

**BATES TOWNSHIP BOARD**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Bates Township Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. at the Township Hall.

Supervisor Stafford called the meeting to order; Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken with Supervisor Stafford, Clerk Benson-Stafford, Treasurer Nelson, Trustees Franzene & Trustee Adams present. Also, in attendance were PW Benson & Karnack; ZA Bofinger; Assessor Erhart; Michael Thibodeau, PC; Larry Nelson, PC; Mike Golas, P&R & PC; Sue Passamani, BHPS; Margee Brennan, ZBA & BHPS; Residents. IC Comm Judd was absent.

**ATTENDEES**

Trustee Adams made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous month's meeting. Supported by Treasurer Nelson. All ayes. Motion carried.

**MINUTES**

Trustee Adams made a motion to accept the February 2026 Treasurers report. Supported by Trustee Franzene. Roll call vote: Benson-Stafford, yes; Stafford, yes; Nelson, yes; Adams, yes; Franzene, yes. Unanimous. Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

General Fund:	\$ 262,165.51
Sewer Fund:	\$ 67,954.72
Water Fund:	\$ 279,735.29
Road Fund:	\$ 318,928.16

**Invoice Approval**

Trustee Franzene made a motion to pay the township invoices. Supported by Trustee Adams. Roll call vote: Nelson, yes; Benson-Stafford, yes; Stafford, yes; Adams, yes; Franzene, yes. Unanimous. Motion carried.

**INVOICE APPROVAL**

County Commissioner Report – Comm Judd was absent.

**COUNTY COMM REPORT**

ICECA Report – Brett announced the return of their newsletter, The Iron Advantage. They hope to publish it monthly. It will contain information on existing and new members, upcoming & future events, and current & upcoming opportunities.

**ICECA**

Van Oss Forestry Assessment – The Township had Mr. Van Oss prepare a forestry proposal bid on 6 parcels of approximately 87.35 acres of township owned land. Clerk Benson-Stafford approved the 20-year management plan prepared by Van Oss at an approximate bid of \$14/acre. Supported by Trustee Franzene. Roll call vote: Stafford, yes; Nelson, yes; Adams, yes; Benson-Stafford, yes; Franzene, yes. Unanimous. Motion carried.

**VAN OSS FORESTRY PLAN**

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Assessor Report – Assr Erhart stated the BOR heard 11 petitions. She provided the board with a copy of the 2026 Summary. / A copy of the report is on file with the Clerk.

**ASSESSOR REPORT**

Zoning Administrator Report – ZA Bofinger stated he issued 3 permits in February. / He attended the February PC meeting. / He was contacted by an individual that wanted to raise pigs on their property. / He was contacted by an individual that was interested in rezoning their property to agricultural. / Year-to-date permits issued: 5 for 2026. / A copy of the report is on file with the Clerk.

**ZONING ADMIN REPORT**

Planning Commission – Chairperson Mike Thibodeau indicated that the PC met on March 2. / They continue to audit the master plan and the zoning ordinance updates.

**PLANNING COMM**

Road Projects- Nothing new to report.

**ROAD PROJECTS**

**Hall**- Nothing new to report. / **Shop**– Nothing new to report. / **Water** – PW Karnack stated that on February 22<sup>nd</sup> a water main break was repaired on US 2 about 1 mile east of the hall. / Recent 280,000-gallon overnight pumping caused the pressure switch valve of pump #1 to cavitate, which will require a repair. /He continues to send out notices regarding broken meter alert. 4 customers may soon receive a 3<sup>rd</sup> and final notice before being shut off. / **Sewer** – Nothing new to report. / **Cemetery** – Closed for the season. / **Park** – Closed for the season. / **School** – Nothing new to report. / **Paint River Boat Launch** – Closed for the season.

**HALL-SHOP-WTR-SWR-CEM-PARK-SCH-PR BL**

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**DEPARTMENT REPORTS (cont'd)**

Windsor Center– Stafford said it appears that the Windsor Center will need a new boiler. They currently have two. They are waiting for estimates which they expect to come in around \$85,000-\$125,000.

**WINDSOR  
CTR**

Bates Hall Preservation Society Update – Sue Passamani acknowledged the write up on the BHPS in the Reporter. / They are waiting on the USDA before they can put out a bid package, which the USDA will have to approve. Then once the contractors are chosen, the USDA has to approve them; all before any project can begin. / They continue to seek grants. / Their current fund-raising account is \$316337. / There was discussion about the fact that the federal government will require a Notice of Federal Interest or Lien on the township hall. / The Board requested that the BHPS get the terms of the NOFI in writing before the project moves forward, so that there is clear information about when/how the lien can be removed.

**BHPS**

WIDL – Trustee Adams explained that the library board consists of a representative from each township and the city. / There is a new outreach coordinator that will reach out to schools & nursing homes. / The library will be closed March 25<sup>th</sup> for floor replacement and circular desk final renovations.

**WIDL**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Supervisor Statement – Stafford stated that he continues to attend the PC meetings. / The road bids have come in. / The trailer toolbox was purchased. The original approved bid was for the trailer/mini/toolbox/buckets was up to \$35,000. They have spent \$31600 to date. They will be ordering a smooth edge bucket at an estimated cost of \$1800/township. (Bates, Iron River, and Stambaugh Twps.)

