

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 10, 2026

6:00 pm

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

DRAFT MINUTES

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YS Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
September 10, 2026

Routing 9/14/26

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Meeting called to order at 6:01 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: Dennis Buist, Frank Fiala, Joe Shea, Dan Miller, Sandy Marcukaitis

Visitors: 23

ROLL CALL

Motion by Hopkins with support from Knowles to amend the agenda to remove the public hearing for the special assessment on Heritage Bay and Rosemary Lane due to lack of signatures. **Roll Call Vote:** Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes.

**MOTION TO AMEND
AGENDA**

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

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to accept the agenda as amended. **Roll Call Vote:** VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Mousseau: yes; Hopkins: yes.

**MOTION TO ACCEPT
AGENDA**

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

Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of August 13, 2026 BOT meeting.
- DISBURSEMENTS August 2026
 - IPA Twp. Renov. #50 Aug. 1, 2026 AUTO PAY (5,689.47)
 - AP Checks of 8/12/26: #919178-919204 (37,946.62)
 - OLD Outstanding checks (mainly from 2014-2020) 2,265.67
 - *adjustment to July General FED withholding (36.86)
 - Aug. FIRE payroll Chks. #8864-8909 8/11/26 inc. election (17,765.70)
 - Aug. FIRE State W/H 8/11/26 inc. election inspectors (894.32)
 - Aug. FIRE Fed. W (3,993.41)
 - Aug. Gen. Payroll 8/31/26 Ck#s 8910-8932 (20,943.23)
 - Aug. General PR Fed withholding (6,553.27)
 - Aug. Gen PR State WH (1,153.84)
 - Aug 31st AP Checks # 919205-919230 (30,046.64)
 - Total Disbursements \$ (122,757.69)

**MOTON TO APPROVE
CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins 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:

County Commissioner Catherine Getty: provided an update on the Barry County activities.

Fire Chief Dan Miller

Rosy Chatterton, Aileen Van Houten, Raeanne Renner of GFWC Gun Lake Area Club: The group held a pontoon progressive fundraiser with funds earmarked for veterans. They raised \$1,700 and are splitting among local groups that support veterans. Tonight they presented the Yankee Springs Veterans Memorial with a donation of \$300. They also support the memorial by baking cookies for the veterans' events held twice yearly.

Grant Taylor, Michigan Class: Gave a brief presentation on what Michigan Class is and what they can offer the township. He recognized Deb Mousseau for doing a great job of managing the investment portfolio for the township.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tim Cunningham (1868 Heritage Bay Dr): He is here to speak about the Heritage Bay Road assessment. He states that the assessment method is not legal the way the township is doing it. He referred to Michigan laws which he says state that the assessment can't be applied where there is no benefit. When there are two roads in one neighborhood, the back one (Rosemary Lane) is not used by the Heritage Bay residents. There is no benefit to the Heritage Bay residents so the back road gets assessed for their stuff and the front gets none of it. Both sections get a portion of the front road assessment because they both use it. He says that is how it is supposed to be done in Michigan and that the board is in charge of it, not the residents. All they do is put together the scope, assess the work to be done, pick the contractor and so on. He states he's pretty sure the assessment and how it's charged is per the township. He shared how he believes it should be split up and states that people may have changed their decision if they had seen this information.

Kevin Swayne (3934 Hermitage Point Rd): Shared a picture of the property he is referencing with board members. He has been working with Joe Shea and Brad Williams regarding fencing along the side of the house. They recommended that he come to this meeting in regard to Section 12.9 "Fences, Walls, and/or other Protective Barriers". He refers to two homes, A and B. Six-foot fencing is allowed on House B up to the corner edge where it has to be dropped to a 4' fence, while House A is still allowed a 6' fence. Both houses are at a 4' fence where it is closer to the lake. He is questioning why House A can put up a 6' fence and House B can only put up a 4' fence. His recommendation is that both houses should be able to put up a 6' fence up to the edge of the house that is closest to the lake and would like to see an amendment to Section 12.9.

Lee Cook (1884 Heritage Bay Dr.): With regard to what Tim was saying about the Heritage Bay project, he thinks it sounds like the township is just the bank so he is unsure about who provides the oversight, the accountability, the transparency in that situation. Is it all just upon the group that brings the petition or is some of it on the township. He comments that if the project is done, he hopes it will include speed bumps for speed control.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Prepared by Deb Mousseau, Treasurer

