

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES Regular Meeting

Thursday, April 10, 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
April 10, 2025

Routing 4/28/25

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INVOCATION

ROLL CALL

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: Rich Beukema, Frank Fiala, Dan Miller, Dennis Buist

Visitors: 8

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:

- Add a possible roll call vote on the walking path at the park.
- Add accepting a special assessment district in the clerk's report.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Mousseau to add these two items to the agenda.

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

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

Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to approve the agenda as amended. Roll

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

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

- Board minutes of meetings March 13, 2025; March 27, 2025; and April 3, 2025.
- March 2025 Accounts Payable Checks #918421 through #918459 total amount: \$198,978.33 (Void Check #918412 duplicate payment \$159.99).
- March 31, 2025 Payroll Checks #8157 through #8185 = \$19,872.28.
- March 2025 Fed. P/R withholding \$6,429.53. March 2025 state payroll tax withholding \$1,106.97.

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

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

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

**MOTION TO AMEND
AGENDA**

**MOTION TO ACCEPT
AGENDA**

**MOTION TO APPROVE
CONSENT AGENDA**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:

County Commissioner Marcia Bassett
Assistant Fire Chief Dan Miller

- Commissioner Bassett gave an overview of what has been happening at the county level including passing the PACE program, receiving a grant for \$297,000, setting up a jail committee and hiring a consultant for that project. She recently attended the Gun Lake Improvement Board organizational meeting. Supervisor Heethuis shared that our township is in need of a representative to serve on the GLIB so if anyone is interested, they should let him know.

TREASURER'S REPORT: By Deb Mousseau, Treasurer

- Tax collection ended March 1st.
- March 2025 Financial Statement and Investment reports were reviewed.
 - A deposit for \$1,200 was an insurance reimbursement for the excavating company that assisted with the fire on Chief Noonday.
 - A refund was received from the federal government for the overpayment of Federal 941 taxes in December 2024.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to approve 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:

- April 2025 Current Invoice Journal as of today is \$24,547.95.
- Report on VanderKam property:
 - Reimbursement from the insurance company received in the amount of \$1,200 which was equal to the cost for a zero balance.
- New copier to be installed April 11, 2025. This is a lease agreement which will save approximately \$2,500.00 a year.
- The trial period for the digitizing software has been extended in order to try it out with the new copier. It is expected that a proposal on this will come before the Board next month.
- ZA Joe Shea provided information regarding current fees against actual costs for zoning appeals, etc. and perhaps the board should look at overhauling those fees during the budget meetings.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve the Clerk's Report. Roll Call Vote: Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Planning Commission:

- PCI March 2025 report in board member packet.
- March meeting

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS

TREASURER'S REPORT

MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURER'S REPORT

CLERK'S REPORT

MOTION TO APPROVE CLERK'S REPORT

PC REPORT

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- Approved an SEU for an STR in Whispering Pines but neglected to open for public comments so next meeting will include public hearing.
- Another SEU on an outbuilding was approved.
- Discussed the master plan.
- Discussed Whispering Pines and will hold a public hearing to possibly rezone the area next week.
- Discussed the mining and ponds and intend to have something for the Planning Commission to look at next week.
- We did hear a preliminary discussion for mining off Bass Road but then the Board had a meeting to put a moratorium on it.
- Next regular meeting April 17, 2025.
- Supervisor Heethuis shared that the special meeting on April 3 put a moratorium on applications for mining, quarrying, and gravel, sand, and earth removal so that will be coming to the Planning Commission.

Zoning Board of Appeals:

- April 8, 2025 meeting:
 - One case was an applicant who ignored the ruling regarding using a shipping container as a storage building so he has to stop his construction and tear that down.
 - The other case was a single piece of property with two houses on it, Gun Lake frontage. Back in 1996 it was shown to be two properties and somehow it became one. We went ahead and approved the split so it will be separate properties. They are smaller road frontage but it was the lesser of two evils.
- Next meeting will be May 13, 2025 if needed.

ZBA REPORT

Fire/EMS Report:

- March 2025 Fire/Emergency Medical responses in board member packet.
- Township paid \$4,700 for radios for fire station.
- Chief Miller shared that there were 18 fire responses in March and 22 emergency medical responses.
- Current staffing includes 16 certified Firefighters, 2 Resource Probationary Firefighters and 1 EMT for a total of 19 YSTFD personnel.
- EMS will cut ties with Wayland EMS as of April 10, 2025. The township paid Wayland EMS \$2,930.52 for contract fulfillment.
 - Medical license was delayed for about a week due to some paperwork issues. Currently being backed up by Thornapple EMRS and Hastings.
 - The transition of equipment went well.

