

Meeting of Sparta Township Board

Sparta Township Hall - 160 E Division St - Sparta MI 49345

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July 9th, 2026 - 7 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Dale Bergman, Clerk Marcy Savage, Treasurer Ashley Johnson, Trustee Bill Goodfellow, Barb Johnson, Jason Bradford, and Rob Steffens.

Also Present: MerriJo Library Director and Recording Secretary Sarah Fischer.

Absent: None.

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **Additions or corrections to the agenda:** Barb Johnson requested that the agenda be amended to correct the date listed under the Approval of Minutes from **May 11, 2026, to June 11, 2026**. A motion to approve the amendment was made by Bill Goodfellow and seconded by Marcy Savage. The motion was carried unanimously, with all members voting in favor.
4. **Public Comment on agenda items:** None.
5. **Approval of Minutes and Treasurer's Report:**
 1. **Approval of Minutes of June 11th, 2026:** Motion to approve the Minutes by Barb Johnson, second by Ashley Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, with all members in favor.
 2. **Treasurer's Report:** Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report by Rob Steffens, second by Bill Goodfellow. The motion passed unanimously, with all members in favor.
6. **Building Department Monthly Report:** Informational only.

Business Items:

1. **Approval of Bills:** Motion by Ashley Johnson with a second by Barb Johnson to approve the bills. The motion passed unanimously, with all members in favor.
2. **Cub Scouts Flag Placement Appreciation:** John Kozel, Cubmaster of Cub Scout Pack 3280, thanked the Board for allowing the Cub Scouts to continue placing American flags at veterans' graves each year. He shared that the scouts take pride in

maintaining the flags by repairing them before placement, retiring worn flags through a respectful ceremony each fall, and helping preserve the township's resources by extending the life of the flags. Kozel also highlighted the educational value of the project, noting that it teaches youth about citizenship, community service, and honoring veterans. He mentioned that Cub Scouts now welcomes both boys and girls and encouraged community support as the local pack works to rebuild membership. Board members expressed their appreciation for the Cub Scouts' continued partnership and discussed additional opportunities for collaboration, including cemetery restoration projects and ongoing maintenance efforts. The board also noted plans to purchase additional flags as current inventory is depleted and thanked the Cub Scouts for their dedication to honoring the community's veterans.

3. **Public Safety Revenue Sharing Allocation:** The Township Board discussed potential uses for its public safety revenue-sharing funds after meeting with a representative from the Kent County Sheriff's Office. The discussion focused on the Kent County Safety Network, a camera system that allows law enforcement to monitor public areas and respond more quickly to criminal activity. Board members reviewed several possible investments, including security cameras at township parks, intersections, township facilities, and other high-traffic locations. They also discussed the option of using funding to support an AED purchase for the Sparta Police Department and explored the possibility of connecting existing cameras owned by local businesses to the county's camera network. While members agreed additional information was needed before making decisions on the larger public safety projects, they emphasized the importance of keeping the funding invested within the township whenever possible. The board elected to postpone further discussion on cameras until more details are available.

Separately, in response to an immediate safety need at the township offices, Jason Bradford made a motion, seconded by Barb Johnson, to approve the purchase of five combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The motion passed unanimously, enhancing safety measures within the building. The motion passed unanimously, with all members in favor.

4. **New Township Hall Roof Quotes:** The Board reviewed multiple quotes for the township office roof replacement project. Specifications were sent to the roofing contractors, and three bids were received by the deadline and reviewed by the Board.

Submitted bids included:

- **Arrow Roofing:** \$48,884 for completion of the project.
- **Strong House Solutions:** Approximately \$48,840 for the specified roofing system.
- **Trident Roof Solutions:** Submitted a bid of \$55,890 for the original EPDM roofing specifications and an alternate bid of \$45,275 for a TPO membrane roofing system.

