

Meeting Minutes
Meeting of the North Township Advisory Board
Held at the Fire Station in Lapaz, IN
July 21, 2025 at 7:00pm

North Township Advisory Board Members Present:

Steven Davenport, President

Steve Barber, Secretary

Third seat is vacant following the passing of Dave Banicki

Emily Haskins, Trustee, North Township

Mathew Haskins, Fire Chief

For other community members present, please refer to the attached sign-in sheet.

*The reader will note that meetings are now livestreamed. Please refer to our website for a schedule of our meetings, links for the live streams, and additional information: <https://northtownship.org>

The meeting consisted of the following.

Mr. Davenport called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

1. Approval of 6/23/25 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Barber moved to accept the minutes as printed, seconded by Mr. Davenport and passed 2-0.
2. Fire Territory Executive Committee recommendations, as applicable.
 - a. That the Township adopt HSA for health coverage with a maximum contribution of \$4,300. Mr. Barber moved to adopt the HSA for health coverage with a maximum contribution of \$4,300, seconded by Mr. Davenport, and passed 2-0.
 - b. That the Township adopt the PERF MyChoice plan with the Township paying the employees' mandatory 3% and the employer fixed cost of 4%. The employer's total cost would be 7%. Mr. Barber presented a chart (see attached) of his understanding of the options available to the Township in order to utilize PERF. He advocated for the PERF MyChoice plan with the following changes: having the employee pay the mandatory 3% and then the Township will match 50% of the employee's voluntary contribution. A discussion ensued. Ms. Haskins clarified that changes in contribution levels/percentages within PERF MyChoice plan may be made from year to year. However, once the decision is made to enter the PERF MyChoice plan, we appear to be locked into this plan. Mr. Barber moved to adopt the Territory recommendation: to adopt the PERF MyChoice plan with the Township paying the employees' mandatory 3% and the employer fixed cost of 4%. The employer's total cost would be 7%. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davenport and passed 2-0.
 - c. That the Township approve payment to Mr. Robertson in the amount of \$7,000 through the end of the year for completion of the administrative tasks. Mr. Barber moved to adopt this recommendation, seconded by Mr. Davenport, and passed 2-0.
 - d. That the Township initiate the process to remount the 2016 ambulance. Mr. Davenport moved that we move forward with that process (for example, getting quotes, etc.). Ms. Haskins explained that payment for this project may be "encumbered." This means that there may be a payment in this calendar year and a payment in next calendar year AND (if done in this manner) that it would be considered as an expenditure on this year's budget. To clarify, the additional effect of encumbering is that the anticipated payment made in 2026 would not be included in the

budget for 2026 and would NOT impact levies/taxes for 2026. The board and the Trustee clarified to Mr. Haskins that we are okay with either a) getting the work done before the end of the year and paying for it before the end of the year, b) paying for the work before the end of the year, or c) making a payment this year and making the final payment next year upon completion of the work. Mr. Barber seconded the motion which was passed 2-0.

