

**YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES Regular Meeting**

Thursday, May 8, 2025

6:00 pm

Yankee Springs Township Hall  
284 N. Briggs Rd., Middleville, MI 49333

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

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YS Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
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Routing 5/19/25

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Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM by Supervisor Rob Heethuis

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**INVOCATION**

**Roll Call:** Dave VanHouten, Rob Heethuis, Larry Knowles, Tom Hopkins (All Present)

Absent with notice: Deb Mousseau

**Staff Present:** Rich Beukema, Frank Fiala, Brad Williams, Dennis Buist, Dan Miller

**Visitors:** 8

**ROLL CALL**

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Roll Call Vote:** VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION TO ACCEPT  
AGENDA**

**Consent Agenda**

• Minutes from Board Meeting April 10, 2025	
• IPA Township Renovation #34: April 1, 2025 Auto Pay	\$ (5,689.47)
• AP Checks as of 04/10/2025: Check #918460-#918482	\$ (24,547.95)
• AP Checks as of 04/29/2025: Check #918483-#918501	\$ (23,559.26)
• Payroll Checks #8240 (out of sequence) #8166-#8202 Fire/BOR 04/14/2025	\$ (13,523.94)
• Payroll Checks #8203-#8227 end of the month P/R General	\$ (20,789.13)
• Mid-April Payroll Federal withholding tax (mainly fire) 04/14/2025	\$ (3,324.14)
• Federal Payroll withholding tax end of April 2025 General Payroll	\$ (8,578.43)
• Additional adjustment for March State withholding tax	\$ (4.37)
• State monthly withholding tax April 2025	\$ (1,819.36)
	\$ (101,836.05)

**Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to approve the consent agenda. Roll**

**Call Vote:** Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTON TO APPROVE  
CONSENT AGENDA**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:**

County Commissioner Catherine Getty  
Assistant Fire Chief Dan Miller  
Township resident Bill Bryker

- Commissioner Getty shared the activities taking place at the county level.
- Bill Bryker (potential appointee to the Gun Lake Improvement Board): Introduced himself and gave some background. He has a home on Gun Lake purchased in 2019 and likes everything the community has to offer. Prior to this they owned a cottage on Silver Lake and while there he became involved as a chemist with the water quality and continues to be interested in using this background to help ensure good quality water for Gun Lake. His career was spent as a chemical engineer.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Prepared by Deb Mousseau, Treasurer

- April 2025 Financial Statement and Investment Report have been reviewed by the board members.

**Motion by Knowles with support from VanHouten to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Roll Call Vote:** Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**CLERK'S REPORT:**

- Special Assessment for Deer Sight Drive

**Motion by Hopkins with support from Heethuis to accept Resolution #05-08-2025 A for a special assessment for the Deer Sight Drive Road improvement.** Discussion: Mr. Hopkins has verified the names and is ready to accept it as a resolution and suggests the hearing to be set for May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Notifications will be sent out on Monday. The cost will be approximately \$52,000.00. **Roll Call Vote:** Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- The township has been informed that our contract with BS&A will increase in cost for the next fiscal year to approximately \$20,000 from \$7,500 due to the new cloud-based system. The system the township currently uses is old and being phased out. This will need to be addressed by the new budget if the township continues to contract with BS&A. Other options are being investigated.
- No check register to approve yet this month.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:****Planning Commission:**

- PCI April 2025 report in board member packet.
- April 17, 2025 meeting:
  - Held public hearings for two STRS in Whispering Pines.

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS****TREASURER'S REPORT****MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURER'S REPORT****CLERK'S REPORT****MOTION TO ACCEPT RESOLUTION #05-08-2025 A – SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR DEER SIGHT DRIVE****PC REPORT**

- Approved an SEU for an outbuilding in Streeter's resort.
- Discussed mining and ponds and will hold a public hearing regarding the pond ordinance next week.
- Recommending a change in zoning district for Whispering Pines from Resort and Recreation to Gun Lake Residential Lakefront.
- The Zoning Department has asked that the Planning Commission look into a burning ordinance, particularly with regard to the burning of household waste.
- The Planning Commission talked about an on-call planner which is being looked into by Mr. Heethuis and Mr. Hopkins and will be discussed next month.
- Next regular meeting May 15, 2025 at 7:00 PM.