FIRE/EMS REPORT

Park Committee:

- Contract signed with Bultsma for park improvements. Will start in April with completion by June 26, including cement pads for porta johns and storage shed.
- Update on walking path:

PARK COMMITTEE REPORT

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to approve moving the walking path to bid. Roll Call Vote: Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

**MOTION TO PUT
WALKING PATH OUT
TO BID**

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs to be put in the newspaper and then allow two weeks for bidding. The work will not be done until Bultsma has finished the rest of the work at the park. If it runs in the paper on 4/16 then the bids would be due 4/30. This would allow it to be on the agenda for the May BOT meeting. 	DRAFT MINUTES Page 4 of 6 YS Board of Trustees Regular Meeting April 10, 2025
Recycling Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair Tom Mawson is investigating grant for another cement pad and bin. Mr. VanHouten asked if it is possible to move recycling to an individual basis. In the past when it was looked at it was not found to be cost effective and there were areas that would not be served so it was decided to keep it here at the Township office. Household hazardous waste collection at the Barry County Fairgrounds will be May 17 and September 30, 2025. 	RECYCLING COMMITTEE REPORT
Veterans Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mick Lane is the new chairperson and is working on some things for Memorial Day. Two benches are ready to be installed depending on weather. 	VETERANS COMMITTEE
Board Action Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on cemetery software: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has been conducting a trial with it and finding it easy to use. The software enables having all the information on the computer and will avoid duplications in the future. It will make it much easier to find someone if there are questions about a specific gravesite and would allow it to be online for residents' use. Cost is \$120.00 per year to lease software and includes cloud backup at another location. 	
<p><u>Motion by Knowles with support from VanHouten to lease the software for \$120 per year for the cemetery. Roll Call Vote: Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes.</u></p>	MOTION TO APPROVE LEASE OF CEMETERY SOFTWARE
<p>Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget workshop to be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 3:00 PM. Public Hearing and Final Adoption of Budget for 2025/2026 to be held on Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at 6:00 PM. Reminder that township cleanup is on Saturday, April 26 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon with refreshments at the Fire Station after. 	BUDGET MEETING DATES SPRING CLEAN UP
<p><u>Motion by Hopkins with support from Knowles that we accept the petition for the special assessment district for Deer Sight Drive.</u> Discussion: The estimated amount is \$50,000 to \$60,000. Roll Call Vote: Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.</p>	MOTION TO ACCEPT PETITION FOR SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT
<p>Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED</p>	
PUBLIC COMMENT:	PUBLIC COMMENT

Robin Laansma, Precinct Delegate: She had prepared her comments for last month but was unable to attend. There is only one public comment time – how did this come about? Was there a motion and discussion and if so, when? You are telling the public that their voice does not matter and this is shameful. Enjoyed the PC meeting with the representatives of the DNR and the Yankee Springs Recreational area. When they reviewed the plans for the Barry State Game Area, Yankee Springs Recreational area and the State Park, there was no mention of a plan to connect the State Park to the Yankee Springs Township Park. Joe mentioned that the State Park had approximately 1.2 million visitors last year. Why would we want to give 1.2 million people, most of whom do not live in Yankee Springs, access to the township park by way of a trail from the State Park? It is not in their plan. The residents of Yankee Springs pay the taxes to improve and maintain the township park, not any of these 1.2 million people. This trail idea needs to be done away with. We have many other ways that our tax money can be used. Please put it to rest and forget about connecting the two parks. Along with the copier and the cemetery software talked about tonight, David and I attend other meetings besides Yankee Springs. All of those meetings are live streamed and then put on a platform so the meetings can be viewed at a later date. Please consider purchasing the equipment necessary to get this technology in place. Yankee Springs is way behind on this front. A new copier with the ability to digitize sounds like a good idea and so is software for the cemetery. It catches us up a little bit. Thank you.

BOARD COMMENT:

Mousseau: Happy Birthday to Jerrie Fiala.

VanHouten: When we do our budgeting, could we consider improving either one two or three of our cemeteries, perhaps a wrought iron entrance, a name, some stone. I think the cemeteries deserve to be dressed up a little bit. I had someone make a comment about where is the township hall? We do not have a large sign or rock or anything that identifies YS Township Hall so we might want to consider that.

Knowles: Agree with Dave that we need a sign. It was brought up before and we didn't really react to it.

Hopkins: It's interesting that Dave brought that up about the cemeteries because I met with four people today with concerns about the cemetery and it was mentioned how nice Robbins looks with the new fence but they would all look so nice with an entryway. It's a little premature for me to talk about it because I'm brand new but I'll make a point of taking a look. I asked those people if they have recommendations to bring them in and if it looks decent, I could bring them to the Board. It's just timely because they brought it up today. We need to update some of our technology but we also need to update our status with regard to some of those things. They are important to our community.

Heethuis: We have discussed this before and I'm glad it's coming up again. Looking forward to the township cleanup on the 26th. I hope everyone shows up. It's always a good time with a little discussion afterwards over refreshments. Would be nice if it didn't rain this year. It's from 9 to 12.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mousseau with support from VanHouten to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 PM.
Approved by all. Motion Carried.

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BOARD COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Respectfully submitted by:
Betsy Frigmanski, Recording Secretary
April 12, 2025

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