

Powell Township Board Meeting
P.O. Box 319, 101 Bensinger Street, Big Bay, Michigan 49808
February 17, 2026
Minutes

1. Call to Order at 7:00 P.M. by the Supervisor.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call of Officers – Levi Ellis (Supervisor) present; Daryl Wilcox (Treasurer) absent; Sharon Mattis (Clerk) present; Stephen Girard (Trustee) present; Denise Hudson (Trustee) absent.
4. Approval of Agenda – **Motion** to approve Agenda (S. Mattis, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
5. Approval of Minutes – **Motion** to approve the January 2026 Board Meeting Minutes (S. Mattis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
6. Revenue & Expenditure Report – **Motion** to approve the January 2026 Revenue & Expenditure Report (L. Ellis, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
7. Budget Amendments Report – **Motion** to approve the January 2026 Budget Amendments Report (L. Ellis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
8. Treasurer’s Report - **Motion** to approve the January 2026 Treasurers Report (S. Mattis, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
9. Approval of Bills – **Motion** to approve the Bills to Be Paid (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
10. Committee & Department Reports:
 - a. Ambulance Department: K. Bourgeois/Ambulance Billing:
 - i. There were three (3) calls since the last meeting.
 - ii. We have our new trailer, and it is working well along with the side by side.
 - iii. One of the calls received was a personal injury accident and it was then cancelled. There are cell phones that automatically call 911 now.
 - iv. If you have that automated service on your phone, please be sure to call 911 back if you drop your phone. Please pass the word!
 - b. Emergency Management: K. Bourgeois/Emergency Manager: The next Food Bank opening is February 18 from 5 to 7 P.M. at the Bill Dionne/

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Halfway Fire Hall.

- c. Fire Department: M. Anderson/Fire Chief:
 - i. Fire training is going very well.
 - ii. There were four (4) calls for service since the last meeting.
 - iii. One call was for a stuck snowmobile, and our path to it was blocked by a wall of plowed snow. The groomer driver was able to reach and pick up the snowmobiler.
 - iv. It is possible that the Ambulance Department's cancelled automated cell phone 911 call was from a cell phone traveling on top of (or inside of) a fast-moving vehicle that dropped; this would explain 911 Dispatch thinking it was an auto accident.
 - v. The Fishing Derby weekend Pancake Breakfast went very well, and we raised \$1458.00 for the Fire Department. Thank you very much to everyone who volunteered for the pancake event, and to everyone who donated and ate pancakes. It was a great turnout.
 - vi. We may have another Pancake Breakfast during the Easter weekend. We are not sure yet of the timing, and we will coordinate with the team doing the Easter Egg Hunt to ensure the events complement each other.

- d. Parks and Recreation Committee: K. Cain/Chair:
 - i. Dotty LaJoye came to the monthly Committee meeting and spoke about deadlines for the Passport Grant. This grant will help fund the finishing touches needed to Draver Park.
 - ii. If anyone is willing, please provide the Committee with letters of support explaining Draver Park's importance and/or impact on the community. These letters will help with the grant justification.
 - iii. Dotty plans to have the grant ready for the Committee to review by next month. She will then need the Powell Township Board's review and approval to meet the April 1 deadline for grant submission.
 - iv. Heidi Shatz is putting together a Father's Day Meat Raffle using SuperOne Foods. The drawing will be on June 21. More to follow soon.
 - v. We are coordinating the summer events planned to include the Big Bay Relay, park maintenance, and planning and development and funding of other projects noted in the approved 5-Year Recreation Plan.
 - vi. Draver Park ribbon cutting event preparations are underway. Sven Gonstead has several to-do lists generated. We will have a proposed budget and more information soon.

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- vii. Darlene Turner is stepping down from the Committee. Thank you to Darlene who has been a driving force for the Committee. She spent a lot of her time helping in the old Draver Park cookshack and we remember. We appreciate her years and years of steadfast commitment. Her resignation will leave a big hole in the community. She was one of the founding members and volunteered for an incredibly long time -- she doesn't even remember how many years.
 - viii. Alita and Jim Miller were approved by the Committee to fill the now two (2) Committee vacancies, and we are very grateful for their timing and willingness to volunteer.
 - e. Planning Commission: D. Hudson/Trustee Liaison: The next regular meeting is March 18, 2026, at 7 P.M. in Powell Township Hall.
 - f. Sewer Department: C. Sorby for S. DeMoulin: All is well.
 - g. Water Department: C. Sorby/Water Operator: There were a few emergencies related to communications failure with the power outage and a recent water pipe freezing. All things resolved without further issue.
11. Correspondence
- a. From the State of Michigan: You may qualify for up to \$34,000 in free home weatherization upgrades. This could lower your heating and cooling costs and upgrade your home's systems, seals, and insulation. This program is state-funded and completely free for qualifying households. Flyers with all contact information are in town hall, on bulletin boards, and available on request by contacting 906-767-0067 or visiting greatlakesweatherization.com.
 - b. From Marquette County: Please take a moment to complete the Marquette County Master Plan Update community survey. Your input will help shape updates to the county's official planning. Flyers are posted throughout town with a QR code to the survey. You can also visit www.mqtccoplan.org for the survey and more details.
 - c. From the Central Upper Peninsula Materials Management Planning Committee: We will have a work session on Thursday, February 19, at 1 P.M. online and in the Delta County Service Center in Escanaba. Discussions will include materials management and regulation of trash, recycling, and composting activities in counties including Marquette. More information is

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available at www.cuppad.org.

