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

July 6, 2026

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

Members of the public in attendance:
Nancy Duncan
Gary Deardurff
On-line attendance:
None – audio was active – no video



5:30 pm- Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order: Kent Hizer

New Business for Penn Township Board:

- Approval of June 1, 2026 minutes. Kent corrected the noted ending time of meeting. Changed to 6:00 PM. Kent motioned for approval. Mark Voelker second it. Minutes approved.

Old Business:

- Doris is still waiting for the DLGF (Department of Local Government Finance) regarding the status of expanded fire territory. No update from last month. Doris reminded everyone even though we approved this expanded territory at the end of March, the actual paperwork got submitted several weeks afterwards. Kent expressed concerns about Doris's ability in submitting a 2027 budge with this approval delay. Doris plans to have preliminary budget finished within the week for general township assistance. Further firefighter budget data can be budgeted as an estimate based upon history which be added if needed. Doris will do this and have available incase approval delays extend pass budget session. Doris has met informally with the other two Trustees from the new fire territory, reviewing issues about the merger. They are hopeful to hear from DLGF in late July or early August.
- Parking lot has been marked, and is ready for repair. Mike Furry had shoulder surgery, his son is filling in taking care of cemeteries. Quotes for parking lot was around $8000 plus costs to replace dry well. Quotes were within $1800 of each other. Any repair to the dry well will be charged time and material. The extent repair and of the cost of damaged dry well can only be known when it's dug up.

Chief Gerndt Report:

- Chief Gerndt reported while traveling from Indianapolis. Mike will summited May and June Incident reports tomorrow. No unusual incident was recorded.
- Department is working through various vacancies within the department. The first round of physical ability testing completed. Two more are scheduled, then they will begin the process of offering jobs for the two open positions. Ideal candidates would be paramedics which would replace the two that left the force. Focus is to get more lead paramedics. Chief Gerndt would like to have 2 per shift, which he hopes to accomplish within next 2 months. The plan is to have more paramedic in lead training afterwards. One issue of becoming a lead paramedic is to have the sign-off by Memorial and St. Joseph Hospitals medical directors. No longer using Elkhart General Hospital medical director.
- Joe Pain is at 100% full duty.
- Possible time line for New Fire Territory budget approval could mean having budget hearings in August or September with approval a month later.

- Mark Voelker asked about the status of shooter training that Penn fire department was trying to set up. Chief Gerndt said that there was plenty of interest by fire departments, but they only had less than 20% of the required law enforcement personal needed to proceed with the training. At this point no training is scheduled.

Trustee's Report:

- June's reports were sent earlier, and TA-7 will be sent within a few days.
- Doris will send out rough drafts of budget in a few weeks, which will be available for next board meeting.
- Kent requests data in excel spreadsheet if possible.
- August will be the budget hearing, and September will be the adoption meeting. September will be held the second Monday due to Labor Day holiday. (September 14)

Good of the Township:

- No comments

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

Next Meeting: Monday, August 3rd at the Trustee office. This could be moved to Station 14 if we have new firefighters to swear in.