

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI 49686

www.peninsulatownship.com

Agricultural Advisory Committee Regular Meeting

January 20, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Township Hall

Notice/Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge
3. Roll Call
4. Brief Citizen Comments (for agenda items only)
5. Approve Agenda
6. Conflict of Interest
7. Consent Agenda
 - A. Approve meeting minutes:
 - Agricultural Advisory Committee Regular Meeting November 18, 2025
8. Business:
 - A. Committee Organization
 - Select Officers
 - Confirm Calendar
 - B. Introduction of Small Processor Draft Ordinance
 - C. Planning Commission Updates
 - Farm Signage Recommendations
 - Amendment 201 Acreage Minimum Recommendation
 - Agritourism Memo sent September 18th
 - D. Town Board Updates
9. Citizen Comments
10. Board Comments
11. Adjournment

*** If you would like to use a portable hearing device, please ask the recording secretary.**

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**Agricultural Advisory Committee
November, 18, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.
Township Hall
Minutes**

1. **Call to Order** by Kroupa at 2:00 p.m.

2. **Pledge**

3. **Roll Call**

Present: Hemming, Heller, Bramer, Johnson, Coggon, Baldyga, Gomez, Kroupa.

Late: Edmondson

4. **Citizen Comments: none**

5. **Approve Agenda**

Baldyga moved to approve agenda as presented with a second by Hemming. Motion passed by consensus

6. **Conflict of Interest: none**

7. **Consent Agenda:**

1. Approve meeting minutes from Agricultural Advisory Committee Regular Meeting, September 16, 2025

Baldyga moved to approve consent agenda as presented with a second by Hemming. Motion passed by consensus

8. **Business:**

A. Committee Member Changes

Secretary Erin Hafeli has resigned; committee expressed their appreciation for Hafeli's work. Nick Johnson has been appointed as second alternate by township board and Chris Baldyga has moved into voting member position. Committee reviewed requirements for secretary role. No volunteers. Town board supervisor Sanders volunteering to fill in secretary role for one month.

B. Planning Commission/ Town Board Updates

Beard [PC representative] reviewed sign ordinance red line edits as presented in packet, which are still under discussion at PC with types of signage, size, quantity, location and respective zoning districts. PC is looking for feedback on the current edits. Comments can be sent in writing to planner and Beard and those will be passed on to re-write committee and PC.

Committee discussed seasonal versus temporary, setbacks for signage, and permit requirements for on premises. The regulation and limitation of "incidental signs" within the property had pushback from committee. Feedback will be reviewed by PC at December meeting.

Recommendation from AAC [Agricultural Advisory Committee] for adjusting acreage minimums to standard 40 acres has general support from the zoning rewrite committee and PC. Currently being reviewed by planner for the implications of that change on the rest of the zoning code. Concern

was raised by Heller that the AAC's recommendation of 40-acre minimum had not explicitly stated the uses. Beard agreed to pass on that the AAC's 40-acre recommendation includes uses as previously stated for 60-acre minimum in zoning amendment 201.

Sanders gave update for town board. Zoning administrator position is being interviewed for, vacant seat on PC accepting applications. Jed Hemming is attending the zoning rewrite committee meetings.

C. Update from Small Processor Subcommittee

Subcommittee member Molly Stretton: meeting regularly, both as a collective group and individually to gather feedback from Peninsula Township farmers. We are continuing to compile data, explore ideas and shape an outline of potential ordinance language. Our goal is to have a draft ready in December. There's a lot of momentum from multiple groups to develop a farm ordinance that is fair, practical and aligned with state and federal laws and norms. I am personally committed to working collaboratively with those groups and individuals as we move forward.

D. Introduction of Old Mission Citizens Coalition

Hemming introduced the establishment of the organization, aimed at addressing concerns they have with Peninsula Township governance concerning examples such as agriculture and shoreline regulation. Focussing on an independent review of township ordinances. President Fred Swaffer and Secretary Fred Woodruff introduced themselves. Edmondson expressed his hope for the coalition to be advocates for the agricultural community perspective.

E. Discussion of next area of focus for AAC

Baldyga raised desire for the continued focus on opportunities for small processors. Sub committee is currently working on developing some guidelines and hoping to bring forward next month. Heller requested further review of the sign ordinance after reworking at PC level. Beard confirmed that before anything goes to public hearing at PC level the AAC will review first. Hemming gave a recap of the work the sub committee will be bringing in December for review, citing some small processor examples that could be better supported to keep more land in agricultural use. First concern addressed will most likely focus on acreage.

9. Citizen Comments:

Fred Woodruff, 4824 Forest Ave: suggest as you go through this process of redoing the zoning ordinance, that there are experts. Agriculture is going through tremendous change. That's what I've learned meeting with this group [Citizens Coalition]. MSU Extension Service, Groundworks, there's a group that's holding a summit on agritourism. A lot of expertise that could be brought to this body as an advisory group, who then advises the PC, who then goes to the rewrite committee. There could be public hearings that are more than just citizens giving their personal views. People who have expertise, independent and unbiased. Advice and data on what you ought to consider as you carve up the township and decide uses by right, uses by special conditions, etc.

