9:50pm. Motion carried.

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Rob Kowalski, Supervisor

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Korey Kripli, Clerk