#### **Zoning Board of Appeals:**

- No meeting since the last Board meeting.
- Next meeting will be June 10, 2025 if needed.

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to approve the land division request of Benjie Vista, ID #16-030-003-00. Roll Call Vote:** Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve Resolution #05-08-2025 B to rezone Whispering Pines Condominiums from a resort and recreation to Gun Lake Residential Lakefront.** Discussion: Maybe the motion should reflect that it won't go into effect until July which gives time to get information out and process any applications. It is not a resort so the Planning Commission felt it was a better fit. **Roll Call Vote:** Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes; Knowles: yes; Heethuis: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion by Heethuis to adopt an Ordinance to amend the YST zoning ordinance including the zoning map by rezoning certain common elements in the Whispering Pines condominium subdivision, (consisting of twenty condominium units) and open space located in the southwest fractional quarter of Section 30 T3N, R10W from Resort and Recreation District to Gun Lake Residential Lakefront District; to repeal all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith and to establish the effective date of said ordinance.** Motion dies for lack of support.

Discussion: Mr. Knowles believes it should reflect the start date for the ordinance to go into effect and suggests to make it August 1<sup>st</sup>, allowing the owners to have time to apply for STR permits.

**Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to adopt an Ordinance to amend the YST zoning ordinance including the zoning map by rezoning certain common elements in the Whispering Pines condominium subdivision, (consisting of twenty condominium units) and open space located in the southwest fractional quarter of Section 30 T3N, R10W from Resort and Recreation District to Gun Lake Residential Lakefront District; to repeal all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith and to establish the effective date as August 1, 2025.** **Roll Call Vote:** VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

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#### **ZBA REPORT**

**MOTION TO APPROVE  
LAND DIVISION REQUEST  
PARCEL ID #16-030-003-00**

**MOTION TO APPROVE  
RESOLUTION  
#05-08-2025 B TO REZONE  
WHISPERING PINES  
CONDOMINIUMS**

**MOTION TO ADOPT  
ORDINANCE TO AMEND  
THE YST ZONING  
ORDINANCE BY REZONING  
WHISPERING PINES  
CONDOMINIUMS**

#### Fire/EMS Report:

- April 2025 Fire/Emergency Medical responses in board member packet.
  - Deputy Fire Chief Dan Miller reviewed the report.
  - Total fire dispatches year to date are at 54, similar to 60 in 2024.
  - Total emergency medical dispatches year to date are at 99, compared to 100 in 2024.
  - Out of the 19 medical emergencies for the month of April, eight of them were responded to by YSTFD EMRs during their duty shift. The remaining eleven were answered by YSTFD EMRs on their time off.
  - Chief Miller also reviewed the current personnel status and training for the past month.
  - Mr. VanHouten inquired about assigning someone to be responsible for recruiting and retention. Chief Miller says it is handled by everyone and is mostly word of mouth.
  - Cost recovery was mentioned with regard to energy companies when the fire department is called out and has to wait for up to several hours.
  - Chief Jordan has stated that things are going well and he will likely be ready to step down on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### Park Committee:

- Work has been started on the pickleball and basketball court renovation.
- It is expected to be completed by the third week in June.

#### Recycling Committee:

- Household hazardous waste collection at the Barry County Fairgrounds will be May 17 and September 30, 2025.

#### Veterans Committee:

- Memorial Day Celebration will be Sunday, May 25 at 4:00 PM.
- Mick Lane is the chairperson and is putting together the program.
- Julie Fox of the Curly Cone will again provide food for the event.
- Discussed if a board member should be a liaison to the committee now since Mr. VanHouten is no longer on the committee.

