

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES Regular Meeting

Thursday, February 13, 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
February 13, 2025

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

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

Staff Present: Dennis Buist, Sandy Marcukaitis, Frank Fiala, Tom Mawson

Visitors: 8

ROLL CALL

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to accept the agenda.

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

Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED

MOTION TO
ACCEPT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

- Board Minutes BOT Regular Meeting, Jan. 9, 2025. Joint Meeting Jan. 20, 2025. Special meeting Jan. 23, 2025.
- January 2025 Accounts Payable: Checks #918340-918371. Total Amount: \$91,959.51
- January 31, 2025, Payroll Checks. #8112-8135 = \$22,048.86
- Amended State Withholding for Dec. 2024 = \$324.17
- January 2025, Federal withholding \$7,338.57
- January 2025, State withholding = \$1,214.39

MOTION TO
APPROVE
CONSENT
AGENDA

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

Yes: 5, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:

Assistant Fire Chief, Dan Miller, Recycle Committee chair Tom Mawson, County Commissioners Catherine Getty and Marcia Bassett

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Commissioners Marcia Bassett and Catherine Getty:

- A brief update was given on ongoing activity at the county level. Of note is a large \$150,000 Ignite Grant given to the Delton-Kellogg schools to develop a manufacturing curriculum.

ACKNOWLEDGE-
MENT OF
VISITORS

TREASURER'S REPORT: By Deb Mousseau, Treasurer

- January 2025 Financial Statement and Investment Reports were reviewed.
- Treasurer is 'cleaning up' funds that have 0% interest.

TREASURER'S
REPORT

Thanks was offered to Deb Mousseau for her work to put money where it will receive maximum interest rates.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.

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

MOTION TO
APPROVE
TREASURER'S
REPORT

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

CLERK'S REPORT:

- January 2025 Current Invoice Journal as of Feb. 11, 2025: \$43,605.54

CLERK'S REPORT

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to approve the February 2025 Current

Invoice Journal. Roll Call Vote: *Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes.*

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

MOTION TO
APPROVE
INVOICE
JOURNAL

- Report on Steve VanderKam property. Last month the township paid a bill to pull cars away during the fire. Mr. VanderKam has been notified that we paid the bill but he understands it is his responsibility. There is ongoing work to resolve this. The fire is still under investigation.

PLANNING COMMISSION, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Recycling Committee.

Tom Mawson, Chair of the committee reports:

- The four member committee met on February 4.
- They will not participate in Winterfest this year.
- Tom spoke to local grocery stores about their use of plastic bags.
- The committee is looking at purchasing a high res camera for the area around the recycle bins to catch rear license plates. They have contacted EGLE to request a grant to offset the cost.
- The committee is considering obtaining another recycle bin. Currently 1 bin is emptied Monday and Friday. Cost of another bin will include another concrete pad - will gather information.
- Rachel Frantz, Barry County recycling source, received info on a compactor for styrofoam that we could put on our property at no cost to us - the committee will check into this.

RECYCLING
COMMITTEE
REPORT

- Tom Mawson also reported that he is coming in every week to check the maintenance of the building.

Discussion:

Mr. VanHouten urges the committee to work toward voluntary elimination of plastic bags. A thank you was extended to Tom Mawson for his work.

Park Committee.

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to accept bid for park renovation to Bultsma Construction for \$243,000.00.

Discussion:

- The original bid was \$223,000.00 but Don DeVries of Fleis & VanDenBrink reviewed the bid and said it was actually for \$243,000.00. He recommended accepting this bid.
- The Women’s Club would like to donate white pine trees to the park. This would save us some \$ on this bid.
- Contractor will be contacted regarding the trees and be given a request for no unexpected add-ons.
- Accepting this bid means that 54% of this project is being paid by the State of Michigan grant, 46% paid by Yankee Springs Township.
- Board will pass this pending an explanation for the \$20,000 increase.

Roll Call Vote: *Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes;*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Heethuis with support from Hopkins to bid the resurfacing walking path.

Roll Call Vote: *Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Zoning Board of Appeals Report

- The ZBA will be meeting on March 11, 2025 if needed.
- At the ZBA meeting on January 14, there was an appeal of a decision to turn down a STR. The Board upheld the decision by the zoning administrator.

Planning Commission Report:

- PCI January 2025 Report in packet.
- 1/16/2025 Regular Meeting:
 - Approved a SEU on Bowen’s Mills Road for a chiropractic service.
 - PC continued discussion of the Master Plan. The PC will continue the discussion of Whispering Pines at their next meeting.
- PC Next Meeting is February 19, 2025 at 7 PM
- The PC will meet with the DNR on February 20. The BOT and ZBA as well as the public are invited.