- d. From the Red Cross: Together with local volunteers, fire departments, State Farm, and FEMA, we are installing FREE smoke alarms in your community. You can request an installation now. Flyers with all details are available throughout town or by contacting Taylor Mikal at 906-295-1352 or taylor.mikal@redcross.org.
- e. From the Powell Township Assessor: The 2026 March Board of Review (MBOR) schedule is as follows.
 - i. The Organizational Meeting is Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 2:00 P.M.
 - ii. Written petitions must be received by Tuesday, March 10, 2026
 - iii. The first MBOR Meeting is Wednesday, March 11, 2026, 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.
 - iv. The second MBOR Meeting is Thursday, March 12, 2026, 3:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.
 - v. All meetings are at Powell Township Hall, 101 Bensinger Street, Big Bay, Michigan, 49808. For questions, contact: Dylan Jurasin, Powell Township Assessor, 906-361-6787, assessor@powelltownship.org; powellassessor@gmail.com.
- f. From Powell Township:
 - i. Current township job postings are available at the powelltownship.org main page and on community boards. The postings are for:
 - 1. General Office Clerk
 - 2. Recording Secretary
 - 3. Election Inspector
 - 4. Planning Commission Member
 - ii. There will be a Highline Updates and Q&A Forum on Monday, February 23, 6 to 8 P.M., in town hall. The Highline Chief Executive Officer and the President/General Manager will be here to discuss the status of service and upgrades in the township and to answer questions.
 - iii. The Powell Township Committee of the Whole Meeting is on Wednesday, February 25, 3 to 5 P.M., in town hall, and will include draft 2026-2027 Budget discussions. The meeting is open to the public.
 - iv. The Powell Township Draft 2026-2027 Budget Public Hearing will be March 17, 6 P.M., in town hall. The draft budget will post soon.
 - v. Save the date for the Draver Park Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on June 6 at 1 P.M. Everyone is welcome.

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- g. From Powell Township Emergency Management:
 - i. The Bill Dionne (Halfway) Fire Hall Food Bank opens the first and third Wednesday of the month from 5 to 7 P.M. through March 2026. The upcoming dates are February 18, March 4, and March 18.
 - ii. Food Bank donations can be dropped at town hall or by coordinating with the township Emergency Manager. Dry goods and toiletries are also accepted. Any donations are greatly appreciated.
 - iii. In March we will decide on openings for any further spring dates.

- h. From the Marquette County Senior Center:
 - i. There is still a part-time Big Bay Homemaker Aide job available. Notices are posted in town hall and offices, and throughout the township. If interested, please use the contact information on the job posting, or call the center's office at 906-228-0456.
 - ii. More free Senior Services Days are scheduled for Powell Township Hall for the first Thursday of March, April, and May as follows. Appointments are free of charge and open to all seniors in the area. One goal is to help clients with items such as health insurance enrollment. To schedule an appointment, call 906-228-0456. Flyers with all information will also post online and throughout town soon.
 - 1. March 5, 8 A.M. – 3 P.M.
 - 2. April 2, 8 A.M. – 3 P.M.
 - 3. May 7, 8 A.M. – 3 P.M.

12. Presentations: Safe Routes to School Grant Application Update / Sven Gonstead (see presentation posted under board meeting documentation)

Public Comment:

Sven Gonstead - The Honey Bear Classic Ski and Snowshoe Event was great this year, as was the entire weekend in Big Bay, with several events and residents all together. We had 100 participants in the Honey Bear, and we raised around \$3,000.00 for the trails throughout Big Bay. The weather was amazing. Thank you so much to Coty Sorby for the expert trail grooming and maintenance timing -- it was a fast trail this year.

Unfinished Business: None.

