

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES Regular Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 2026

6:00 pm

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

DRAFT MINUTES

DRAFT MINUTES

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Regular Meeting
March 12, 2026

Routing 3/19/26

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

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

Staff Present: Dan Miller, Dennis Buist, Frank Fiala, Joe Shea, John Trygier, Sandy Marcukaitis

Visitors: 19

ROLL CALL

Motion by Heethuis with support from Mousseau to add considering an amendment to the zoning ordinance with regard to fees, escrow and charges. Roll Call Vote:

Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION TO AMEND THE
AGENDA

Motion by Hopkins with support from VanHouten to accept the agenda as amended.

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

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION TO ACCEPT
AGENDA

Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of February 12, 2026 BOT meeting
- DISBURSEMENTS February 2026

| | |
|---|----------------|
| IPA Twp. Renov. #44- Feb. 1, 2026 AUTO PAY | \$ (5,689.47) |
| State W/H Amendment Comp. Issues from Jan. (to be refunded) | \$ (11,799.80) |
| AP Checks of 2/12/26: 918915-918945 | \$ (44,251.71) |
| AP Checks of 2/25/26: 918946-918960 | \$ (34,892.17) |
| February 11 FIRE payroll Chks. #8594-8611 | \$ (11,529.11) |
| Replacement P/R Ck# 8612 for Void P/R Chk #8499 | \$ - |
| Feb. 11 FIRE Fed. W/H | \$ (2,767.60) |
| Feb. Gen. Payroll 2/26/26 Ck#s 8613-8634 | \$ (15,502.79) |
| Feb. Payroll FEDERAL withholding 2.26.26 Gen. | \$ (5,285.91) |
| Feb. State W/H Gen. payroll & 587.64 inc. for fire pyrl | \$ (1,470.64) |

Total Disbursements \$ (133,189.20)

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve the consent agenda. Roll Call Vote: Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:

Fire Chief Dan Miller and other members of the Yankee Springs Fire Department

County Commissioners Marcia Bassett and Catherine Getty provided an update on the Barry County activities.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mike Cunningham (Heritage Bay Dr): Thanked the PC for spending a lot of time creating the Gravel Mining Ordinance that is a Board action item tonight. The ordinance was created over a seven-month period with a lot of public interest shown by attendance at the meetings and signed petitions. Public input was welcomed during the process. The openness and transparency used in the creation of this ordinance was outstanding. He encouraged the board to adopt the mining ordinance as written.

Dave Laansma (Payne Lake Rd., Precinct Delegate): He agreed with Mike Cunningham's comments. He attended many of the PC meetings and appreciated the amount of discussion and the depth of thought that went into crafting the new ordinance. He is looking forward to hearing the Board's discussion on the ordinance and feels that it is a great addition to the township ordinances. He also reminded the Board that they would like to see the meetings taped for replay at a later date.

Robin Laansma (Payne Lake Rd., Precinct Delegate): Thanked Larry Knowles and everyone on the PC who worked so hard on this mining ordinance. They listened to everyone's concerns and she supports the ordinance. She also would like to see the meetings livestreamed so that they can be rewatched later.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Prepared by Deb Mousseau, Treasurer

- February 2026 Financial Statement and Investment Report were reviewed.

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

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

CLERK'S REPORT

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve the current accounts payable for \$179,012. Discussion: It is a large amount because it includes \$150,000 to the Road Commission. **Roll Call Vote:** Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes.

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**MOTION TO APPROVE
CONSENT AGENDA**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF
VISITORS**

PUBLIC COMMENT

TREASURER'S REPORT

**MOTION TO APPROVE
TREASURER'S REPORT**

CLERK'S REPORT

**MOTION TO APPROVE
CURRENT PAYABLES**

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Mousseau with support from VanHouten to approve the fire payroll for \$11,613. Roll Call Vote: Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Planning Commission:

- Meeting February 19, 2026
 - Public hearing for the mining ordinance. Waiting for the attorney's review at this time.
 - Has provided the Board with a task list which they would like to see the Board prioritize. This will be looked at in Board action items
- PCI Report
- Next regular meeting March 19, 2026.

Zoning Board of Appeals:

- No March meeting
- Next meeting will be April 14, 2026 if needed.

Fire/EMS Report:

- Review of February 2026 Fire/Emergency Medical responses.
 - 32 fire responses which included 21 lift assists
 - 24 medical dispatches.
 - Duty shift personnel responded to 2 medical and 12 fire responses.
- Current personnel is at 20, including 14 certified firefighters, 3 probationary firefighters, 5 EMRs, 4 paramedics, and 5 EMTs.
- Recognition of Daniel Ramey for EMT certification and awarding the red fire helmet which signifies he is no longer a probationary firefighter and has completed his field training.
- Trustee VanHouten brought up a day last week where the Fire Department responded to three calls in 58 minutes. It was very busy and the personnel handled it well and everything turned out fine.
- The issue with the ongoing lift assist calls is being worked on and will be resolved with LIFE ambulance soon. They will reimburse the Fire Department \$150 each trip if they need to ask for their assistance.