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS

PUBLIC COMMENT

TREASURER'S REPORT

• August 2026 Financial Statement and Investment Report were reviewed. • The IPA loan is at 2.64% which is still lower than the investment interest rates. It will be paid off when the loan interest is higher than the investment rate. <u>Motion by Hopkins with support from Knowles to accept the Treasurer's Report. Roll Call Vote:</u> Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes. Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED	DRAFT MINUTES Page 3 of 7 YS Board of Trustees Regular Meeting September 10, 2026 MOTION TO APPROVE TREASURER'S REPORT
CLERK'S REPORT <u>Motion by Hopkins with support from Heethuis to approve the current accounts payables Checks #919232 through #919246 for \$28,087.25.</u> Discussion: Included \$8300 flowthrough for PCI, Walsh Disposal was a little over \$4000, and the last \$1500 that pays off the paving for the township and fire department. 10% was held back until the township was satisfied with the job. <u>Roll Call Vote:</u> Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes. Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED <u>Motion by Hopkins with support from Mousseau to approve the current Fire payroll Checks #8933-#8954 for \$14,210.50.</u> <u>Roll Call Vote:</u> Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes. Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED	CLERK'S REPORT MOTION TO APPROVE CURRENT PAYABLES MOTION TO APPROVE PAYROLL
GLASA REPORT • The Board is receiving a monthly report to improve communication between the water system and the township. ○ In August the water system pumped 3,700,000 gallons of water. This was down from July which was the biggest month they have ever had. ○ Gun Lake Water charged Yankee Springs about \$4,000 for work done on the system last month. ○ The permit has been received for the new well. The test well was drilled and everything was fine so they are currently drilling the new well. ▪ The well will be done in the next week or two. ▪ It will not be put in use until EGLE gives the permit to use it which will probably be next spring. ▪ It will continue to operate at 200 gallons per minute until then, but the system is ready now for 400 gallons per minute. ○ The Water Advisory Board is asking the township board if there is any interest in digging up the Payne Lake loop again. ▪ This is one of the projects that has been discussed with the Minnesota group that gave the previous grant. ▪ There will be future conversations about trying for another grant to cover that project.	GLASA REPORT
COMMITTEE REPORTS: Planning Commission: • PCI Report • A special meeting was held on 8/11 to hear from the local lake associations who had a lot of input regarding the master plan.	PC REPORT

- At the last regular meeting, a business plan was proposed for a landscape design business that would be located just west of the Sand Bar. They did not ask for approval yet, but the PC did approve the concept and tabled the rest until its October 15th meeting so that they applicant can collect more information.
- There were five students who attended the PC Special Meeting on 9/8. They all took the Citizens Planner class: Rob Heethuis, Brad Williams, PC member Niki Smith, John Frigmanski who is a PC member and also liaison to the ZBA, and John Trygier who is on the PC. Each of them passed the class and the test and the next step was for each individual to make a presentation to the Planning Commission which was completed at this meeting.
 - John Frigmanski – township safety
 - John Trygier – speed limit change on M179
 - Brad Williams – lighting for safety on the corridor
 - Niki Smith – a path from McDonalds to Briggs Rd
 - Rob Heethuis – an ADA trail
- These are all ideas that were presented. Supervisor Heethuis followed up by speaking with the DNR who gave a right of way along state property. They agreed to a 10' easement whether it be on the north side, by the Fire Station, or on the south side over the wetland. An ADA trail could require more than 10' and the DNR says they are open to discussion. The next step is to receive approval from EGLE. Heethuis would like permission from the Board to speak with them. It is possible that their permission has already been given when the plan was designed in 2015. The Board feels that as there is no money being spent, there is no problem with the conversation. Trustee VanHouten commented that any trail, with grants, is a good thing.
- Next regular meeting September 17, 2026.

Zoning Board of Appeals:

- No meeting in August or September.
- Next meeting will be October 13, 2026.

ZBA REPORT

Fire/EMS Report:

- Review of August Fire/Emergency Medical responses.
 - There were 21 fire dispatches in the month of August.
 - YTD total is 190, compared to 109 last year.
 - The increase is attributed to the storms in April and May
 - There were 37 medical dispatches in August.
 - YTD total is 226, compared to 215 last year.
 - Duty shift responded to 8 calls.
 - There are currently 21 personnel: 15 certified firefighters, 3 probationary firefighters who will start at the academy in January 2027. Medical personnel include 6 EMRs, 5 EMTs, and 4 paramedics.
 - Training last month was Rescue Boat practice on the lake, and Scene location and size-up with the What 3 Words app.
 - There is a minister from Thornapple and a county wide PTSD group who is called in when there are unusually stressful situations. It is important to take care of the personnel.
 - Supervisor Heethuis talked about other communities who do not have nearly the resources that we have here in Yankee Springs.

FIRE/EMS REPORT

Park Committee:

- They are busy putting down cement pads and benches.
- Levi will continue working at the park until all the nets are down.

