Minutes
Penn Township Advisory Board Meeting
St. Joseph County Indiana
Penn Township Trustee's Office
210 E Russ Ave, Mishawaka, IN 46545

June 1, 2026

In attendance:
Kent Hizer – Board President
Mark Voelker-Board Member
Kris Verash – Board Member
Doris Portolese- Trustee
Chief Gerndt – Fire Chief

Members of the public in attendance:
None
On-line attendance:
Nancy Duncan

Meeting was held at Station #14 – 13960 Jackson Road, Mishawaka
5:30 pm- Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order: Kent Hizer

New Business for Penn Township Board:

- Approval of April 6, 2026 minutes. Kent motioned for approval. Kris Verash second it. Minutes approved.

'd Business:

- Dorris – we are still waiting for the DLGF (Department of Local Government Finance) regarding the status of expanded fire territory. This organization "represents / protects" the taxpayers, by reviewing documents, that the approval process was handle properly per Indiana code. Mark Voelker asked if they could still reject this – Dorris does not think so, they could only request modifications or alter the levy amount. Per Kent, there is a possible $0.40 cap in levy amount change and there is some uncertainty if the replacement fund amount is included in this levy cap or can be considered separate. The response should be soon.
- Dorris is proceeding with getting quotes for re-doing the office parking lot. Need to get 2 quotes. The primary issue is if a new dry well will need to be installed. There is hope to get this moving forward within the next 30 days.

Chief Gerndt Report:

- Chief Gerndt summited April and May Incident reports. These months are within an expected result. April was 206 calls and May at 187.
- Department is working through various vacancies within the department. There is a new lead paramedic which is balancing out some of the vacancies. There are several solid candidates. Chief hopes to make offers in June with starting dates in July.
- Joe Pain will be returning to work June 5th. He will be on limited duties for a while to get reacclimated to department and job. Kent praised the teamwork and efforts by all firefighters to support Joe regarding personal time. Once again showing the outstanding team of firefighters that work for Penn Township.
- Penn South and Penn North reunion in April – about 80 people showed up.
- Chief is planning to apply for a grant to get self-contained breathing apparatus (Scott Brand) which is the same as Clay Fire Department. Old equipment could be traded in.

Trustee's Report:

- Accounts will be balanced by end of week, and TA-7 will be sent.
- Went to new website provider. Penn Township has an updated website. Dorris and her team will be able to update the content internally. This will save some money. There has been an uptick in township assistance.
- Dorris is hosting an ITA Northeast district. Dorris is one of 9 district ITA directors in the State of Indiana.
- Dorris is also attending an informal meeting regarding the new Fire Territory, with other townships leaders to begin discussion on what will be involved with joining Clay and Penn fire departments. Can't move forward with anything until DLGF approves the expanded territory.

Good of the Township:

- Nancy Duncan asked question on what the process would be if a Township would like to exit the new fire territory. Kent and Dorris explained about the annual review process and what would be involved if such a decision would be made.

Call for adjournment: ~~5:30 PM~~ 6:00 PM Hizer made a motion to adjourn. Voelker second. Unanimous vote to adjourn.

Next Meeting: Monday, July 6, 2026 – 5:30 PM at Trustee's office. There is a chance that the meeting will be held at Fire Station 14 if there will be any new firefighters to swear in.