3. Billing Service Update. Ms. Haskins reported that we have received \$18,352.11 to date from billing.
4. Employee Update. We currently have two full-time employees. Coverage is being provided Monday through Sunday, 12 hours per day. Mr. Haskins is hoping to hire more full-time employees soon. There is an EMT class in Plymouth in which one of our applicants is enrolled. Mr. Haskins is hoping to advertise again in mid to late August.
5. 2026 Budget Preparation (see attached).
 - a. Ms. Haskins reviewed the line items for the Township General Fund. She clarifies that Building Repairs/Maintenance/Construction line item is \$0.00. This will require an appropriation for construction if this is done next year. One variable which may affect this is the LIT shares for 2026. Ms. Haskins also clarifies that an additional appropriation would prompt state oversight and require a hearing. Mr. Haskins indicated that there appears to be problems with the 6" well. There is evidence of pebbles moving through the well pump and subsequently through the pumping system in the tanker. This needs to be addressed sooner rather than later. The board asks Mr. Haskins to get this issue examined. Mr. Haskins indicated that he will ask Montgomery to take a look. Mr. Haskins reported that he does expect a bill from Banner Electric soon for work completed upstairs.
 - b. Ms. Haskins reviewed the line items for Township Assistance Fund. Ms. Haskins reminded the Board that last year, we were required to lower the 2024 Township Assistance budget to gain state approval for the total 2025 budget. This action was precipitated because the balance remaining in the Township Assistance Fund at that time in 2024 was insufficient to meet the needs anticipated for the rest of 2024 and through the budget year of 2025. She anticipates that this will also be an issue for the 2026 budget. The problem is that we are not permitted (by law) to transfer money from one fund to another fund. For example, we cannot transfer money from the General Fund to the Township Assistance Fund. In talking with the DLGF and the SBO A, the best option is for us to establish a levy for the Township Assistance Fund. She emphasized that this will NOT increase taxes for our patrons. It will simply divert money from the General Fund levy. So, part of the General Fund levy will be cut in order to raise a corresponding levy and provide monies for the Township Assistance Fund. As of today, our balance in the Township Assistance Fund is \$38,164.86. To date, \$4,066.38 has been spent from this fund this year. So, the future levy for the Township Assistance Fund will only be for as much as is needed to fulfill the budgeted needs. The levy is unlikely to be very much. Mr. Barber moved that we adopt the Trustee's recommendation that we apply for a Township Assistance Fund Levy. Mr. Davenport seconded the motion which passed 2-0.
 - c. Ms. Haskins reviewed the line items for the Fire Territory Operating Fund. It is noted that the Fire Territory Executive Committee was deadlocked and did not make a recommendation regarding its budget for the Township to review. There were two different budgets under consideration (see attached). Ms. Haskins provided a comparison between Mr. Barber's 2026 budget proposal (with changes noted) from the Fire Territory meeting recently and a revised 2026 Fire Territory Operating Budget (the revision factored in the savings brought about by changing the PERF plan).
 - i. Mr. Barber's plan:
 1. 4 full-time employees. It was explained that it is difficult to schedule a 5th full-time person, without a 6th as well. So, instead of putting down a 5th full-time

person, budgets were increased for the part-time and volunteer compensation line items – to cover nights and weekends. This illustrated that the difference between having 24x7 coverage compared to only partial coverage for the Township is about \$69,300. It was reported that hiring 6 full-time employees also helps to address a recent problem they have experienced in securing sufficient EMTs to cover the available shifts for nights and weekends.

2. Part-time staff line item increased from \$20,000 to \$40,000
3. Night-time volunteer stipend added at \$46,000
4. Employer taxes for part-time staff increased from \$2,200 to \$4,400
5. Fire Territory Operating **budget** decrease of 23.99%
6. Overall Township **rate** reduction of 26.65%

ii. The other proposed budget would result in the following:

1. 24x7 staffing.
2. Fire Territory Operating **budget** decrease of 16.95%
3. Overall Township **rate** reduction of 22.10%

iii. Additional discussion ensued. Ms. Haskins explained that the amount of billing received in 2025 will be considered as applying to the budget submission for 2026. In other words, whatever billing is received in 2025 will **reduce** the amount that will need to be collected to fulfill our budget request for 2026 (and a corresponding decrease in the rate, notwithstanding the unknown variable of what will happen to assessed valuation for the Township).

iv. Mr. Barber moved to adopt the proposed budget of \$817,200 for the Fire Territory Operating Fund as well as the Budget recommendations for the Township General Fund and the Township Assistance Fund. Ms. Haskins indicated that the total for all these funds would be \$976,400. Mr. Davenport seconded the motion which was passed 2-0. Ms. Haskins clarifies that this budget will be presented at the next Fire Territory Executive Committee meeting simply to inform them. No vote will be needed at that time.

d. Ms. Haskins presented the December Property Tax Collections Calculation Worksheet for Budget Year 2026. It indicates that we should expect a total distribution of about \$511,251 in December 2025 (for all three funds).

6. Trustee Update

- a. Ms. Haskins informed the Board that Mr. Banicki passed away recently and his position is now vacant. She has been in communication with the Democratic Party Chair who is beginning the process of securing a replacement. Ms. Haskins will ask the family if it is okay to mention this on the website. Mr. Barber moved to express our appreciation to Mr. Banicki for his service on the Board, seconded by Mr. Davenport, and passed 2-0.
- b. Ms. Haskins presented her report of Receipts, Disbursements, and Balances as well as the Township Assistance Report (see attached). One correction is that 55% of the year has now lapsed.
- c. Mr. Barber presented his final written report on Conger Cemetery (see attached). Digital reports, including photographs have been submitted to both Ms. Haskins and the Marshall County Historical Society (MCHS). As a result, MCHS did publish an article about this in the Plymouth Pilot News. It is noted that Conger Cemetery is on private property and the property owner prefers to let everything remain as it is and undisturbed.