Water Advisory Committee

- The committee hasn’t met recently but continues to look for grants.
- Regarding sewer, the current ordinance is changing. The rate structure will change. Updates will be made by the township.

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**PARK
COMMITTEE
REPORT**

**MOTION ACCEPT
BID FOR PARK
RENOVATION**

**MOTION TO BID
OUT THE
RESURFACING OF
WALKING PATH**

ZBA REPORT

**PLANNING
COMMISSION
REPORT**

**WATER ADVISORY
COMMITTEE
REPORT**

Fire/EMS Committee Report:

Dan Miller (Deputy Fire Chief) reviewed the January 2025 fire and medical reports.

- January 2025 Yankee Springs Township Fire/Emergency Medical Responses.
 - 12 total fire responses in the month of January.
 - There were 27 medical responses in January.
- Training in January: annual CPR certification; orientation on training for 2025
- Information is being gathered on a potential MIOSHA matching safety grant for \$10,000 for new fire fighting gear (complete kit from helmet to boots) to replace old gear.

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to hire (on at will basis) Chief Mark Jordan as interim Fire Chief for Yankee Springs Fire Department on a monthly rate of \$1,000/month.

Discussion: this is on a temporary basis.

Roll Call Vote: *Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to allocate up to \$5,000 for fire equipment to match the funds received in special grant for Fire Dept. should such a grant be awarded.

Discussion: This is the grant named above by Deputy Chief Dan Miller.

Roll Call Vote: *Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to allocate up to \$9,000 for the Fire Department for the necessary software and 2 new computers for a stand alone fire department.

Discussion: Why 2 computers? The need is for a new records management program and two computers: one computer that will be at the fire station (desktop) and one that they take with them (laptop). The records management program will come from an outside vendor. Currently quotes are being gathered. They are consulting with an IT person for recommendations.

Roll Call Vote: *Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Included in the meeting packet are two communications (emails) regarding our separation from Wayland EMS. Still to be determined is the date of separation. March 1, 2025 is our requested date, but April 10, 2025 may be required per our original agreement with Wayland Area EMS. Comment: Thornapple EMS is already running about 1/2 of the calls since Wayland is so busy.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS:

- Zoning Update

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to approve the request for land division; PSD 25-01-01 (Parent Parcel #16-015-004-52) as recommended by the zoning administrator.

Roll Call Vote: *VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

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FIRE/EMS
COMMITTEE
REPORT

MOTION TO HIRE
CHIEF MARK
JORDAN AS
INTERIM FIRE
CHIEF

MOTION TO
ALLOCATE UP TO
\$5,000 FOR FIRE
EQUIPMENT

MOTION TO
ALLOCATE UP TO
\$9,000 FOR
SOFTWARE/COMP
UTERS FOR FIRE
DEPT

BOARD ACTION
ITEMS

MOTION TO
APPROVE
REQUEST FOR
LAND DIVISION
PSD 25-01-01

Motion by Knowles with support from VanHouten to approve the request for land division; PSD 25-01-02 (Parent Parcel #16-018-001-10) as recommended by the zoning administrator.

Roll Call Vote: *Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to pass the Yankee Springs Fire and Rescue Dept. Ordinance #02-13-2025.

Roll Call Vote: *Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: yes; Heethuis: yes;*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Heethuis with support from Knowles to accept agreement from Thornapple EMS.

Discussion: The number of runs already done by Thornapple EMS is surprising.

Roll Call Vote: *Hopkins: yes, VanHouten: yes; Knowles: yes; Heethuis: yes; Mousseau: yes*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

John Timmers from Wayland has been informed of our intention to be an independent fire station by March 1st.
Question about 911 service - preliminary work has been done with central dispatch. The Fire Dept will meet with other jurisdictions. It will be brought for approval.

Motion by Mousseau with support from Knowles to approve \$150,000 to the Barry County road commission for the year 2025.

Roll Call Vote: *Mousseau: yes, VanHouten: no, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes.*
Yes: 4, No: 1. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Heethuis with support from VanHouten to pass a resolution recognizing the Wayland Chapter of the society of St. Vincent DePaul as a non-profit organization in the community

Discussion: The state has requirements that we recognize the non-profit status of an organization in our community. There are no other obligations on our part.

Roll Call Vote: *VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Dave VanHouten with support from Heethuis to put restroom remodel out to bid.