PARK COMMITTEE REPORT

Recycling Committee: - No meeting. Veterans Committee: - Next meeting will be Wednesday at 1:00 PM. - There is a feeling that the community is starting to embrace the memorial and the veterans and this is appreciated. GLIB Report: - No report.	DRAFT MINUTES Page 5 of 7 YS Board of Trustees Regular Meeting September 10, 2026 RECYCLING COMMITTEE REPORT VETERANS COMMITTEE REPORT GLIB REPORT
Board Action Items: - Approval of PA-116 application: - This is a program from the state which defers property tax based on the property not being touched for a period of years. - This one is for Greg Helder and it means his property will stay natural with no development. - It does not particularly affect the township but the approval is a requirement. <u>Motion by Hopkins with support from Mousseau to approve the PA-116 application. Roll Call</u> <u>Vote:</u> Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes. Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED - Public Comment format: - The board members attended a presentation in Dorr that covered the legalities of public meetings. It was mentioned that the trend in meetings was to have the first public comment only for agenda items and the second one for any other topics. - The board discussed this but do not feel a need to make any changes. - Resolution on Mutual Aid for the Fire Department. - This is to approve a MI-MABAS agreement which provides for fire departments to provide mutual aid where needed. - It includes if one department has equipment that another one does not. - It makes mutual aid easier for local departments to get when needed. They are not required to deplete their own equipment; it is optional. There is no charge involved unless the usage goes over 8 hours. - Chief Miller states that Thornapple Township, Orangeville Township, Hastings, Freeport and others have signed it. <u>Motion by Hopkins support from Mousseau to approve Resolution # 09-10-2026 on mutual aid.</u> <u>Roll Call Vote:</u> VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Knowles: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes. Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED	RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PA-116 APPLICATION DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT CHANGE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION ON MUTUAL AID FOR FIRE DEPT
PUBLIC COMMENT: Dave Laansma (precinct delegate (Payne Lake Rd): He commends the board for the decision to push back on the money for the trail. It's a great idea but very expensive. There seems to be	PUBLIC COMMENT

some difficulty in paying all the expenses now since there is still a millage, although there is plenty of money in the accounts. He also said he appreciates that the Board did not change the set up of the public comments. It allows citizens to comment freely on matters that may come up during the meeting.

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BOARD COMMENT:

BOARD COMMENT

Mousseau: Taxes are due Monday, Sept. 14 at midnight. We are open tomorrow til noon and then Monday, 9 to 5. We have a drop box available.

VanHouten: We had the gentleman (Mark) here last month about the "Run on the Gun". They have decided to cancel it this year as they don't feel they can get everything coordinated in time to do it right. So it will be held next year. I got a little confused about one of the public comments. We pay taxes on the roads, but if we don't drive on one of the sections on the road, we don't have to pay taxes? I hear comments that subdivisions if they are going to have an assessment, if you live on the front of the road and not the back of the road – those are ridiculous comments.

Hopkins: We've had a very busy month here at the township. Deb is full blast into tax season and if you've been by the township building you've seen a lot of cars going in and out and they are handling it well. I thank Dave for the Veterans Committee – it's really starting to grow. I hear from one of my neighbors that it's great. It's coming to people's attention and that's really cool. I've run road races for about 10 years, so if the guy from Orangeville needs any help, I'm happy to sit down with him. There are actually groups that help put it all together. Give him my number and I'll talk with him. Larry, thanks for all you do with the water system – it amazes me. I didn't think anything that came out of EGLE or the DNR could possibly go that quickly. You have magic pixie dust in here someplace. Rob, thank you for the way you're approaching this whole concept of the trail, going slowly and looking at where's the cost is going to come from so that we don't have a burden on the township. Looking at the grants that are available – I don't understand that everyone who's running for office says we have to cut costs but when you go in with any kind of proposal for trails the money seems to come out of the woodwork. Good luck with that. I'd also like to remind everyone that we have the fall election coming up, which will be a very busy time for us. Looking forward to having my crew back because they are the best, and we will try to pull off a very good election for you again here in two months.

Knowles: I think this meeting kind of highlighted Deb's efforts on the investments and I wanted to thank her.

Heethuis: The guy from Orangeville, Mark, does great things. He started up the Orangeville Days again and he's got it going and doing great things over there. He's a hard-working guy and I'm sure he'll get it worked out. I'm excited for the team that we have here, it's a great bunch of individuals. Just a comment on the trail, an ADA trail. I completely agree with our public comment today that the township could not and should not pay for that. There's a lot of grants out there, and that's the DNR's property and I think there's a good chance so we'll see what happens. I completely agree with that statement. Of all the trails they have, they don't have something for a disabled person, an older person, or a young lady with a stroller. I think it's absolutely ridiculous and I think the DNR feels the same. I think it's going to be interesting the help we could get from the DNR, and the tribe.

Hopkins: I tried really hard not to comment on this, but I just can't stop myself. I agree with Dave that the one public comment was not factual, and I'll be happy to go through that with anyone who wants to talk about it. The way the roads are done, and how the assessments are established, is very clear in our manual for the township. Frank gave me a copy of one, and it's exactly the one I have, and it's the same thing. It's very clearly spelled out and a couple of the

statements he made were not factual. I wish all the people were still here to hear me say this. We always say we aren't going to comment on public comment, so I'm breaking my own rule, but I just can't let that go.

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ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Hopkins with support from Van Houten to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 PM.

Approved by all. Motion Carried.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Respectfully submitted by:
Betsy Frigmanski, Recording Secretary
September 14, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

DRAFT