7. Good of the Order.

- a. Mr. Haskins reports that the SCBAs were delivered today. The fit test is scheduled in a couple of weeks. Once a canceled check is received, documentation will be submitted to the county for reimbursement of the \$50,000. Regarding follow-up, consideration is being given to inviting the

Pilot News to do a story on this and attending a meeting of the Commissioners to thank them for this.

- b. Mr. Haskins reported that the county is in the process of purchasing drones for the purpose of taking pictures during incidents. Training will be provided.
 - c. Mr. Haskins reported that the county is also going to purchase a 4-gas detector for each fire department. This is similar to what NIPSCO has and utilizes.
 - d. Mr. Haskins reported that there a question has arisen about how to bill an incident wherein significant treatment is provided but a helicopter is brought on the scene. One option would be "treat, no transport," which does not appear to fully reflect the services that were provided. They will do some research about this to determine an appropriate billing code for this type of service.
8. Public Comment: None
9. Adjournment: Mr. Barber moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Davenport and passed 2-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen Barber, Secretary

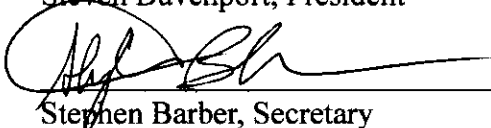
Approved: ☒ As Written/Printed

☐ As Amended

☐ As Corrected


Steven Davenport, President

8-25-25
Date


Stephen Barber, Secretary

8-25-25
Date

North Township Marshall County Public Meeting
Monday, July 21, 2025 at 7:00pm
LaPaz-North Township Fire Station

Sign-In Sheet

1. Steve Barber
2. AD Robertson
3. Sandy Robertson
4. Steve Davenport
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North Township Marshall County Public Meeting
Monday, July 21, 2025 at 7:00pm
LaPaz-North Township Fire Station

- 1. Approval of 6/23/25 Meeting Minutes**
- 2. Territory Board recommendations, as applicable**
- 3. Billing service update**
- 4. Employee update**
- 5. 2026 Budget Preparation**
- 6. Trustee update**
- 7. Good of the order announcements or updates from Fire Department**
- 8. Public Comment (Limited to 2 minutes per person)**

Online Streaming: <https://www.youtube.com/live/8LeRg5sl84E?si=FtYHhaqdAvK9-KvI>

North Township Marshall County Public Meeting
Monday, July 21, 2025 at 7:00pm
LaPaz-North Township Fire Station

Fund Name	Beginning Balance 1/1/25	Receipts	Disbursements	Ending Balance 12/31/25
General	\$ 325,073.17	\$ 128,526.96	\$ 35,981.75	\$ 417,618.38
Territory Operating	\$ 599,173.14	\$ 700,458.72	\$ 176,819.14	\$ 1,122,812.72
TA	\$ 42,231.24	\$ -	\$ 4,066.38	\$ 38,164.86
Territory ERF		\$ 47,841.92	\$ -	\$ 47,841.92
Rainy Day	\$ 36,030.27	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 36,030.27
Fire	See notes in Cell	\$ -	moved to territory	\$ -
Cumulative	See notes in Cell	\$ -	moved to territory	\$ -
EMS	See notes in Cell	\$ -	moved to territory	\$ -
Total	\$ 1,002,507.82	\$ 876,827.60	\$ 216,867.27	\$ 1,662,468.15

- 34% of the year has lapsed. Township expenditures are at 21% of budget, Fire 18%, Township Assistance 15%.
- We have had 17 requests for township assistance. 2 for mortgage/rent assistance, 13 for utilities, and 2 for cremation assistance. Of the total 17 applications, 14 were approved and 3 were denied. 24 adults and 7 children were helped between the 14 households assisted. These numbers do not include any outstanding assistance applications that the applicant never followed through on.