Fred Swaffer, 1045 Gray Road: stress the importance of small farms. Acreage in that five to 39 acre range. The cost of entry for new farmers on the Old Mission Peninsula is cost prohibitive at 40, 80, 100-acre parcels. Parcel down the road from me, 1.8 million, 80 acre farm. Vacant four or five years now. Had a buyer, but the numbers didn't work. New farmers, as some of us old people age out, where are they going to come from? How are they going to afford entry? The only way is with smaller parcels, to try to build their business. The more farms we have, the less houses we have. The less houses, the less stress we have on our land. Perfect example on the corner of Montague Road. Hawthorne Vineyards. Mr. Hawthorne had the authorization to build 35 homes. That's 35

wells, 35 septic tanks, 70 vehicles, and who knows what else. What kind of carbon footprint is that? How much carbon are his grapevines sequestering? Those are the things we have to think about when we think about farming. They are preserving our views. They are bringing value to the residents of the peninsula. Their stories don't always get out. We have to work harder getting their story out to the public, who just want to live their life, until some unfortunate thing comes up that gets their attention. They go, "Oh, maybe I should have been watching what's going on." That's my goal, and I think the purpose of the organization.

10. Board Comments:

Sanders gave a safety reminder in light of the past weekends tragedy, with the shooting of a Peninsula Township resident in Traverse City. Tensions have been rising, and a winery owner's recent aggressive confrontation with a township committee member was reported to the sheriffs department.

A FOIA request has been made by a winery owner and will be released at their request to the public concerning recent social media references to the wineries "5-acre plan."

Edmondson brought up concern that home occupancy businesses are generating traffic and operating under the "honor system" of self reporting for registration at the township level.

Regulation is expected by obvious overuse being reported by neighbors. Baldyga expressed same equivalency should be expected for agricultural use.

11. Adjournment

Gomez moved to adjourn at 3:45 p.m. with a second by Baldyga.

Passed by consensus

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP FISCAL 2026-2027 REGULAR MEETING DATES

	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Town Board	14 th	12 th	9 th	14 th	11 th	8 th	13 th	10 th	8 th	12 th	9 th	9 th
Town Board - 2nd Meeting	N/A	26 th	N/A	28 th	N/A	22 nd	N/A	N/A	N/A	26 th	N/A	N/A
Planning Commission	7 th	5 th	2 nd	7 th	4 th	1 st	6 th	3 rd	1 st	5 th	2 nd	2 nd
Zoning Board of Appeals	21 st	19 th	16 th	21 st	18 th	15 th	20 th	17 th	15 th	19 th	16 th	16 th
Parks Committee	27 th	27 th	22 nd	22 nd	24 th	23 rd	26 th	16 th *	14 th *	27 th	22 nd	24 th
Ag. Advisory Committee	21 st	19 th	16 th	N/A	18 th	15 th	N/A	17 th	15 th	19 th	16 th	16 th

Township Board, P.C. & Z.B.A meetings are held at the township hall at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

Township Board 2nd meetings are held at the township hall at 3:00 p.m. unless otherwise posted

Parks Committee meetings are held at the township hall alternating on Mondays at 3:00 p.m. one month and Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. the next month unless otherwise posted.

Agricultural Advisory Committee meetings are held at the township hall at 2:00 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

Note: all meeting dates are tentative.

**Meeting changed from originally scheduled date.*

Becky Chown, Clerk

Adopted: TBD

Posted: TBD

a public hearing, including analysis from the zoning administrator on slope-related requirements, confirmation of remaining tree cover and long-term protection options, and clarification of engineering standards. Request that the incoming zoning administrator be fully briefed and provide input before the matter proceeds further.

b. Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Discussion

i. Amendment 201 Acreage

Review of proposed revisions regarding acreage-based agricultural uses. Staff explains that the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) recommends lowering the threshold so parcels of 40+ acres would be eligible for the same uses and privileges currently limited to parcels of 60 acres or more. Staff presents preliminary data showing 81 parcels in the township that are 40 acres or larger, including approximately 40 parcels between 40 and 60 acres that could become newly eligible under the proposed change. Members note that the data provides only a high-level snapshot and does not indicate how many parcels are already in agricultural production or associated with existing wineries or farm operations. Staff/PC agrees that additional context is needed to assess potential impacts and suggests further analysis, data sharing, and consultation with the AAC.

ii. Signage Draft Ordinance

Review of updated draft signage ordinance revisions from the McKenna Group and identifies several unresolved issues. Members agree that the revisions reflect prior feedback but that additional clarification and full commission input are needed. PC decides to defer further action until a future meeting when more members are present and to refer the draft to the AAC for additional review. Members express concern about requiring permits for seasonal agricultural signage and emphasize avoiding unnecessary administrative burden. Discussion on extending the allowable duration for one-time event signs remains open.

