

West Branch Township

*1016 County Road 545 N
Skandia, MI 49885*

Kris Shaw – Supervisor

*Deena Barnhart – Clerk
Catherine Shaw – Treasurer*

*Laurie Beauchamp – Trustee
Matthew Barnhart – Trustee*

RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING FEBRUARY 24, 2026 7:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

In attendance were Chair – Kris Shaw, Vice Chair – Ray Johnson, Secretary – Natalie Chmiko, Catherine Shaw, Nellie Turton, Brenda Aldrich, and Brandon Chmiko.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Review & Approve Agenda – There was a motion to approve the agenda by Ray Johnson, supported by Brandon Chmiko. None opposed, motion carries.
- B. Review & Approve Minutes from last meeting on January 5, 2026 – The group discussed a couple typos (Turton & Johnson) and changed an inaccuracy in the roll call (Aldrich not a delegate) and removal of the absent member line. After edits were confirmed, there was a motion to approve the minutes by Brandon Chmiko, supported by Nellie Turton. None opposed, motion carries.

5. GRANT UPDATE

- A. Tribal Grants – Kris Shaw reviewed grants that the township is seeking to support recreation efforts.
 - i. Sault Tribe – Trustee Laurie Beauchamp has put in a 2% funding request towards the material costs of a pavilion, requesting \$12,000 total. This application request was approved at the last township board meeting.
 - ii. KBIC – Brenda Aldrich provided information on the 2% gaming revenue distribution from Keweenaw Bay and highlighted projects funded in the past. The plan would be to seek funding for playground

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equipment to replace/enhance the existing play equipment. Kris Shaw suggested that this application request go before the township board at the special meeting on March 9, 2026. Brenda will work with Laurie to coordinate documents.

Kris Shaw motioned to approve the application submission, delegated to Brenda and Laurie, Nellie Turton supported the motion. None opposed, motion carries.

- B. DNR Grants – Kris Shaw shared that the township board recently hired Bill Sanders from Sanders & Czapski Associates, PLLC to support the 2026 grant application. Bill is a landscape architect and will help us refine our proposal and site plan. The current site plan draft was shared with the group and public, which included all development areas, which will be refined down for this year’s application. The township anticipates going for the Trust Fund and Recreation Passport grants.

The group discussed enhancing the park over time and future projects could include additional bathrooms, concessions, pavilions, etc.

- C. Other Grant Opportunities – None.

6. 2026 RECREATION PROJECTS

- A. Development Subcommittee Report Out (Kris, Ray, Brandon)

Recently, the township purchased 6 picnic tables, though the \$5,000 grant from the Skandia Lions club. The plan is to get brass plaques to add to the tables noting their contribution.

Additionally, Ray Johnson has put together a plan for a 36’x56’ pavilion, and the materials from Menards were \$12,200, although there may be additional materials needed. Ray and Brandon Bray (Skandia Lions Club/Cross) are planning to approach Travis Cross to see if they’d be willing to support with trusses. The group was in favor of offering to name the Pavillion after Skandia Truss, if they donated.

7. FUNDRAISER – Sept 12, 2026

- A. Marketing Subcommittee Report Out (Ray, Cherry, Natalie)

Natalie Chmiko shared copies of the first draft of the flyer. The group suggested some edits including swapping out the Big Lake Acoustic logo, adding a tractor and motorcycle, adding the township phone number and formatting changes.

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Catherine Shaw shared that the League of Women voters would like to attend as a vendor, and we would keep it free, but donations are encouraged for all vendors. Any vendors that would like to be included can email the township.

Ray Johnson shared that he called Texas Roadhouse to determine dates for our fundraiser. The group suggested bringing flyers and staffing with 1-2 people. Ray and Brenda volunteered to go.

Kris Shaw shared that Skandia Lions club won't do a pancake breakfast for us, since they did one for recreation efforts already.

Additional marketing efforts include radio ads and TV coverage, through Media Brew, TV6 and other local stations. The group will aim to do this in August.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Kris proposed that we set the next recreation meeting. Group agreed to May 4, 2026 at 7:00pm. An additional meeting will likely take place in August as the tailgate is closer.

The group also will look into costs of additional grounds equipment like pavilion floor gravel, commercial playground equipment, bleachers, etc. for the grant opportunities. Brenda, Nellie and Ray volunteered to look for options, to be finalized for the March 9 special board meeting.

9. EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT

A member of the public asked if the changes to the recreation plans require a public hearing and whether or not the zoning administrator or planning commission need to be involved. Kris Shaw shared that it requires board approval and there will be opportunity for the public to share feedback at the March 9th special meeting.

Another member of the public asked about native landscaping and trees along the property line and if we can incorporate that into our master recreation plan.

10. MEETING ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.