**SUPERVISOR  
STATEMENT**

Road Bids – Supervisor Stafford made a motion to proceed with the following road projects this year: dust control, Little Finland Rd, Forsberg Rd and 1 block of Rogers Avenue at an estimated cost of \$299,745. Supported by Trustee Adams. Roll call vote: Franzene, yes; Nelson, yes; Benson-Stafford, yes; Stafford, yes; Adams, yes. Unanimous. Motion carried. / Stafford said that it will cost approximately \$275,000 to finish Andreski Plat. He will pursue this project if Crystal Falls Township participates; however, they said no to 2026. / Margee Brennan asked about Passamani Rd. Stafford said that it will probably be scarified and turned back to gravel in the future.

**ROAD BIDS**

Vinnedge Rd Waterline Abandonment Deadline – There was discussion that the deadline for abandonment was February 2026. Both property owners were given 2 years of free water to allow them time to put in a well. Property owner 1 has since had medical challenges and cannot install a well and Property owner 2 said that they are on a contractor list for a well installation in May. Trustee Franzene made a motion to send another letter of waterline abandonment extension to May 1<sup>st</sup>. Supported by Supervisor Stafford. All ayes: Nelson, Franzene, Benson-Stafford, Stafford. Nays: Adams. Motion carried.

**VINNEGE  
RD  
WATERLINE  
ABANDON-  
MENT**

Fire Hydrant Rental Charges – Clerk Benson-Stafford made a motion to charge a flat hydrant fee of \$200 for set up and \$10 per 1000 gallons used. Supported by Nelson. All ayes. Motion carried. / It was further understood that each contractor would have to sign an agreement of liability and understanding of the terms.

**FIRE  
HYDRANT  
RENTAL**

Hydrant Meter – Clerk Benson-Stafford made a motion to approve the purchase of a hydrant meter at an estimated cost of \$2100. Supported by Trustee Adams. Roll call vote: Stafford, yes; Franzene, yes; Nelson, yes; Adams, yes; Benson-Stafford, yes. Unanimous. Motion carried.

**HYDRANT  
METER**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Fire Extinguisher Inspections – At the recommendation of DPW Treasurer Nelson made a motion to switch Vendors from J. Aherns to a private Houghton Company, which should result in a \$100-\$150 savings. Supported by Trustee Franzene. All ayes. Motion carried.

**FIRE  
EXTING.  
INSPEC.**

Kleiman Well #1 Rehab – Supervisor Stafford made a motion to approve the estimate of the rehab at a cost of approximately \$42,000 for a VFD, well rehab and pumping hardware replacement. This maintenance should be done every 10 years. This was last done around 2008, so it is due. Supported by Trustee Adams. Roll call vote: Nelson, yes; Benson-Stafford, yes; Stafford, yes; Adams, yes; Franzene, yes. Unanimous. Motion carried.

**KLEIMAN  
WELL #1  
REHAB**

Nick Baumgartner Sign Recognition – Trustee Adams made a motion to approve the \$425 cost to upgrade the plaques on the 3 township signs. Supported by Clerk Benson-Stafford. / Nick Baumgartner approved the sign verbiage.

**NICK  
BAUMGART-  
NER SIGN**

Windsor Rec Authority Ballot Language – Treasurer Nelson made a motion to approve the Resolution to Adopt Millage Ballot Language to be placed on the August 4, 2026, ballot. Supported by Trustee Franzene. All ayes. Motion carried. / A copy of the Resolution is on file with the Clerk.

**WINDSOR  
REC BALLOT**

Joint Public Bldg Restoration Administrative Board & Windsor Recreation Authority – Clerk Benson-Stafford made a motion to approve the bylaws as amended on 11/10/2025. Supported by Trustee Franzene. All ayes. Motion carried.

**WINDSOR  
BYLAWS**

2026-2027 Notice of Public Meetings – Treasurer Nelson made a motion to approve the Notice of Public Meetings. Meetings will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 4:00pm, subject to change. Supported by Treasurer Nelson. All ayes. Motion carried.

**2026-2027  
PUBLIC  
MEETINGS**

Township Property Sale Resolution – Clerk Benson-Stafford made a motion to adopt the resolution giving the Township Board the authority to sell township property. Supported by Treasurer Nelson. All ayes. Motion carried.

**TOWNSHIP  
PROPERTY  
RESOLUTION**

Financial Institution Deposit Resolution – Clerk Benson-Stafford made a motion to adopt the resolution to continue to keep/use the accounts that the township currently has through the Miners State Bank; and reserve the right to use a second depository. Also, the right to explore other financial institutions accounts upon the buyout of the Miners State Bank by Zeal Credit Union. Supported by Treasurer Nelson. All ayes. Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL  
INSTITUT.  
RESOLUTION**

**GUEST COMMENTS**

- Dowgwillo – Sunset Lake milfoil / Discussion about chemicals vs no chemicals; is the rest of the community going to vote on the milfoil mitigation; will there be a public hearing.
- Mike Golas – Discussion about milfoil mitigation options; and stated there was a successful fundraiser (fishing derby) and funds continue to be donated for mitigation.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- ICECA Report
- Iron County Board of Commissioners Letter – Board Vacancies

**ADJOURNMENT**

Treasurer Nelson made a motion to adjourn. Supported by Trustee Adams. All ayes. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:20pm. Next regular meeting will be held at the Twp Hall on Wednesday, April 8, 2026.

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Barbara Benson-Stafford, Clerk  
Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_