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New Business:

1. **Motion** to approve 2026 township meeting time and date cycles (L. Ellis, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
2. **Motion** to approve a Powell Township Principles of Governance policy for board signature (L. Ellis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
3. **Motion** to approve the February 4, 2026, Marquette County Dust Control Activities Letter of Understanding for signature. Estimated cost is \$3,597.66 (L. Ellis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
4. **Motion** to approve a \$377.00 payment to Bensinger, Cotant, & Menkes from other functions professional services funds for bill dispute and tax tribunal legal services (L. Ellis, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
5. **Motion** to approve a \$900.00 payment to Treado Engineering & Development from professional services funds for township water system master plan services (L. Ellis, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
6. Ambulance Department: **Motion** to approve a purchase up to \$700.00 from supplies funds for two new medical bags and a portable oxygen regulator (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
7. Ambulance Department: **Motion** to approve a budget amendment to move \$1,500.00 from ambulance equipment funds to ambulance payroll wages funds (S. Mattis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
8. Fire Department: **Motion** to approve a \$350.00 payment to Elcom from communications funds for a base radio power supply replacement (S. Girard, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
9. Fire Department: **Motion** to approve a purchase up to \$500.00 from building repairs funds for a thermostat plus installation to enable remote temperature warning alerts (S. Girard, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
10. Buildings and Grounds Department: **Motion** to approve a \$500.00 purchase from equipment funds for a portable welding and cutting kit (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
11. Buildings and Grounds Department: **Motion** to approve a \$600.00 purchase from equipment funds for a 42-inch tool chest (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor,

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motion carried.

12. **Motion** to approve a 2026 agreement and \$600.00 payment amount from professional services funds for Upper Peninsula Substance Enforcement Team (U.P.S.E.T.) services (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
13. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve the resignation of Darlene Turner as treasurer (S. Mattis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
14. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve the appointment of Alita Miller as a member (S. Mattis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.
15. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve the appointment of James Miller as a member (S. Mattis, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
16. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve a purchase up to \$300.00 from operational supplies funds to refill the summer youth events foam machine (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
17. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve a \$2,500.00 lumber purchase from repairs and maintenance funds for trails maintenance (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
18. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve a \$1,000.00 aggregate rock purchase from Thomas Rock operating funds for maintenance purposes (S. Girard, S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
19. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve a \$3,000.00 aggregate rock purchase from Powell Township Recreational Network operating funds for maintenance purposes (S. Girard S. Mattis). All in favor, motion carried.
20. Parks and Recreation Committee: **Motion** to approve a \$3,500.00 purchase from equipment funds for 2 bits for a skid-steer auger (S. Girard, L. Ellis). All in favor, motion carried.
21. Transfer Station: **Motion** to approve a \$550.00 payment to North Country Disposal from repair and maintenance funds for floor drain repairs (S. Mattis, S. Girard). All in favor, motion carried.

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Public Comment:

- B. Schultz – There are major concerns about data centers coming to lower Michigan. We stopped the rocket launch facility by being proactive about it in the right timing, and I am hoping we can do the same regarding data centers. The centers are a huge drain on the environment, on land and water resources, and on electricity consumption, and the promise of jobs has not been delivered. The University of Michigan’s Ford School of Public Policy July 2025 report on data centers outlines these items with facts. I want us to be aware now; if we hear rumbling, I am hoping we all want to be proactive in handling the issues so that they do not ruin the current way of life for us.
- C. Sorby - Heartfelt gratitude to Darlene Turner for so many things she accomplishes all the time for the town; she will be sorely missed. Also, an echo about the great weekend in Big Bay, seeing all the events. It was nice to see everyone out for the weekend in our town.
- P. Thoma – I also echo the sentiments; I have been Darlene Turner’s sidekick for many, many years and will miss her very much.
- D. Turner – I am not going anywhere and I am still volunteering.

Board Comment:

- S. Mattis – Thank you to Darlene Turner for her many years of service. I would also like to thank Coty Sorby and Scott DeMoulin for everything they do to provide winter trail services and accessibility. There is so much snow, and they work really hard. Thank you also to Alita and Jim Miller for filling the Parks and Recreation Committee gap.
- L. Ellis – I also thank Darlene Turner for her service and roles – Supervisor, Deputy Supervisor, Parks and Recreation, many others, and now the Board of Review. She has served the community in many ways for most of my life and still does. Thank you very much. Thank you also to Alita and Jim Miller for stepping into the Parks and Recreation Committee. It can be a challenge to find good people. On that note, and regarding data centers: I am trying to get Planning Commission membership up because it is an important and integral part of town planning, plus stopping things like data centers, and protecting the town spirit in general. Once we can get caught up and more plans implemented, then it will help. For the pancake breakfast, thank you to the Auxiliary Fire Department for helping cook and serve so early, and to the Fire Department members who volunteered. We even made lakeside deliveries to Fishing Derby participants on Lake Independence using the side by side. Thank you also to Scott DeMoulin and Coty Sorby and staff who helped us get the place ready; it took about

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3 days to prepare and upgrade prior to the food permit inspection in the early hours before breakfast. The result was raising \$1458.00. Thank you to the community for attending and supporting us, and for their generous contributions.

Next Meeting: Regular Board Meeting Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 7:00 P.M.

Adjourn 7:51 P.M.

Minutes prepared by: Deputy Clerk