A representative from Trident Roofing explained the differences between the EPDM and TPO roofing options. The proposed TPO system would provide the same 20-year warranty while offering cost savings, improved durability, increased UV resistance, and a stronger membrane compared to the originally specified EPDM system. The contractor explained that TPO is a newer roofing technology that has become more widely used due to its durability, energy efficiency, and reduced installation costs. The Board discussed whether the alternate TPO option should be sent back out to the other bidders for a chance to provide pricing. Members noted that because the bid information and pricing discussion had already been made public during the meeting, requesting new bids at that point could potentially put Trident Roofing at a disadvantage. Other vendors would have knowledge of Trident's proposed pricing and could submit a lower bid based on that information, creating an unfair bidding environment. The Board acknowledged that while rebidding the alternate product would typically be preferred for comparison purposes, the circumstances surrounding the public disclosure of the bids needed to be considered.

After discussion, the Board determined that moving forward with the TPO roofing option from Trident Roofing provided the best value for the township while maintaining the desired quality and warranty. Motion made by Rob Steffens, with a second by Barb Johnson to approve the bid from Trident Roofing's, with the TPO membrane proposal for \$45,275. The motion passed with a vote of 6-0.

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. **CBDG Grant:** The Board received an update regarding the CBDG grant for the elevator project after several community members inquired about the status of the funding. Marcy reported that she spoke with the grant representative and was notified that the project is expected to move forward with grant support. Additional details regarding the final grant amount and funding approval are anticipated later this month.
2. **New museum in the Civic Center:** Barb Johnson shared that the Historical Commission have plans to develop a new museum space in the back portion of the

Civic Center. The Commission will be meeting this Saturday with a museum expert from the Grand Rapids Museum, who also serves as the curator for the Voigt House, to provide guidance and assistance with designing and organizing the new exhibits. The Friends of the Historical Commission have approved funding to support this project, providing compensation for 45 hours of assistance from the museum consultant throughout the summer. The Commission has already begun moving items from the Research Center basement and plans to relocate additional items from the schoolhouse in preparation for creating displays. The new museum will focus on the early history of Sparta, highlighting the community's development, lifestyles, and historical significance. The Commission expressed excitement about the project and is seeking volunteers to help with the museum's development and setup.

3. **Sports Park Drain Project Update:** An update was provided regarding the ongoing drain project near the sports park. The contractor has completed the work to remove silt from the pond on Eckland, including excavating the larger area behind the quad. The completed work was reported to be progressing well and has been cleaned up. The Board was informed that one portion of the drain project is approximately 80% complete, with 80% of the associated contract payments already issued. Another contractor working on a separate portion of the project is currently at approximately 20% completion. Upcoming work will continue from the pond area back toward Sparta and eventually toward the Rogue River, while additional work continues farther west into Ottawa County. During the project, it was determined that the removed silt material could not be used as topsoil as originally anticipated, so additional topsoil was brought in to complete the restoration. Minor repairs may be needed to the pathway due to construction traffic, but the area was reported to have been significantly improved. The Board also discussed the possibility of obtaining gravel for the township parking lot. It was decided to wait until the drain project progresses further before making a decision, as additional work and contractor payments are still underway.
4. **Township Website:** The Board received an update regarding the township website after learning the current developer, who has maintained the site for many years, will be retiring next year. The Board expressed appreciation for his work and the quality of the existing website. The developer will assist with the transition by helping transfer website content to a new provider and has provided recommendations for potential companies. Several options are being reviewed, including providers specializing in municipal websites, with costs ranging from approximately \$3,000 for a template-based site to around \$8,000 for a custom

design. However, the township will continue exploring options and provide additional updates as the process moves forward.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jeffrey Ferris, a resident of 279 Winter Pines Court, addressed the Board regarding concerns with a neighboring property's lack of maintenance, including excessive weeds and overgrown vegetation, which he believes is impacting the appearance and property values within the residential subdivision. He also raised concerns regarding the homeowner's association (HOA) structure and lack of clear bylaws. The Board recommended that Mr. Ferris speak with another Township representative to see if additional information or guidance could be provided. The Board noted that, in most cases, property maintenance concerns within private development are handled through the HOA and are typically outside the Township's authority. However, they acknowledged Mr. Ferris' frustration, as he was directed by the HOA to seek assistance from the Township.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 8:12PM by Marcy Savage, second by Ashley Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, with all members in favor.

Submitted by: Sarah Fischer