

*Powell Township's First Annual  
State of the Township Address*

*-- To be delivered during the November 18, 2025, Powell Township Board Meeting --*

**Good evening, everyone.** It's a real honor to welcome you to Powell Township's first-ever State of the Township Address. Tonight marks the start of a new tradition, a time each year when we look at what we've accomplished, recognize where we stand, and talk about where we're headed together as a community.

**Finances.** Let's start with the foundation, our finances. I'm proud to report that Powell Township continues to be in a strong and stable financial position. Over the past year, our net position grew by more than six hundred thousand dollars. Our General Fund ended with a balance of over one point six million dollars — a gain of more than three hundred and fifty thousand from the year before, and even slightly ahead of forecast. That kind of stability doesn't happen by accident. It comes from careful budgeting, thoughtful planning, and a shared commitment to using every dollar wisely.

**Infrastructure and Community Improvements.** When it comes to improvements, the biggest highlight of the year is without a doubt the work we've completed at Powell Township's Draver Park and Pavilion. We made a \$1.1 million investment in our community park, including a new concessions and restroom building and major updates throughout the facility. This project was made possible largely through the efforts of our Parks and Recreation Committee, whose hard work, planning, and dedication brought this vision to life. What makes it even more impressive is that 99% of the funding came through grants and donations. That means we achieved a major community upgrade — and we did it responsibly, without placing a burden on taxpayers. This project has transformed the park into a true gathering place for families, kids, and visitors, a space we can all be proud of. Our second major highlight this year was the resurfacing of County Road 550, stretching from town all the way to County Road 510. This improvement has made travel smoother, safer, and more reliable for everyone who lives, works, and visits here. We want to extend our thanks to the Marquette County Road Commission for their excellent work in completing this project. Their efforts made a big difference for our residents and for everyone traveling through our community. We also made significant improvements to our cemetery. This year's work included damaged tree removal, and new gravel laid down on the roadway, making the grounds safer, cleaner, and more accessible for families and visitors.

**Future Improvements.** Looking ahead, we're planning to upgrade the cemetery fence and continue other upkeep efforts in the years to come, to maintain not just the grounds, but the dignity and care that space deserves. As we look forward, we're also continuing to focus on projects that will strengthen our township for the years to come. One of our key long-term goals is sidewalk improvement, which will be a multi-year project to make Powell Township safer and more walkable. We plan to hire local help and complete the work in-house, keeping the investment right here in our community while saving costs and building local pride.

With these improvements will come a few community safety changes. We'll be moving toward parking on only one side of certain streets and enforcing no parking on sidewalks or in alleyways. These steps will help keep sidewalks open for pedestrians, roads clear for vehicles, and everyone moving safely through town. We're also preparing to chip-seal several township roads next year, a proactive step to extend the life of our roadways. We'll also be making improvements to the transfer station to ensure the building stays in good condition and continues to serve residents efficiently for years to come. Also next year, across town, we'll be implementing speed mitigation measures to calm traffic and improve safety in our neighborhoods.

We're always thinking about what's next — how we can continue to build a stronger, more connected community. One idea that's been discussed is a potential community center addition to Town Hall. It's not a set project, yet; but an idea we're exploring: a space for meetings, programs, and events that bring residents together. If it becomes feasible, we'd pursue grant funding to make it possible without adding any burden on taxpayers. For now, it's an idea, but one worth talking about and planning toward as our community continues to grow.

**More Public Safety.** Public safety continues to be one of our top priorities. Next year, our Fire Department will receive a new fire truck, funded primarily through a federal grant. That's a major investment that will strengthen our emergency response capabilities and help us protect residents more effectively. We're proud to welcome five new fire department recruits, who will begin training this coming spring. Their dedication ensures our department remains strong, responsive, and ready for the future.

We're also taking a more active approach to community policing, working together to keep our neighborhood clean, safe, and well-maintained. That includes addressing ORV traffic in town, illegal dumping, and minor vandalism in a fair, consistent, and cooperative way. We'll continue encouraging residents to report concerns, coordinating with law enforcement, and promoting awareness about proper trash disposal and property upkeep. Our goal isn't just enforcement, it's prevention. By staying involved and looking out for one another, we can keep Powell Township the kind of community we're all proud to live in. To our firefighters, volunteers, and local officers —thank you for your continued dedication and service.

**Service.** We're aiming to improve how we serve our residents day to day. Right now, our township office is open just two days a week. But that's about to change. We're hiring a front desk administrator, which will allow the office to be open Monday through Friday. That means residents will be able to stop by during the week to pay bills, pick up or submit paperwork, and get help in person. It's a simple but important change that will make local government more accessible and responsive for everyone.

**Upkeep.** We're taking steps to make Powell Township more beautiful and inviting. This year, we'll continue to focus on reducing blight and cleaning up overgrown alleyways. Opening those up will improve access, safety, and visibility, while giving our community a cleaner, more cared-for appearance. These are the kinds of efforts that build pride in where we live and show visitors that we take care of our township.

**Economic Growth and Engagement.** One primary focus as a community should be on economic growth and community involvement. Working to attract new businesses, while supporting the ones that are already here. By promoting our natural beauty, location, and quality of life, we're building a foundation for responsible growth that benefits everyone. And just as important, we're encouraging residents to get involved, to volunteer, serve on local boards, and participate in township events. The more connected we are, the stronger we become.

**Challenges.** Of course, we also face challenges, and we'll meet them with transparency and teamwork. We need to improve the water main along the dump road to ensure reliable service for residents. We also need to take a hard look at water billing costs and find solutions that are fair and sustainable. And like many communities, we're facing increasing landfill tipping fees, which will affect our solid waste operations. That will likely require an adjustment in next year's millage proposal for solid waste, to maintain reliable service and keep our system sustainable. These are not small issues, but they're manageable, and by planning carefully and working together, we'll overcome them.

**Gratitude.** Every success we've had, and every challenge we'll take on comes down to the people of Powell Township. I'm proud to say that I'm a Powell Township resident. I've spent most of my life here, and I know what makes this community special. The people, the work ethic, and the pride we all share in calling Powell Township home. To our township board, our staff, and our volunteers, thank you for your hard work and leadership. And to our residents, your ideas, your commitment, and your involvement are what make Powell Township such a great place to live. As we deliver this first-ever State of the Township Address, we're not just reflecting on what's behind us, we're setting our direction for the years ahead. Powell Township is financially strong, forward-thinking, and full of promise. Together, we're building a township that's safe, connected, and full of opportunity. A place where progress and pride move hand in hand. The state of our township is strong, and our future is even stronger. **Thank you.**



Levi Ellis, Powell Township Supervisor