

# Bengal Township Board of Trustees

## Regular Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2026 7:00 PM – 9:11 PM

### 1. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Bengal Township Board of Trustees was called to order at **7:00 PM** by **Supervisor McDonald**.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

### 3. Roll Call

- **Present:** Supervisor McDonald, Clerk Bassette, Trustee Sillman, Trustee Tipper.
- **Absent:** Treasurer Solomon.
- **Note on Attendance:** It was officially noted for the record that Treasurer Nolan Solomon was absent from the proceedings.
- **Community in attendance:** Aliza Robison, Zach Rudat, Jody Smith, and Lynda Roof.

A quorum was declared present.

### 4. Approval of Agenda

The board reviewed the agenda.

- **Motion:** To approve the agenda as presented.
- **Motion by:** Trustee Tipper
- **Second by:** Trustee Sillman
- **Decision:** Motion carried.

### 5. Approval of Minutes

The board reviewed the minutes from the March 11, 2026, regular meeting and the March 23, 2026, Budget Public Hearing.

- **Motion (March 11 Minutes):** To approve the minutes of the March 11, 2026, regular meeting as presented.
  - **Motion by:** Trustee Sillman

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- **Second by:** Trustee Tipper
- **Decision:** Motion carried.
- **Motion (March 23 Minutes):** To approve the minutes of the March 23, 2026, Budget Public Hearing as presented.
  - **Motion by:** Trustee Sillman
  - **Second by:** Trustee Tipper
  - **Decision:** Motion carried.

**6. Public Comment**

- **Public Comment on Agenda Items:** n/a
- **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:** n/a

**7. Reports**

**a. Township Assessor Report – Dr. Holley:** n/a

**b. Planning Commission – Trustee Tipper:** Brief discussion held regarding frontage requirements for 5-acre parcels.

**c. Library Report – Eliza Robison:** Eliza provided an update on the Briggs District Library, noting that 57% of Bengal Township residents are active cardholders. She presented information regarding the upcoming library millage renewal, emphasizing its necessity for maintaining operations.

**d. Commissioner Report – Zach Rudat:** Commissioner Rudat provided an extensive update on county affairs, including the preservation of Planning and Zoning services and the upcoming data center moratorium hearing on April 9th. He also updated the board on the county jail booking area project and expanded walk-in hours for Veterans Affairs.

**e. St. Johns Fire Chief Report:** n/a

**f. Clinton County Road Commission Report:** n/a

**g. Sheriff Report:** n/a

**h. Delegate Report:** n/a

**i. Clinton Transit Report – Jodi Smith:** Report provided noting that ridership remains strong. Highlights included the "My Ride" app, which allows users to book and track

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rides from their smartphones. It was noted that they are continuing to evaluate routes to ensure efficient coverage for rural township residents and mentioned ongoing efforts to maintain a full staff of drivers to meet community demand.

**j. Clinton Area Ambulance:** n/a

**k. Treasurer Report – Nolan Solomon:** n/a (Absent)

**l. Clerk's Report – Clerk Bassette:**

- The Clerk presented the financial reports and noted that a comparison was conducted with the Treasurer's report.
- It was identified that there are currently minor differences between the two reports; these discrepancies will be reviewed and corrected by the **Deputy Treasurer Schultheiss** to ensure both sets of records are fully reconciled.
- **Motion:** To approve the Clerk's report as presented.
- **Motion by:** Trustee Sillman
- **Second by:** Trustee Tipper
- **Decision:** Motion carried.

**8. Payment of Current Bills**

**Clerk Bassette** presented the current bills for the board's review. Discussion was held regarding the fee structure for Dallas rescue runs; the Clerk clarified the billing differences between standard runs and refusal/limited service runs.

- **Motion:** To approve the payment of current bills in the amount of **\$1,892.21**, and include a check of up to **\$875.00** to the **Deputy Treasurer Schultheiss** as a computer stipend, for a total of **\$2,767.21**.
- **Motion by:** Trustee Sillman
- **Second by:** Trustee Tipper
- **Decision:** Motion carried.

**9. Unfinished Business**

- **a. Millage or assessment discussion for EMS:**
  - The board evaluated the financial instability of ambulance services and the projected rise in costs.

- It was decided to pursue a **voter-approved assessment** rather than a millage to provide the township with necessary funding flexibility.
- **Supervisor McDonald** was assigned to consult with the township attorneys to draft the specific legal language for the assessment ballot.
- **b. Road and Chloride Millage Discussion:**
  - The board decided to leave the **Roads and Bridges millage** at its current rate.
  - The **Chloride millage** will be reduced to **1.0 mill** for the next three years to address a current surplus exceeding \$100,000.
  - To further utilize the restricted chloride fund, the board decided that the chloride portion of gravel road projects will now be paid directly from the chloride fund rather than the general road fund.
- **c. Frontier coming Thursday 8am:** Update provided regarding high-speed internet installation.
- **d. PA 233 (Renewable Energy):** Supervisor McDonald provided a reminder of oral arguments scheduled for April 15, 2026.

## **10. New Business**

- **a. Holley Assessing Contract:**
  - The board held a discussion regarding the performance of the Township Assessor. Concerns were raised regarding a lack of professionalism and the inability to complete required tasks in a timely manner.
  - **Supervisor McDonald** noted that the contract was approved last month and he has signed it; he will send a PDF of the contract to **Clerk Bassette** to keep a copy on file.
  - **Decision:** Following discussion of the performance issues, the board concurred to table the matter for one month for further consideration.
- **b. Computer Stipend (Deputy Treasurer Schultheiss):**
  - **Resolution:** **Clerk Bassette** presented and the board adopted a formal Computer Stipend Policy and Resolution (No. 04082026) to provide a one-time payment for a **computer** to be used for township business.

- **Policy Discussion:**
  - **Clerk Bassette discussed** the requirements of the stipend policy; it was established that the receiving employee must sign a formal agreement acknowledging the terms of the stipend before funds are disbursed.
  - **Clerk Bassette** noted that because the computer remains the property of the employee rather than the township, IRS regulations require the stipend to be processed as taxable income through payroll rather than as a non-taxable reimbursement.
- **Motion:** To approve the Resolution for the Computer Stipend Policy and for the **Deputy Treasurer Schultheiss** stipend, in an amount not to exceed **\$875** (grossed up to provide approximately \$700 after taxes), to be issued via payroll check by the Clerk.
- **Motion by:** Trustee Sillman
- **Second by:** Trustee Tipper
- **Roll Call Vote:**
  - **Supervisor McDonald:** Yes
  - **Clerk Bassette:** Yes
  - **Trustee Sillman:** Yes
  - **Trustee Tipper:** Yes
  - **Treasurer Solomon:** Absent
- **Decision:** Motion carried.

## 11. Board Comments

General comments shared by board members regarding local road conditions and seasonal maintenance.

## 12. Motion of Excused Absence

- **Motion:** To excuse the absence of Treasurer Nolan Solomon.
- **Motion by:** Supervisor McDonald
- **Second by:** Trustee Tipper

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- **Decision:** Motion carried.

**13. Adjournment**

**Supervisor McDonald** adjourned the meeting at **9:11 PM**.

**Clerk Certification** I certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete record of the Bengal Township Board of Trustees meeting held on April 8, 2026.

**Clerk Bassette**