

**Au Train Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes**  
**August 11, 2025 6:00PM - 8:23PM**

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Roll Call:

Board Members Present: Supervisor Tom Balmes, Clerk Mary Johnson, Treasurer Kristy Cota, and Trustee John Carr. Absent: Trustee Jake Miller. Others present: Donna Shields, Justen Knuttila, Ryan Walther, Joan Potter Sommer, Alex Kolton, and Eryn Grupido.

Supervisor Balmes opened our August 11, 2025 meeting at 6PM leading us with the pledge.

Approval of the Agenda:

Moved Johnson/seconded Cota to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes:

Moved Johnson/seconded Carr to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2025 Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried.

Moved Balmes/seconded Cota to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2025 Special Board Meeting. Motion carried.

Financial Reports:

Clerk Johnson presented the July, 2025 and Quarterly Financial Reports. Reports are provided to Board Members prior to the meeting. No Budget Amendments recommended.

Pay Bills:

Moved Cota/seconded Carr to pay bills. Cota, yes; Carr, yes; Johnson, yes; Balmes, yes. Motion carried. (General Fund #17530-17552; Fire Fund #9383-9392; Garbage Fund #2155; Road Fund #3019).

Board Member Reports:

Treasurer - Balance as of July 31, 2025: General Fund \$294,339.69; Fire Fund \$432,093.83 + CD \$55,130.10; Garbage Fund \$303,541.37; Road Fund \$181,392.91.

There is an upcoming hall rental on August 20<sup>th</sup> for the Secretary of State Mobile Office Event. The CFR monies were received and will process for August. Summer Tax Collection continues with office hours scheduled for September 15<sup>th</sup>.

Clerk - Since the July Meeting several emails, and FOIA requests were responded to. Preparation for the July Special Meeting, Election Administration ConEd, Workers Comp Audit, MML Insurance Renewal Application, Parcel Division Applications, and the finalization of the UpAhead Proposal were started or completed.

Trustee's - Trustee Carr noted that he met with the Window Store representative to confirm door sizes before ordering. They will provide an estimate for replacement windows in the main storage room for review at our September Board Meeting.

Supervisor - Supervisor Balmes indicated recent meetings attended with the Fire Department, Board of Review, and US Fish and Wildlife. Also addressed garbage concerns and has an upcoming meeting scheduled with MDOT and the ACRC regarding the Orange Bridge on Woodland Ave. The bridge is part

of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Railroad/Trail Bridge was completely removed. It is scheduled for replacement in 2026. The trail will remain open with alternate M28 use allowed to bypass the closure on the trail for snowmobiles.

Supervisor Balmes noted there may be grant monies available for the mouth of the Au Train River and will continue to monitor. Discussion regarding emergency notification and the plan through the Alger County Sheriff Department and Alger County Emergency Disaster Plan. Also, a reporter from "Under the Bridge" will be doing a story on the Forest Lake Dam and the concerns that the Township Board and residents have about its future and stability of the dam.

Special Presentation: Alger County Conservation Districts Alex Kolton and Eryn Grupido provided information on invasive species in the Township and requested permission, which was granted, to install Decontamination Station signage at the Heritage Trail site. Future locations and suggestions are always welcome.

Public Comment: Joan Potter Sommer provided information to the Board on an upcoming Alger County Renewable Energy Solutions collaboration with Alger County Solarize hopes to offer solar panels at a discounted rate for a group purchase. An upcoming meeting is scheduled for September 18, 2025 at 6:00PM at the Munising Township Hall.

#### Boards/Departments:

Maintenance Department: Ryan provided an update to the Board on recent maintenance issues and projects. Work concluded on the removal of the trail tressel bridge and the park was reopened for Public access. Ryan shared more information regarding the kayak launch dock and more damage and repairs that will be needed. Complete removal of the dock and/or launch and how it might affect our lease with the DNR, ADA compliance and monies spent for repairs every year and the benefit it provides was addressed. Clerk Johnson will pull the lease and update the Board at the September meeting. There is a community service worker that is working on projects throughout the Township.

Fire Department: Assistant Chief Justen Knuttila provided the July Department report and it is on file. There were 3 calls for the month. Turn out gear for a new member Brad Steinhoff has been ordered. They would like to put the older pumper, stored in Christmas, up for sale on bids. It is a 1996-1997 truck. There would be a \$5,000 minimum. The Fire 1 And 2 upcoming classes will be using the Christmas Hall.

Clerk Johnson provided information to the Board on the propane pre-purchase options for 16 Mile Lake Fire hall. UP Propane \$1.699 per gallon and Superiorland Gas Co. \$1.94 per gallon. Moved Cota/seconded Johnson to contract with UP Propane at \$1.699 per gallon and pre-purchase propane for the 16 Mile Lake Fire Hall in the amount of \$1,389.64. Motion carried.

Assessor/Board of Review - Report received and on file. Information regarding the July Board of Review Meeting was provided. New construction and regular field inspections are both underway. Letters were sent to all property owners who will be visited this year.

Zoning Administrator/Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals- Zoning Administrator Donna Shields was present and provided her report. Additional information was provided, along with upcoming meeting August 21<sup>st</sup> and hearing schedule details. Discussion regarding several Zoning Violation complaints filed by one individual was made, with clarification and response recommendations from Attorney Nordeen.

Unfinished Business:

1. Board Action Items - None

2. Ordinance Enforcement Officer - The Ordinance Enforcement Officer Ordinance was reviewed, along with discussion on the person(s) responsible for enforcement. Review of the process will be addressed at the September Board Meeting.

New Business:

1. Correspondence - None

2. Civil Infraction Ordinance - Clerk Johnson provided the Civil Infraction Ordinance for consideration by the Board.

Moved Cota/second Balmes to approve the Au Train Township Civil Infraction Ordinance 2025-001. Cota, yes; Balmes, yes; Johnson, yes; Carr, yes. Motion carried. See Attachment No. 1

3. Zoning Fees - After review and discussion of possible increased fees for applying after the fact to bring their property into compliance. The Board requested additional information from Zoning Administrator Shields to revisit and discuss at the September Board Meeting.

4. L-4029 Review - Clerk Johnson presented the L-4029 Tax Rate Request form for the Winter Tax Collection for review and approval. After discussion and reliance on the millage rates used to determine the 2025-2026 Approved Budgets for all funds, Moved Johnson/second Cota to authorize the following rates be collected for the 2025 Tax Rate Request (Form L-4029): General Fund Operate - 0.6758; Fire Fund - 2.9895; Garbage Fund - 2.0000; Road Fund - 1.9930.

Public Comment: Public comment, via email, was received from Duane Newton.

Board Member Comments: None.

Next Meeting: The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2025 at 6:00PM

Adjournment: Motion Balmes/seconded Johnson to adjourn at 8:23PM. Motion carried.

Submitted by Mary Walther Johnson, Clerk

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Mary Walther Johnson

APPROVED DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared: 08/22/2025  
mwj