Discussion: Currently there are 2 stalls in the women's bathroom. Is there a preference for one or two stalls? One of the current stalls is very small, not often used. The men's bathroom urinal is the drain, so the recommendation is to keep the old fixture.

This opportunity will be advertised in the paper and by word of mouth. *Date for bids to be turned in is March 12, 2025.*

Roll Call Vote: *VanHouten: yes, Heethuis: yes, Knowles: yes, Hopkins: yes, Mousseau: yes.*
Yes: 5, No: 0. **MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion on digitizing township records.

Tom Hopkins met with Sarah (new clerk) at the county. They are digitizing their paperwork and working with a company that they are very pleased with. They highly recommend

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MOTION TO APPROVE REQUEST FOR LAND DIVISION PSD 25-01-02

MOTION TO ACCEPT Yankee Springs Fire and Rescue Dept. Ordinance

MOTION TO ACCEPT AGREEMENT FROM THORNAPPLE EMS

MOTION TO APPROVE \$150,000 TO THE BARRY COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION FOR 2025

MOTION TO PASS A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

MOTION TO PUT RESTROOM REMODEL OUT TO BID

digitizing. Their cost is approximately \$4,000/year for the program and services (also needed is a person to do the scans). Tom Hopkins is requesting permission to dig a little deeper to explore potential services and costs. The Board supports further investigation.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mike Cunningham (YS Township resident):

“During public comment at the Jan. 23 meeting it was stated that the board and the process that is being followed just keeps getting better. I disagree with this statement, especially the part about getting better. I do think the process being followed did get better during the last term of 2021 - 2024. So far the new board has significantly reversed much of the improvement. Examples from the first 2 ½ months:

- Public comment periods have been reduced from 2 to 1.
- The Board has provided meeting agendas only a couple days before meetings instead of 6 days for board meetings. The agenda for tonight’s meeting was only made available on the website a few hours ago.
- The new clerk was appointed without following the normal process of advertising and interviewing candidates. Only one candidate was presented and appointed without much discussion and I don’t recall much information being provided about the candidate. This is not about the candidates’ quality, this is about the process not being followed.
- It was announced during a board meeting that someone was now going to be paid for 6 hours of office maintenance without any visible process being followed. Nothing was said about who made this decision, how much they’re getting paid, and that sort of thing. Again nothing about the person hired, just about the process.
- The Board approved the creation of a stand alone fire dept and changed EMS service providers during the winter season when many residents were away and without any public hearings.
- I believe that the PC conducted a hearing (meeting) last month that was supposed to have a public hearing in the paper for a special exception use permit, but there was no public comment allowed during what should have been a hearing, and there was obviously no closing of the public hearing. I don’t think the proper process was followed and even though the public hearing was not listed on the agenda, as maybe it should have been, there are people on the PC with enough experience that they should have corrected the agenda and followed the correct process. I mention this here because the Board, I believe, is responsible for the performance of the PC.

Though many of these changes may be legal, I don’t see how many of them are right or making things better for the people of the township.”

Tom Mawson (YS Township resident): “I just want to bring to your attention that sometimes serving on a board can be a thankless job. Last week we received a letter from a homeowner thanking us and expressing appreciation for the work of the ZBA for their work on Short Term rentals. This person was very thankful that we not only have ordinances, but that we are enforcing it. I just wanted to let everyone know that it was appreciated.”

Public comment closed at 7:16 PM.

BOARD COMMENT:

- Mousseau: February 28 is a Friday, and we’re open until 5:00 PM that day because taxes are due at midnight.

PUBLIC
COMMENT

BOARD COMMENT

- VanHouten: Expressed hope that the park committee will talk about the Yankee Springs Veteran Memorial Park. Two benches for the Veterans Memorial park have been obtained and will be installed in the spring. We need a chairperson for the veterans committee.
- Hopkins: will be gone (on vacation) next week.
- Knowles: Thanks expressed to the Clerk for his work checking into the digitization of records. Thanks also given to Dave VanHouten for itemizing everything for the bathrooms.
- Heethuis: Working together can only bring us forward.
- The Board acknowledges and thanks Travis Knowles, who prepared the powerpoint presentation for tonight's meeting and was present to run it.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Heethuis with support from Mousseau to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 PM.
Approved by all. MOTION CARRIED.

Approved by: _____ Date _____
Tom Hopkins, Township Clerk

Respectfully submitted by:
Diane Dykgraaf, Recording Secretary

ADJOURNMENT

