EDWARDS TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING

October 12, 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, and Deputy Treasurer Sydney Lademan (absent). Several residents of Edwards Township.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 14, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion by George Bodin, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve the September 14, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - October 1, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Daniel Zettel to approve the October 1, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Motion by Korey Kripli, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve the agenda with the additions of 14A Randy Booth. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA: N/A

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR:

Bob Clayton stated that he had one permit this past month. The situation on M-30 has been resolved. The property has been purchased.

SEXTON REPORT:

Mike Laier stated that he had one cremation and sold two lots.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER:

Early Voting at the county building starts on October 24th from 8:30am to 4:30pm through November 1st. The county adopted their budget and they did not take any money out of the revolving fund. Both boilers are being replaced and are on warranty. The IT Director has left and are hoping to

contract out this position. Twenty new computers were purchased.

LIBRARY UPDATE:

Korey Kripli stated that he was not able to attend the last library meeting.

PLANNING UPDATE:

The Planning Committee will hold a Special Meeting available for the public on November 9th at 7pm to discuss the ordinance for data centers.

TREASURER REPORT:

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

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by Dan Zettel to approve bills with Payroll Checks 10495 - 10509, Road Fund Check 1009, and Payable Checks 7794 - 7808. Total is $14,973.81.

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

Motion approved.

HALL DEPOSIT RETURNS:

There were two hall returns to Lisa Brink ($185) and Miranda Damsen ($100) for a total of $285. Motion by Eileen Fournier, supported by George Bodin to approve the hall returns. Motion carried.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN CHILDREN'S ASSESSMENT CENTER:

Rebecca Yuncker presented information about the millage for the Northern Michigan Children's Assessment Center that will be on the November election ballot. Her organization works with law enforcement to interview children that have been abused using forensic investigators. They keep children safe and their staff is highly trained for these situations. Rebecca estimated that a normal household will see a $6 increase in their taxes over the next five years if this millage passes.

RANDY BOOTH - EQUALIZATION:

Randy Booth from Equalization answered questions about assessing for the township. Randy stated that Allison left due to the township not letting her move forward and always having questions about what the previous assessor did. Dan Zettel stated that the Equalization Department is supposed to keep the Assessor in check. Randy stated that the Assessor is an employee of the township and that he has no authority over the assessors. Dan Zettel asked Randy if he audited the assessors. Randy stated yes and that once they turn in their assessment roll, there is a form called a 4021. Once he receives that form, he looks to see if their adjustments are in line and look at new construction. When he looked at Edwards Township last year, there was no new construction reported. Randy noticed this problem and addressed the commissioners and sent letters to all the Supervisors this affected.

Dan Zettel stated that we paid somebody to do a contracted service and they have a five star award for passing a state audit, but I can't take responsibility for something I'm not aware of because I don't have the assessment rolls. Randy stated that MVW Associates passed the state audit five years ago, but last year was the first year that he has not seen new construction on the roll.

Robert Kowalski stated that in September when the board discussed the idea of not doing 4154 forms, Eileen Fournier looked it up and stated that nothing would happen. Rob asked Allison Thompson the same question and she stated that was true, but the Assessor will receive penalties. Randy stated that the Assessor can go up for Assessor Disciplinary Action and the township can have their roll received by the state tax commission.

Randy Booth stated that if the township does not hire an assessor, the township will need to pay Randy Booth in order to complete those 4154 forms. Dan Zettel asked if Randy would be able to complete all of the 4154 forms by December 31st. Randy stated that he would have to.

Dan Zettel stated that in the letter that Randy sent out to the Commissioners and the Supervisors, it stated that "The Edwards Township Board and citizens seem to believe it is unfair to property owners that have to pay the additional tax because of a 4154 petition." Dan was saying that this was meant to be equal taxation across everyone and not just send 4154 forms to half a dozen people.

If they are not done in a timely manner, you can't just send out six of them if there are sixty to be completed. Korey Kripli stated that when we talked about the 4154 forms being completed, Allison didn't know if she would have them done by December 31st or not. If we only send ten of them out for the sixty four that need to be done, that's not fair.

Robert Kowalski asked if the Assessor goes into the state tax commission for a hearing or if the township board would have to go. Randy stated that whoever filed it would have to go. Randy stated that he would have to make the trip to Lansing for those hearings and stated the township would have to pay for his time. Randy stated that the state tax commission hears cases on a monthly basis.

Korey Kripli stated that MVW & Associates didn't do their job, yet normal people filed building permits, followed the rules, and now they're going to receive a 4154 form for their current tax and two years prior. Randy stated that he whole heartedly agreed that it's not right. Daniel Zettel stated MVW & Associates in my opinion did not do their job. We had no ability to audit him doing his job because we had no tax records and he supposedly had them on file, but there was none available.

Randy Booth stated that for the 4154 petition, if a person goes to Lansing, value is not a discussion for the state tax commission. They don't care what the values are. It is either on the roll or off the roll and there is no discussion about value. Randy said it creates a lot of hard feelings and a lot of issues.

Dan Zettel stated that "All required information shall be provided to the commission at the time of petition to be filed including a full filled out form and the required information providing the cards of record and personal property statements issued. A violation of this subrule shall result in dismissal of the petition." Dan's point is that if his card and nobody else's cards are available then the petition will be dismissed so we are wasting tax payer's time again. Randy stated that the township board would be responsible and it's law that you have to have an assessment card on every parcel for every year for record. When you hire a contracted assessor, you should have a copy of the database at the township hall at all times and it should be updated. Randy stated that he tried to upload files from Zack Van Wormer tonight before the meeting and the files were empty. They had nothing on them. Korey Kripli asked how is that the board's fault?