Park Committee:

- Getting ready for spring and will be putting up nets, etc., very soon.

Recycling Committee:

- Setting up goals and objectives with the Barry County group.

Veterans Committee:

- Getting quotes for plans to expand the brick walkway.
- Had some pictures taken of the jet mounted at the Grayling VFW.
- Giving a lot of consideration to how the jet will be mounted and properly preserved.
- Next meeting will be March 25.

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**MOTION TO APPROVE
FIRE PAYROLL**

PC REPORT

ZBA REPORT

FIRE/EMS REPORT

**PARK COMMITTEE
REPORT**

**RECYCLING COMMITTEE
REPORT**

**VETERANS COMMITTEE
REPORT**

Clean Water Committee

- The remainder of the grant money (\$37,500) has been received.
- Peerless has provided the costs and that will be reviewed tonight in Board action items.

Gun Lake Improvement Board Committee

- No meeting (seasonal). Will be starting up again month.

Board Action Items:

- Land Split for 8401 Bowens Mill Road, PSD-20-01-01

Motion by Hopkins with support from Knowles to approve the land split. Roll Call Vote: VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Mining ordinance and/or moratorium extension
 - The Board did not receive final copy of ordinance from the attorney due to her illness.
 - It will be coming soon.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to extend the moratorium on mining for 60 days unless the Mining ordinance is passed prior to 60 days. Discussion: Board will hold off on full discussion until the final copy is received. The board members would like to be sure they have time to review prior to the next meeting. ***Roll Call Vote: Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes.***

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Discussion of parking stops:
 - Several options are available; cost will vary from \$70 each to \$380 each.
 - The board discussed if they feel it is necessary; there was one incident last year.

Motion by Knowles with support from Mousseau that we purchase five of the 3" parking stops which cost \$70 each. Roll Call Vote: Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Amendment to the ordinance for Fire Department cost recovery.
 - Clerk Hopkins reviewed the document that has been prepared using information from other communities in the area. He shared the amounts that the committee decided were appropriate and are an average cost on what other fire departments are charging.
 - There is also a report included that would be used to charge the costs to insurance companies and to utility companies.
 - They are still working out the details but it is expected to be ready for the Board to approve at the next meeting.

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WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

GLIB REPORT

MOTION TO APPROVE LAND SPLIT FOR 8401 BOWENS MILL RD

MOTION TO EXTEND MORATORIUM ON MINING

MOTION TO APPROVE PURCHASE OF PARKING STOPS

DISCUSSION ON FIRE DEPT COST RECOVERY ORDINANCE

- Discussion on signage for the township hall. Clerk Hopkins showed some options that he has received.
 - One was a digital sign, which is very nice but has to be updated all the time and costs about \$30,000.
 - The second option was a large free-standing sign for \$15,000.
 - The third option was a double-sided free-standing sign that doesn't have a price yet.
 - Next is an option to put a sign on the building itself, costing about \$8,000. This one would include small signs designation the office and the hall and also putting the name and the hours on the glass door.

Motion by VanHouten with support from Knowles that we purchase the sign on the top left of the page (going on the gable of the building), adding "established 1835", for a cost not to exceed \$8,000. Discussion: It needs to be verified that 1835 is the correct date before the order is placed. The exact price has not been received but is expected to be approximately \$8,000. **Roll Call Vote:** Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Discussion on the cost of the water system.
 - The project has been approved by EGLE and is now ready to pull permits, etc. A contract will need to be in place in order to move forward.
 - The project manager from Peerless, Bob Masters, would like to have a special meeting set up on March 25.
 - There are still grant funds being pursued to help with the cost.
 - This project (from Peerless) is much less costly than what was suggested from Fleis & Vandenbrink (approximately a third of the cost).

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to set the meeting for Wed., March 25 at 6:00 PM with Peerless to discuss the contract. Discussion: The water system will provide financials at the time of this meeting. **Roll Call Vote:** Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

- FOIA appeal process.
 - The township received an appeal on a FOIA and the clerk did not find a procedure in place for an appeal. He has reviewed the MTA guidelines and spoke with the township attorney to come up with an appeals process.
 - The board has to decide if they want to have an appeal decided by the entire board, or if they would want it be handled by the Supervisor and the Clerk.
 - Discussion took place on a time frame for this and if a special meeting would be necessary, which is an extra expense to the township.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles that the appeal should go to the Board, unless it is repetitious and the same subject matter as a previous appeal, then it could be decided by the supervisor and the clerk. Discussion: So, if the appeal is something that was already decided, it would not have to go back to the full Board. The appeal would have to be made by the Friday before the meeting in order to be added to the

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**MOTION TO APPROVE
PURCHASE OF SIGN FOR
TOWNSHIP HALL**

**MOTION TO SET MEETING
WITH PEERLESS WATER**

**MOTION REGARDING
FOIA APPEAL PROCESS**

meeting agenda (same time line as other items for the agenda). **Roll Call Vote:**
VanHouten: no; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes.