#### Clean Water Committee:

- The water system has applied to Senator Slotkin for a grant and there has been some interest in that. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund is another grant that is available.
- The next step is to have a public hearing and would like to do that on May 22 along with the Public Hearing for the Special Assessment for Deer Sight Drive Paving.

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to have a public hearing on May 22, 2025, at 6:00 PM for the DWSRF grant.** Discussion: To be held at the same time as the public hearing for the Special Assessment. **Roll Call Vote:** Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Mr. Knowles: There's talk of a possible development in Wayland Township that would touch our water system. Would the Board have interest in expanding to handle this development? It was talked about as approximately 90 houses. In the

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#### FIRE/EMS REPORT

#### PARK COMMITTEE REPORT

#### RECYCLING COMMITTEE REPORT

#### VETERANS COMMITTEE REPORT

#### WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

#### MOTION TO SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE DWSRF GRANT 05/22/2025

past Yankee Springs has not crossed over to other townships. It would require an increase in arsenic removal and possibly a third well. It would likely be financially advantageous to Yankee Springs to serve this area. The Board is interested in the possibility.

**GLASWA:**

- Not much going on other than educating the public about the new rates.

**Board Action Items:**

- Gun Lake Improvement Board (GLIB): Sally Smith has resigned from the committee. Bill Bryker is the suggested replacement.

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to accept Sally Smith's resignation from her appointment to the GLIB.** **Roll Call Vote:** Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Thank you to Sally Smith for all she does for the township.

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to appoint Bill Bryker to the GLIB.** **Roll Call Vote:** Hopkins: yes; Heethuis: yes; VanHouten: yes; Knowles: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Bids for the walking path refurbishment.
  - One bid was received.
  - The company doing the other work at the park does not have the equipment to do a path.
  - The bid is from Greenbauer Asphalt for \$60,000.00. Don DeVries reviewed the bid and thought it was a good bid.

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to accept the Greenbauer Asphalt bid of \$60,000 to repave the Township Park walking path.** Discussion: The board discussed the recommended subbase and the township engineer believes it to be the proper way to do it. This would be done immediately after the current project is completed and would take no more than three days. **Roll Call Vote:** VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to hire Travis and Sam Knowles to maintain the park this summer.** Larry Knowles recused himself from the vote. **Roll Call Vote:** Heethuis: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes.

Yes: 3, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to approve funds to support a grant application to Barry County to improve park backstops.** Discussion: This is a safety issue to keep the foul balls from the parking lot and playground. The State will fund 75% of the