Randy stated that it is the board's responsibility to make sure Zach is doing his job. Korey Kripli stated that Zach is not providing his service that the board is paying him for. Randy stated to not pay him if he is not providing his service.

Ray Miller asked when is the state going to step in and do their job? Randy stated that the state is doing their audits every five years. When they did the audit five years ago, Zach Van Wormer passed the audit. There is another audit this upcoming Spring and if there are red flags and deficiencies they will ask for a corrective action plan from the township. If there are major issues, then the Assessor can go to the Assessor Disciplinary Action and have their assessing license revoked. Randy stated that the board can file a former complaint that MVW & Associates did not do their job. Randy stated that Zach Van Wormer will be brought up in front of the Assessor Disciplinary Board.

Robert Kowalski stated the board ran an advertisement through the Michigan Assessor Association. The board received applications and Rob stated that he believes the board needs to hire a company with multiple assessors because one assessor cannot do the work in a timely manner for our township.

MOBILE MEDICAL UNIT OPERATIONS:

Loyal Source is a veteran recertification program. They were at the township hall on Wednesday and Thursday last week and recertified 40 to 50 veterans. The township will keep providing the hall for their services for the future.

TIRE DRIVE RESULTS:

Robert Kowalski stated that 505 tires were taken at no charge. This was a very successful event.

PLANNING MEETING - PUBLIC MEETING:

November 9, 2026 at 7:00pm

ALLISON THOMPSON EXIT INTERVIEW:

Allison brought in all of her files and information to the hall once she resigned. All of the information is ready for the next assessor.

SNOW PLOW CONTRACT:

Edwards Township received one bid for snow removal.

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by Eileen Fournier to approve Scott Simmons for $150 per push for the township hall and the cemetery only when requested.

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

Motion carried.

BUDGET TO ACTUAL:

Robert Kowalski went over the Budget to Actual and made some necessary changes. Korey Kripli will update those changes.

REFUND ON SIGN (PAINTING):

The painter refunded the township $300 since he has not been able to paint the front sign of the township hall.

ASSESSING:

Robert Kowalski provided a resume from Peter Casler, MMAO. His contract states that he will complete the 4154 forms and become the assessor of Edwards Township. His company has multiple assessors. The township attorney looked at the contract and the only thing he wanted to add was that the insurance needs to be adjusted up to a million dollars per incident and two million dollars in perpetuity. The first year of his contract will cost $52,410 and this will include the 4154 forms and the Corrective Action Plan letter. The 2nd and 3rd years of his contract will cost $27,840. The company will not be an employee of the township and he will start October 15, 2026.

Motion by George Bodin, supported by Eileen Fournier to hire Peter Casler, MMAO of Michigan Assessing Services for one year for $52,410 with an option to renew for the second and third year at a reduced rate.

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

Motion carried. Dan Zettel stated that he opted out of voting because he had other issues.

SUPERVISOR COMMENTS:

Robert Kowalski stated that Dan Zettel stated that he had received a 4154 notice from Allison Thompson. Rob stated that no notices were ever mailed and what Dan received was an email from Eileen. It was an office email setting up a meeting. It was not a violation of the open meeting act because you are allowed to discuss dates and times in an email. Dan stated that he has a copy of the email from Allison Thompson. Rob stated that Allison did not get any authorization from this township to send notices.

Robert Kowalski stated that it is illegal to use township funds to pay personal taxes/fines. He stated that Dan Zettel talked about that in the September board meeting and that Jane Illig asked there to be a motion. Dan stated that he made a statement that if we were to go after MVW & Associates to make everyone whole, the township could hold the bill easier than an individual trying to put shoes on their kids feet. Rob stated that it was not a motion that the board could entertain.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dale Sheltrown stated that if the board sues Zach Van Wormer that he would probably file bankruptcy and the township wouldn't get any money. The other question he had was if he could receive a copy of the list of names of 4154 forms that will be sent out. Robert Kowalski confirmed with Randy Booth that there would be no list until it was sent to the state. Randy stated that no forms have been submitted with the state at this time. Robert Kowalski and Randy Booth stated that if the homeowner doesn't sign the 4154 form it still goes to Lansing. Dale stated that the Amish community is very concerned.

Mike Laier asked if the board was going to add school signs on Greenwood Road for the Amish community. The board stated that they had not purchased school signs in Edwards Township. The Amish put the signs up themselves. The township purchased Horse and Buggy signs. Robert Kowalski asked Dale Sheltrown to talk with the Amish and see if they want school signs to be purchased.

Robert Kowalski stated that there will be an indoor Trick or Treat event at the Edwards Township Hall on October 24th from 5pm to 8pm. Candy will be provided to the kids by eleven volunteers and there will be a costume contest. This is for all ages and will not cost the township any money.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Public Planning Meeting: November 9, 2026 7:00pm
- Township Board Meeting: November 9, 2026 7:30pm

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Robert Kowalski, supported by George Bodin to adjourn at 9:56pm. Motion carried.

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Rob Kowalski, Supervisor

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Korey Kripli, Clerk