**YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP**
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
**Special Meeting – 2025/2026 Budget Workshop Meeting**

## Wednesday, June 18, 2025
## 3:00 pm

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

**MINUTES**

Meeting called to order at 3:00 PM by Supervisor Rob Heethuis

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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**INVOCATION**

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**ROLL CALL**

**Roll Call**: Deb Mousseau, Dave VanHouten, Rob Heethuis, Tom Hopkins (All Present)
Larry Knowles (arrived at 3:14 PM)

**Staff Present:** 0

**Visitors**: 2

**ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:**

**MOTIONS TO ADD ITEMS TO THE AGENDA**

***Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to add pickleball discussion and possible roll call vote to the agenda.*** ***Roll Call Vote:*** *Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Hopkins: yes.*

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

***Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to add water budget review to the agenda.***
***Roll Call Vote:*** *Heethuis: yes; Hopkins: yes; Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes.*

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

***Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to add voter registration clerk to the agenda.*** ***Roll Call Vote:*** *VanHouten: yes; Mousseau: yes; Heethuis: yes; Hopkins: yes.*

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

**MOTION TO ACCEPT AGENDA**

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

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

**Board Action Items:**

- Pickleball Tournament proposed by TK Schools Cheer Coach Madalyn Lula.
  - Proposed date is August 2nd.
  - Depending on the number of people at the tournament, there may be a need for additional trash and toilet facilities.
  - The coach will provide a list of names and phone numbers of the parents who have volunteered for clean-up, etc.
  - The township would like to have participants sign liability waivers for both the school and the township. The Park committee would also need to be responsible for monitoring the parking at the time of the event.
  - This is an event for Thornapple Kellogg Schools sports program which is a part of Yankee Springs and the coach is a resident of Yankee Springs so the township feels positive about hosting it in our township.

**MOTION TO APPROVE PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT**

***Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to approve the pickleball event to take place on our courts on August 2nd.*** ***Roll Call Vote:*** *Mousseau: yes; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes; Hopkins: yes.*

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

**REVENUE CHANGES**

- Treasurer Mousseau cited some items that will decrease the revenue for the next year:
  - Reduction in tax revenue sharing by approximately $8,000 to $9,000.
  - Charter franchising fee is decreasing by $4,000.
  - Interest rates are hard to predict but may be less than last year. If the rates go near 2.64% then paying off the renovation loan will be discussed.

**WATER BUDGET REVIEW**

- Trustee Larry Knowles gave a brief overview of the water budget for 2025/2026.
  - Nothing is out of the ordinary from previous years.
  - The water tower bond has been completed.
  - The arsenic renewal bond will expire in 2027.
  - Will be talking in the future about some improvements to be made but at this point our revenue will meet our expenditures.
  - The water system holds about $1 million in reserve right now.

- Wage increases this year are at 2.5% which is the COLA amount.

**VOTER REGISTRATION CLERK DISCUSSION**

- Voter Registration Clerk duties are currently handled by Deb McKenna. The board discussed adding to her salary for this position to reward her for these duties and encourage retention. This would add $7,380.00 to the budget for election expense.

**REVIEW PROPOSED 2025/2026 BUDGET**

- Review proposed draft Rainbow Budget of 2025/2026 to be presented at the 06/25/2025 Budget Public Hearing.
  - Discussion took place as board members reviewed each line of the budget:
    - A large increase in the budget pertains to the quote from BS&A for the year. The annual administration fee increased to $18,425.00 and they are also recommending an upgrade to a cloud-based system for an added $28,600. The Board members feel that it would be best to stay with BS&A and pay the annual administration fee but to wait on the cloud-based upgrade for now. This will be reflected in the budget.
    - Insurance costs have increased this year for both the township office and the

fire department. The budget will reflect an increase but there are still quotes coming in.
    - At this time the township investments are still paying higher interest than what is being paid on the renovation loan so the township will continue to make the loan payments.
    - Board members discussed possible capital improvements to be made in the following year. Further discussion covered the township allotting $150,000 for water system improvements.
- Adjustments were made where needed. The treasurer will incorporate these adjustments into the budget which will be reviewed and approved at the 06/25/2025 public hearing.

**MOTION TO ELIMINATE ADMINISTRATION FEE FOR 2025/2026 FISCAL YEAR**

***Motion by Knowles with support from VanHouten to eliminate the administration fee.*** Discussion: Is it appropriate to have more money stockpiled than really needed? There is enough to do the planned things. Having this small cushion does help avoid the chance of needing to pass a millage in the future. It is a small enough amount that most people will not even notice if it is taken off their tax bill. ***Roll Call Vote:*** *Knowles: yes; Hopkins: no; Mousseau: no; VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: no.*

Yes: 2, No: 3. **MOTION FAILED**

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Mike Cunningham** (township resident): On the admin fee, they used to vote every year to not impose it. It automatically came back every year unless they said no. Some of the comments "to take money from people because they won't notice"? They do notice and they would appreciate it being lower. If the board could tell people that we did what we could to lower their taxes, even though a lot of it is school taxes, it would be helpful. But this board did not do that. It's not a lot of money that nobody cares about except the township cares and they keep taking it when it's not needed. Part of the reason it seems to be needed is the $150,000 added to the budget to pay for water system expenses. Over the past years over $20,000 in engineering fees for changes that haven't occurred yet have been paid for by the township and not the water system. That water system should pay for all the costs of the water system. You're spending $150,000 of the township money, of my money. The bulk of the people on the water system those people in the future won't have a bill. We'll all be sharing the costs of the water system and they won't have any bill. Of course, we will still be paying for our well which is our own individual water system but they won't have to pay a water bill anymore because you'll be putting it on the township expense. That $150,000 should not be spent by the township. It should be in the water system budget, not the township's budget.

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**BOARD COMMENT**

**BOARD COMMENT:**

**Hopkins**: We need to know the information on the water as soon as possible. It's the unknown funds that we're going to need that bother me. It's like coming home to your house and the roof is leaking and you didn't plan on that . . . those are the ones that catch you. I watch people's money just like everybody else does but it's the unknown that I worry about. It's easy when you have a good bank account to spend. It's tough when a big bill hits so I'm in Deb's corner. I'm more concerned about two years from now than I am about this year. I agree that it looks like we have more than enough money this year but what about two years from now. You don't want to get into the situation where you have to go back and tell people we need more money. It's just easier to maintain than add.

**Knowles:** Apologize for being late. I guess my punishment is that I lost my motion.

**Mousseau**: No comment.

**VanHouten**: I do feel we have been fiscally responsible and that we've attacked projects that have been delayed and delayed and delayed by other boards. We've gotten a lot done. I don't like the criticism that we're spending too much money or that because we have the money we're coming up with projects to spend it on. That's not what we are doing. We need to have the structure and we need a nice township. I think we have been doing the right things.

**Heethuis:** My only comment is to Deb: You did an awful lot of work on putting this together and I thank you for it. It was a tremendous job. There was a lot of discussion here today and I think that we put it all on the table and I look forward to the public hearing next week.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

***Motion by Hopkins with support from Knowles to adjourn the meeting at 4:47 PM*** *Approved by all. Motion Carried.*

Approved by: _____ Date 7-17-25
Tom Hopkins, Township Clerk

Respectfully submitted by:
Betsy Frigmanski, Recording Secretary
June 19, 2025