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**MOTION TO ACCEPT  
RESIGNATION OF SALLY  
SMITH FROM GLIB**

**MOTION TO APPOINT  
BILL BRYKER TO GLIB**

**MOTION TO ACCEPT BID  
FOR PAVING OF THE PARK  
WALKING PATH**

**MOTION TO HIRE TRAVIS  
AND SAM KNOWLES FOR  
PARK MAINTENANCE**

**MOTION TO APPROVE  
FUNDS TO SUPPORT  
GRANT APPLICATION FOR  
IMPROVING BACKSTOPS**

estimated cost of \$2,930.00. The Township is responsible for 25% of the estimate (approximately \$750.00). This would be included in the next budget; this just allows the grant application to go forward. **Roll Call Vote:** Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Restrooms have been completed.
- Thank you to all who were part of the Yankee Springs Township Cleanup Day. Everything went well and the refreshments afterward were enjoyed.
- Budget workshop will be June 18, 2025.
- Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Budget for 2025/2026 will be held on June 25, 2025.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Mike Cunningham** (Township resident) shared the following: "The township budget for 2025/2026 will be discussed in May and June and adopted on June 25. During last year's budget process, a motion was made to reduce the revenue raised by eliminating the 1% administration fee or by reducing the amount of the millage imposed to reduce revenue by a similar amount. This motion was made because the general fund balance has been steadily increasing and is much larger than needed to protect against any unplanned revenue losses or expenses. The board voted against this motion on a 4 to 1 vote. The only reason that I heard for not reducing the tax rate or eliminating the admin fee was that it did not amount to much money. As I recall most of the board members said it would be considered next year. It is now next year. The amount of money raised by the admin fee is between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year. State law has allowed the township to collect the administration fee for at least a few decades. When I was first involved with the township the board opted not to impose the administration fee because taking additional money from the township tax payers was not needed. That changed about 10 years ago when the board opted to impose the fee. I did not see a reason for doing it then and I still don't see a reason for it. There are many years of steady increase in the general fund balance to prove that it is not needed. The balance was \$2,632,295 at the start of the current fiscal year (7/1/2024). The balance May 1, 2025 was \$2,935,380. That's about \$303,000 higher (11.5%) than last year. There are still two months remaining in this fiscal year but it seems clear that the township is taking more from the residents than is needed. Keep in mind that with the office renovation, new fire truck, park parking lot expansion, township spending has been high over the past 4 years or so and still the balance grows. So I am asking the board to not impose the admin fee for the next fiscal year or reduce the imposed millage by a similar amount. This is a one-year reduction and it can be adjusted any time that it needs to be adjusted so there is no real risk in it. I am confident that one year from now we will not see any negative impact of this reduction. Keep in mind this is government revenue, not personal or business revenue I am asking you to reduce. Not many people would voluntarily reduce their personal or business revenue but government revenue is different." (Time expired)

**Starr Adams** (property owner in Whispering Pines): She wanted to make sure that the Board is aware that by changing the zoning only 4 of the units will comply, out of 21. She is concerned that if one of the places burns down, or there is a tornado, they will not be able to rebuild because there will not be room going outward and cannot go upward.

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#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The places do not have footings; they are sitting on blocks. She would like to have the Board at least consider adopting a new zoning that they actually comply with. They will never be able to comply with this zoning. It is for single family residences. They have a four plex and a duplex and all the smaller units are under 600 square feet and that's her main concern. If something happens to her property, how would she be able to rebuild it and be in compliance. She just wants the Board to know that she is not happy with this and there are others as well. There was a person who came forward in 2013 asking for the zoning to be changed to this and the township made the change but then took it back due to the wells not complying and that none of the smaller units complied with the zoning also. She thanked the board for listening.

**Betsy Frigmanski** (township resident): At the last meeting during the Board comment there was mention of putting some signage in front of this building or maybe a rock, something to look nice. She asked that if this is done, that they also look at how the flag is lit in the front of the building. Particularly in the winter, the way the spotlight is set up it gets covered with snow and the flag is not lit. If the flag is not taken down at night it should be lit and as a government office it should be properly lit.

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**BOARD COMMENT:**

**Hopkins:** No comment.

**Knowles:** Too bad that Deb is not here, I wanted to thank her for putting everything on social media. She really does the township justice with that. And thanks to Dave for everything on the fire board and the veteran's board. And thanks to Curly Cone for what they are doing for the Memorial. Can we make sure that Joe gets noticed to send out letters to the people at Whispering Pines?

**VanHouten:** Going back to the Veterans Committee because I got caught by surprise. The Women's Club will bake and donate cookies so that will be nice. Annie is going to sing the Star-Spangled Banner again. Deb Timmerman and the Gun Lake Business Club is donating \$500 to the Veterans Committee. There will probably be a donation of a couple of quilts also.

**Heethuis:** Joe will be back on Tuesday to take care of the letters. Tom has been a tremendous addition to the board and appreciate everything he has been doing. I compliment all the hard work.

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**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Hopkins to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 PM.** Approved by all. Motion Carried.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully submitted by:  
Betsy Frigmanski, Recording Secretary  
May 10, 2025

**BOARD COMMENT**

**ADJOURNMENT**