Yes: 4, No: 1. **MOTION CARRIED**

- Planning Commission Work Plan
 - Mineral and gravel mining was the first item and will be completed soon.
 - Updating the master plan is next on the list and is currently in process.
 - Sanitary Landfill ordinance should be short and easily completed.
 - Blight ordinance: Not having a blight ordinance has been a handicap to the zoning department and they have written something up for Trustee Knowles to bring to the PC.
 - Permanent docks: That should be looked at to make sure it is a strong ordinance.
 - Fire: There is a Michigan state statute in place so the Zoning department feels it is already there.

- Spring cleanup will be Saturday, April 18.

- Amendment to the YS Zoning General Ordinance Section 22 regarding escrow procedure, fees, and expenditures.
 - Zoning Administrator Shea talked with the attorney and provided an update that they feel would be appropriate.
 - This has been reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.
 - The board decided to review this amendment and vote on it next meeting along with the mining ordinance.

- Township newsletter usually comes out in April so everyone should get something to Sandy to put the newsletter together.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Sandy Marcukaitis: The Barry-Roubaix (bike race) is April 18, the same day as the Spring Clean Up.

Mike Cunningham (Heritage Bay Dr): He suggests the Board consider having a public input meeting of some type for the cost recovery amendment for the Fire Department. It sounds like there is some inequality in there as some will pay and some will not. Insurance premiums are based on the claims made so it does affect the township resident's bills. On the water system, I am in favor of it and would like to see the Board vote or pass a resolution that they will not spend any taxpayer money on it. It should all come out of the water system. He stated that he was the person that made the FOIA appeal. The township does have a policy and appeals are made through the clerk to the Board and are not deemed received until the next board meeting (tonight) and then the Board has ten days to respond. This is the third time he has made an appeal and the first two were ignored. This is the MTA's sample policy that was adopted by Yankee Springs Township and by not accepting the appeal tonight he believes they are in violation of the law.

John Trygier (Barlow Lake Rd): Regarding the township sign: One, the Board didn't have all the information yet (missing the price) to make the decision. Two, having a sign on the face of the building rather than by the road will make it harder to see when people are

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**PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK PLAN**

SPRING CLEAN UP

**AMENDMENT TO THE
ZONING ORDINANCE
SECTION 22**

TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

PUBLIC COMMENT

driving by.

Marcia Bassett (North Crooked Lake Dr., Delton): Delton Kellogg Educational Foundation is working in conjunction with the Delton Rotary Club on an event on April 16, bringing in a 9/11 survivor, Joe Ditmar to speak about his experience and how he survived. It will be at the Gilmore Car Museum with dinner by the Seasonal Grille.

BOARD COMMENT:

Mousseau: Thanked everyone here. All this paper shows a lot of work that has been done and everyone on the Board should be thanked.

VanHouten: Neglected to mention that the ambulance contract was renewed with Thornapple. The 2026 amount for non-transport was not to exceed \$6,000. We negotiated for 2027 \$5,000; for 2028 \$5,500, and 2029 will be \$6,000. I think we did well and it's all signed and approved. I don't remember the exact amount when we were with Wayland and we didn't have any input or oversight. The service has been good and we're pretty happy with it.

Hopkins: Well done on the ambulance contract. And thanked Larry and Rob for all the work on the Peerless water project. That's something we're going to leave to our children and grandchildren. When you look at what was originally out there and what we're doing now, and the grants that you have and are going after, this will not be a burden to anyone. Really super work.

Knowles: Thanked Tom for filling the vacancy of the clerk. It's clearly not a job that very many people want and you've stepped up and done a really nice job.

Heethuis: When you talk about a water system, if the water system failed tomorrow, they wouldn't look at your committee and say they did a terrible job. They would look at Yankee Springs and say that's your water system, how come you let it happen? I totally believe that if we have a fire and if we are questioning whether we have the ability to fight that fire, I'm sure everybody in the township would like to make sure we can fight that fire. So, I am one that believes that we definitely have a place in that water system. Delton had a heavyweight state wrestling champion, Mitch Swift! He's going to be a fireman for Orangeville so you guys' better recruit him too.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Heethuis to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 PM. Approved by all. Motion Carried.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Respectfully submitted by:
Betsy Frigmanski, Recording Secretary
March 15, 2026

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BOARD COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT