

**FAWN RIVER TOWNSHIP**

**ST JOSEPH COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**FACILITIES USE AND ACCESS POLICY**

**ADOPTED: 06-09-2025**

**EFFECTIVE: 06-09-2025**

1. **Scope.** The intent of this policy is to establish access and use procedures for the Fawn River Township Hall and Fire Department annex building located at 31194 Faw River Rd., Sturgis, MI, within the Township (hereinafter “township hall property”). Township-owned cemeteries are addressed under the cemetery ordinance. If the Township acquires other property, such as a park, for public use, such property will also be separately addressed.
2. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidelines for use of and access to the township hall property and to ensure the efficient uninterrupted administration of the township government.
3. **Facilities.** The township hall property consists of a township hall building, parking area and proposed fire department annex building. The Fawn River Township Hall building functions as an office building/place in which the Township conducts occasional day-to-day business and as a public meeting room. Within this policy, the Township Board determines that portion of the township hall building that is open to public access and use; and the degree of public access and use. The proposed Fire Department annex building is a separate building, located on the Township Hall property, and is intended to house a fire truck and to provide access and parking facilities thereto for members of the Tri-Township Fire Department. The Township Hall building and the fire department annex building are public property, but they are not open to public use unless the township board has so directed in this policy or any amendment thereto. The meeting room portion of the Township Hall building is accessible to the public in accordance with the Open Meetings Act of Michigan and otherwise in accordance with this policy.
4. **Parking Areas.** While parking areas are generally open to the use of the public, it is imperative that the fire department and its members have access to the fire department annex building to be located on the northwest side of the property. To that end, the Township Board has designated and marked a “clear traffic area” where no parking, driving, loading or unloading is permitted excepting for fire department members and employees as necessary for the performance of their duties. Pedestrian use of such parking areas is permitted subject to the fire department’s right-of-way.
5. **Township Hall building.**
  - a. Fawn River Township officials and employees are not required to keep public office hours, except as dictated by statute (i.e. Treasurer for tax collection). Officials and employees with offices in the Township Hall need not open the hall for public

access when they are undertaking their responsibilities unless required by statute to do so. Members of the public should not, therefore assume that the building is unlocked and available for entry unless he or she has made a prior appointment with an official or employee. The following positions are authorized to receive keys to the township hall building:

- i. Clerk and Deputy Clerk (if deemed necessary or expedient by the Clerk)
- ii. Supervisor
- iii. Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer (if deemed necessary or expedient by the Treasurer)
- iv. Trustees of the Township Board
- v. Members of the Fire department designated by the Township Supervisor and/or board.

**b. Posting of office and non-public areas within the Township Hall building.**

The office area of the Township Hall building must be protected from unwarranted damage or disruptions in order to ensure the efficient and uninterrupted administration of township government. These areas of the Township Hall are neither designed nor intended for public access. Only Township Officials, staff, and specifically designated individuals are permitted in the office areas. No person shall be permitted to film or photograph any persons or materials in the office area except Township Staff performing work directly related to Township administration or upon invitation into the office by the holder of that office. The township office area must be free of distractions in order to permit the governmental entity to function and to that end, the Township Supervisor or his/her designee shall clearly mark and cordon off (if necessary) the office area of the Township Hall and clearly identify these areas as not accessible to the public.

**c. Public Meetings.** Fawn River Township Boards and Commissions holding meetings in the meeting area of the Township Hall comply with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261 et seq. as amended. Public access to a public meeting being held by a Township board or commission in the meeting area of the Township Hall is governed by the Michigan Open Meetings Act, to which all boards and commission of the Township are required to adhere. In addition to the meeting room portion of the Township Hall; the public is permitted to access the hallways and public bathrooms of the township hall building for the duration of any public meeting.

**6. Proposed Fire Department Annex building.** The fire department annex building is not open to the public and is not accessible except by Township Officials (as necessary) and fire department members and shall be locked during times it is not actively in use by members of the department. At the Township Supervisor's discretion, the Fire Department parking area may be opened to the public for fire department activities such as "touch a

truck” to which the public may be invited. The fire department and Township Supervisor shall coordinate any such activities and may designate those areas to which the public may be permitted during the limited time of such event. This policy does not require the Township to allow such activities; which may be more appropriate at the main fire department building.

Motion by Ware, supported by Robison to adopt the within policy effective immediately and to direct the Township Clerk to distribute to officials and employees and to post at the Township Hall and on the website at [www.FawnRivertwp.net](http://www.FawnRivertwp.net).

The members voted as follows:

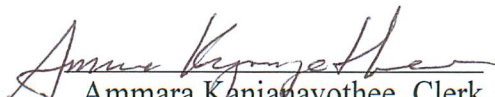
Ay: Schwartz, Himes, Kanjanayothee, Ware, Robison

Nay: none

The Supervisor declared the motion passed and the policy adopted.

#### CERTIFICATE

Ammara Kanjanayothee, the duly elected Clerk of Fawn River Township, St. Joseph County, Michigan certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a policy adopted on June 9th, 2025 at a regular meeting of the Fawn River Township Board; that the meeting was conducted and public notice of the meeting was given pursuant to and in compliance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act; that a quorum of the Board was present and voted in favor of the policy; and that the minutes of the meeting will be or have been made available as required by the Open Meetings Act.

  
Ammara Kanjanayothee, Clerk  
Fawn River Township,  
St. Joseph County, Michigan