

MINUTES OF THE AU GRES TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING JUNE 9th, 2026 ~ 7:00 P.M. **DRAFT**

IN ATTENDANCE: Supervisor Jim Herzog, Clerk Michael Oxley, Treasurer Patricia Tremble, Trustee Jan Bullock and Trustee Penny Kurchak
ABSENT: None

ATTENDEES: In order of signing in: Art Gallop, Pam Stewart, Ron Bilbrey, Josh Gordon, Jim Osborne and Sandra Compau.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting began at 7:00pm with the pledge of allegiance.

BOARD COMMENT: Supervisor Jim Herzog introduced Josh Gordon, local contractor who did the work on the Linwood Cemetery out buildings. Gordon described the upcoming job of putting up a metal roof on the Township Hall. Tar paper over the existing shingles, a brand new cap, bridge gap metal sheeting bolted to the existing roof. Roofing material from MS Metal sales (located near Delta College, Saginaw) with a 60 year paint warranty. Color green was decided to match the hall. Work could not begin for at least a month. It was noted that \$16,250.00 was received from a Saganing Chippewa Tribal 2% spring distribution grant (the bid amount from J & G Contracting).

APPROVAL of AGENDA: Tremble made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion supported by Trustee Jan Bullock. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Agenda approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT (2 minute limit per person/group): Jim Osborne asked Josh Gordon if a dumpster was included in his roofing bid. (Yes).

APPROVAL of the MINUTES: Treasurer Pat Tremble made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 12th, 2026 Board of Trustees meeting. Motion supported by Trustee Penny Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Minutes approved.

PAYMENT OF BOOK OF BILLS: Motion made by Tremble to approve the May 2026 Book of Bills as presented. Motion supported Clerk Michael Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. May 2026 Book of Bills approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Read by Pat Tremble. The current General Fund balance is \$181,726.00. The General Fund total including investments and accrued interest is \$945,676.53. The total of all funds is \$1,684,373.43 (bank accounts, investments and interest accrued). Motion made by Oxley to approve the treasurer's report as presented. Supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Treasurers report approved.

BOARD REPORTS:

AUGRES-SIMS-WHITNEY FIRE AUTHORITY: The May 21st, 2026 meeting was held at the Au Gres Fire Hall. The meeting called to order by Keith Edmonds. Treasurer Tom Brandimore gave the treasurer's report, reporting that the annual audit by Yeo & Yeo was scheduled for June 1st. The board paid bills totaling \$1492.26. The fire fighters planned their annual steak fry dinner to be held on June 3rd.

Fire chief Kurt Hummerickhouse reported 10 calls during the previous month: a grass fire in Au Gres Township, a personal injury and another grass fire in Au Gres Township, downed power line in Whitney Township, a car fire and a brush fire in Sims Township, a CO leak in Au Gres City and two gas leaks, one in Au Gres Twp and one in Sims. The next meeting is on Thursday, June 18th, 2026 - 7:00pm at the Au Gres Fire Hall.

HERITAGE ROUTE AUTHORITY: See the Minutes of the May 4th, 2026 meeting in the agenda packet.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Art Gallop Zoning, driving around the township, reported that the Knopp house and barn being built on Santiago (North of US-23) was coming along nicely with two gated driveways completed. The garage on Rumsey road was not moving along very fast. Schwiderson's barn on US-23 was up with roof installed, no metal siding as of yet. The house by Rollins on US-23 across from Bilacic Trucking is moving along quite quickly. Casey Boensch, son of the owners of the Red Barn store is building on Noggle Road close to Big Creek.

There was discussion about the Solar Project in Turner/Mason Townships, to which Gallop added that in the Netherlands, where land is scarce, solar panels are mounted 15 feet off the ground and the property is farmed.

LINWOOD CEMETERY REPORT: Kurchak reported that the flags were up in time for the Service on Memorial Day, May 25th. There was a large turnout (about 50 people), more than in part years and the weather was beautiful.

Herzog presented his idea of placing six additional flagpoles, three on either side of the Veteran's Monument, honoring the branches of the military, no lights of these flags would be required. Just a suggestion to the board.

Kurchak asked Herzog to talk about St. Paul's Cross. Herzog spoke how St. Paul's Church (Tonkey Road south of US-23 had disbanded in December 2025. The new owner of the building Amanda Goodson (The Closet Exchange, formerly located in the mall behind H&H Bakery/Restaurant) needed the large iron-beam cross removed from the property. As Goodson receives government funding, any religious icons on the property conflict with grant requirements. Herzog has been working for months, trying to find a contractor who could move the large cross, which is bolted to a cement slab. Recently, Dennis Killingbeck said he had acquired a 'Sky Hook' and could move the cross to Linwood Cemetery for \$500.00. Before agreeing to moving the cross, Bullock requested a cost analysis of mounting it in the cemetery. Herzog imagined that for now it would just be leaned against the fence line.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Gravel pad for Recycle bin and waste dumpster behind the township hall. Oxley and Herzog had suggested that the township board put down some rock the next time the GFL recycle bin was moved. Currently, recyclers have to walk in the mud during the Spring and Fall. Tremble asked what would be done with the topsoil, imagining that a 'pad' style area would be dug out and then filled with rock. Work to be done by C. Woods Trucking for a total cost of \$3,200.00, and the soil would be hauled away. Motion made by Tremble to approve the project (using general fund monies). Motion supported by Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Approved.

b. Assessor Jessica Landry sent (2) Land Combinations and (1) Land Division to the Township Board for final approval.