iii. Shoreline Draft Ordinance

Review a heavily reorganized/marked-up shoreline ordinance draft prepared by McKenna and township counsel and hears counsel's legal overview that the township's role is to regulate upland land use impacts and the exercise of riparian/littoral rights, while avoiding jurisdictional overreach into state and federal permitting. In working through the draft section by section, PC proposes targeted simplifications: add riparian/littoral references to intent sections; remove or replace several land use permit triggers (especially for shared docks and a second dock on wide-frontage lots); keep the 8-foot dock width cap but exempt patios and swim platforms; and tighten wording in definitions, storage, and measurement references. PC flags the dock-placement/setback framework as overly complex and recommends a clearer "no encroachment into setbacks" rule, paired with an administrative-first dispute process (zoning staff with standards and appeal to ZBA) to handle irregular shoreline geometry and neighbor conflicts. Commission decides to retain the "three hoists per 50 feet" standard without proration for now and identifies the longstanding shared-waterfront parking language as needing clarification so the long-used shoulder-parking interpretation is explicit rather than discretionary.

Next steps are influenced by the need for clarity and timing before dock installation season. Staff outlines a tight timeline involving incorporation of comments, review by McKenna and legal counsel, coordination with the zoning administrator, and required publication deadlines. To ensure accuracy before a public hearing, the commission agrees to hold a special meeting on January 14 at 4:00 p.m. solely to review the revised draft. The commission defers setting a public hearing for the February 5 regular meeting until after that review, with the goal of staying on track for township board consideration and timely enactment.

c. Planning Commission Training Opportunities

Beard describes option training opportunities for commissioners which include the MSU Extension Citizen Planner course (online, self-paced, \$250 reimbursable through the township), MTA online training, and the more advanced Master Citizen Planner credential. Beard proposes arranging a parliamentarian-led session on Robert's Rules to improve meeting efficiency and procedure. Commissioners express appreciation for the guidance, completion of at least the MSU course, preferably proactively, is encouraged, noting its practical value and flexibility.

Parcels 40+ acres in Peninsula Township (December 2025)

Parcels.pnum	Parcels.propclass	ParcelMaster.totalacres
11-223-010-00	101	40
11-109-010-54	101	40
11-132-009-00	101	40
11-116-006-00	101	40
11-008-001-00	101	40
11-018-012-00	101	40
11-116-014-00	102	40
11-005-012-00	402	40
11-115-022-00	101	40.03
11-115-015-50	101	40.22
11-031-004-05	402	40.7
11-128-023-00	101	40.85
11-122-012-55	401	41
11-115-014-20	101	41.96
11-119-002-00	402	42.52
11-134-001-00	101	43.63
11-008-014-55	102	44.44
11-104-022-00	101	45
11-102-002-00	102	45.42
11-122-029-00	101	46.51
11-109-028-02	402	46.66
11-110-015-00	102	46.68
11-115-005-00	201	48.16
11-234-001-01	401	48.53
11-017-037-00	101	49.69
11-102-007-00	101	49.86
11-226-002-00	101	50.37
11-103-010-00	101	51.56
11-227-013-10	402	52.6
11-134-021-03	102	53.56
11-110-006-00	101	55.05
11-565-957-00	402	56.1
11-134-004-11	401	56.84
11-102-005-00	101	58.15
11-018-009-55	402	58.23
11-120-001-00	401	58.59
11-115-038-55	102	58.72
11-128-025-01	402	58.98
11-134-003-04	401	59.3
11-228-002-00	401	59.86
11-227-013-03	102	60.18
11-103-003-00	101	60.87

Prop Class Legend

- 101 Agricultural Improved
- 102 Agricultural Vacant
- 401 Residential Improved
- 402 Residential Vacant

26 parcels

14 parcels

11-127-032-00	401	61.4
11-226-002-10	102	62.88
11-103-006-00	101	66.87
11-227-011-55	101	68.18
11-127-001-06	401	69.51
11-133-001-56	101	70.35
11-018-006-01	201	71.32
11-127-022-00	101	74.36
11-104-001-00	101	74.53
11-110-001-00	102	76
11-003-025-03	102	79.3
11-117-010-00	101	79.5
11-122-007-00	101	80
11-116-002-00	101	80
11-103-012-00	101	80
11-116-017-00	102	80
11-116-015-00	102	80
11-008-018-00	401	80
11-227-001-65	401	80.04
11-109-002-00	101	83.6
11-127-025-55	101	83.7
11-104-013-55	101	84.58
11-003-001-02	102	94.6
11-110-013-00	101	95.5
11-117-008-55	401	96.92
11-127-016-56	201	98.3
11-128-010-00	101	98.63
11-133-009-00	101	100.44
11-234-035-55	101	101.14
11-121-006-00	101	102.75
11-225-001-00	401	104.25
11-004-020-56	101	105.07
11-134-008-55	401	114.7
11-226-006-55	101	116.48
11-226-001-00	402	120
11-223-004-00	402	136.62
11-121-003-55	402	145.54
11-131-001-00	401	200.68
11-223-005-00	402	260

41 parcels

81 parcels total