

Hope Township Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

August 11, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S. M-43, Hastings, MI 49058. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Members present: Bob Norton, Larry Heslinga, Christine Zuzga, Jr Homister, Drew Chapple.

Members absent: None.

Others Present: Township Planner/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed.

Agenda: Motion by Homister, supported by Zuzga, to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting minutes: Motion by Homister, supported by Zuzga, to approve the July 14, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

General Public Comment: None.

Data Center Discussion: Mehmed discussed his communication with Attorney Kaufman regarding data centers and moratoriums. Kaufman suggested that the Township consider adopting the moratorium language provided by the Michigan Townships Association while the Township further evaluates data centers, impacts, and any potential locations. The results of the moratorium don't need to result in any particular action, but time should be taken to determine the direction. Mehmed explained that there is a model ordinance for both zoning and regulatory, and that the Township would need to adopt both. Mehmed further explained that the zoning text amendment language also provides a process for future moratoriums unrelated to data centers.

The Commission reviewed and asked questions about the model ordinances. There was plentiful discussion regarding the findings language in the zoning text amendment example. The Commission directed Mehmed to modify it and make it more general so that it aligns with the intent of the text amendment as not being just for data centers. Homister clarified that the Planning Commission does not need to do anything with the regulatory ordinance, that is for the Township Board. Mehmed stated that he is correct. The Commission determined that it would likely be in the best interest of the Township to move forward with a moratorium, and

asked Homister and Mehmed discuss with the Township Board for future action and direction.

Shipping Containers: Mehmed presented an updated draft text amendment addressing shipping containers, accessory buildings, boat houses, and manufactured homes. Mehmed explained that the additions to draft 2 include moving some exclusion language to Section 10.24 to ensure that it is clear that mobile homes, semi-trailers, and modified wheeled structures cannot be used as accessory buildings. The updated draft also includes an updated definition for manufactured home and a new definition for mobile homes referencing the manufactured home definition due to the synonymous use of both terms throughout the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission expressed that they were satisfied with the changes and directed Mehmed to post a notice for public hearing at the September meeting.

Short-Term Rentals: Mehmed stated that he provided the Planning Commission with a copy of the Yankee Springs Township short-term rental ordinance for discussion and comparison with the County draft, as requested. Norton asked if rentals had been an issue. Mehmed stated that he gets very few complaints, but there are a lot of calls from potential buyers and real-estate agents regarding whether it is permitted in the Township. Heslinga shared that Wilkinson and Cloverdale have had some issues with renters being loud out on the lake at night. Chapple stated that he is aware of quite a few on Long Lake. The Commission discussed the need for such an Ordinance, or if a simple registration would be sufficient. There was further discussion about whether or not short-term rentals are explicitly permitted in the Zoning Ordinance and if that should be clarified. The Commission determined to hold off on any ordinances or drafts until after more pressing topics have been addressed.

Zoning Administrator: Norton asked about the Master Plan. Mehmed noted that the public hearing can be held at the September Planning Commission meeting. The Commission agreed that they were ready to move forward. Mehmed stated that he would draft the notice and send it to the paper.

The Planning Commission discussed moving the September meeting to Tuesday, September 15th to ensure that all members could be present for the Master Plan public hearing. All agreed.

Mehmed shared that there may be several variance requests before the Zoning Board of Appeals in the coming months. Norton stated that he wouldn't be able to make those meetings due to conflicts in his schedule.

Adjournment: Motion by Homister, supported by Heslinga, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Christine Zuzga
Christine Zuzga, Secretary

8-11-2026
Date