Parcel Combination #2026-02 - Michael and Melissa Mathie combining three platted subdivision lots on Booth Road - Seven Season Estates Lot 15,16 and 17 (Combo 003-2-S30-000-015-00, 003-2-S30-000-016-00 and 003-2-S30-000-017-00 (2027). New parcel number to be provided by the assessor. \$150.00 check received.

Parcel Combination #2026-03 - Marvin and Nancy Selle combing four parcels (vacant land) on Court Street. Vacant land(s) 003-0-012-100-010-00, 003-0-012-100-015-10, 003-0-012-100-015-20 and 003-0-012-400-010-00. New parcel number to be provided by the assessor. \$150.00 check received.

Land Division #2026-04 Brian Knowles (Angela Knoll Estate). Parcel 003-0-012-300-005-00 at 835N Court Street being divided into a 1.09 acre parcel, with a remainder parcel of 40.45 acres (Court Street and Proulx Roads). New parcel number to be provided by the assessor. \$150.00 check received.

Motion made Tremble to approve the two (2) land combinations and one (1) land division presented by Township Assessor Jessica Landry. Motion supported by Oxley. Voice vote: All yeas. No nays. Motion approved, final parcel numbers to be provided by Assessor Landry.

c. Solar Panels (Turner/Mason Twps) Rain run-off discussion: Tremble, having attended a prior Turner Township board meeting, spoke on the DTE Solar Project (on Stange and Yurick's farmland) in Turner and Mason Townships. Aurette Gates, an Au Gres Township planning commission member, had brought to our board's attention that run-off from the solar panel project could affect drains in our township as well as the Au Gres river. The solar project has grown from 600 acres to 1200 acres, according to Tremble. Unsure of the type of contaminants which might come from a solar panel or the cleaning fluids used on the panels, it was decided that more information was needed: such as getting DTE and the County Drain Commissioner, Steve Andrejewski speak at the township board meeting in July.

d. Golf Cart for cemetery workers: Herzog stated that he watched as Barbara Manor and Penny Kurchak were placing memorial flags on the veterans' gravesites in Linwood cemetery. Pushing and pulling a wagon with the flags. He came up with the idea of acquiring a golf cart, or side-by-side to make this work easier. Also noting that Dominic Ruiz, cemetery maintenance worker, could use it to haul grave blankets in the Spring, and empty the garbage cans when needed. There was discussion about costs and places to buy a cart (Sexton Ed Manor, favoring a golf cart, said a side-by-side was too wide to get in between the rows). Oxley questioned the 'use-over' cost factor, as the flags only go up once a year, and Ruiz had already stated that he would continue to use his truck over a golf-cart. It began to look like a cart would be parked in the shed most of the year, and the topic was tabled for now.

- e. **Reduced rates for Marijuana Renewal Permits:** Oxley stated he had been contacted by Brian Farah, Hello Farms (Shenfield Road) asking the township to consider reducing the \$5,000 per permit renewal charge in order to help support the industry in the township. Noting that the doubling of the Retail Outlet excise tax charges by the State of Michigan had hurt growers, processors and retailers. Oxley pointed out that since last year the township lost \$25,000.00 in permit fees as two facilities went out of business last year. This topic was tabled at May's board of trustees meeting in order to survey the permit fees of surrounding municipalities. Oxley reported that Bay City, Pinconning, Ann Arbor, and other locations in the state all charged the \$5,000 per permit. Only Pinconning gave a discount if a facility has 10 or more permits (the fee dropped to \$2500.00 per permit). Tremble spoke and the board agreed that we could not favor one facility over another, and since most all facilities are all paid up for 2026, we wouldn't be refunding any monies to those who already paid. And then it would get convoluted going into 2027. The board agreed that the state has put the same burden on the entire industry, and a business either adapts or fails. No more discussion on the topic.

BOARD COMMENT: Kurchak inquired if the beaver dam at the end of Gordon Road and Rumsey had been removed. Herzog reported that the one on Swenson Road near Noggle had been removed and that a trapper has been hired by the Road Commission.

Herzog stated that Noggle and Swenson Roads are being prepped for asphalt paving. Kurchak asked when the roadside mowing was to start as Santiago road is getting dangerous for deer crossing. Herzog replied that Santiago between US-23 and Gordon is a county road, and he will check when it gets mowed. Also noting that road brining will start soon. Tremble added that roads in Omer have already been brined and done very well, asking who does their brining.

PUBLIC COMMENT: It was asked if a township benefits from a solar farm, when a project like Turner Township gets built. Tremble answered that a township would get a kickback from Personal Property tax levies (0900), much in the same way that our township gets a 1% Admin fee on taxes paid, which is used to run the township. Pam Stewart noted that the solar project was being referred to as the "Au Gres Solar Project" causing confusion.

ADJOURNMENT: TIME – 8:13pm. Motion made by Tremble to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Kurchak. Voice vote: All yeas. No Nays. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes approved at the regular Board of Trustees Meeting on _____

James Herzog, Supervisor _____

Michael Oxley, Clerk _____