

## Keene Township Board Meeting – Minutes March 10, 2026

Call to Order: 6:10 PM

Attendees ~ Supervisor: Sandy Smiley

Trustees: Christine Hendrick, Holli Melton, William Pflugrad. **Absent** - Nate Wolff

### I. Agenda & Minutes

**Approval of Agenda** - Motion by Pflugradt, seconded by Hendrick → **Motion carried 4-0. Approval of Minutes** - February 10, 2026 - correction that “motion carried 5-0” should be “4-0”; minutes approved with amendments, with abstention Pflugradt abstaining for absence.

Motion to approve by Melton, second by Hendrick → **Motion carried 3-0 Pflugradt Abstained/absent Approval of Minutes** Special meeting March 4, 2026 - Motion to approve by Melton, second by Pflugradt → **Motion carried 4-0**

**II. Public Comment & Guests** - Approximately 10 members of the public were present. Becky Gnuse asked questions regarding the fire services contract - The township's goal is to negotiate a consistent, flat-rate fee that incorporates all costs to provide residents with budget stability. The board reiterated their strong desire to continue receiving fire services from Saranac, stating it is the most logical and effective option. There was further discussion, and in the interest of time the guest was advised that further discussion would take place in another meeting.

Tracey Boulton questioned the necessity of a \$125 BOR training expense for the supervisor. Recalled a February 10th meeting where training for two alternates was approved, but the supervisor's (Sandy's) training was not. Clerk Holli Melton responded that she did the minutes from a meeting recording and then reviewed them against the transcript, asserting their accuracy. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the \$125 per person training cost for the two new alternates and the supervisor. It was argued that it is important for the supervisor, who oversees the Board of Review, to have the training. It was also noted that the board eliminated a separate \$1,000 worth of training from the budget for FY 26/27. Resident Boulton stated that board members should pay out of pocket for education.

**III. Announcement of Cake and refreshments** in recognition of Jeanne Vandersloot's 30 years of Service. The board has selected a new Zoning Administrator who will begin on April 1st. The new ZA will be introduced to the community in April.

**IV. The Public hearing for the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget was opened, as required by Michigan's Act 43 of 1963.**

- Copies of the proposed budget are available for review and have been posted to the website. • Key financial figures for Keene Township were presented.
- The township's millage rate has been reduced from the voted 1.0 mill to 0.66 mill due to truth in taxation and Headlee rollbacks.
- The current budget is based on the actual 0.66 mill rate.
- This reduction has decreased the potential revenue from \$97,767.90 to \$63,206.22. • State-level changes to revenue sharing and road funding have negatively impacted the township's finances and control over local roads.

**No further public comments were offered. A motion to close the Public hearing was offered by Smiley and seconded by Pflugradt → Motion carried 4-0. The public hearing on the budget was formally closed at 7:12 PM**

### Regular Meeting Business

**V. Treasurers Report** - The Treasurer discussed delinquent tax collection and preparations for the upcoming audit. Financial statements as of the end of February are posted. Approximately 63 parcels have delinquent taxes,

which have been turned over to the county. The annual audit is scheduled earlier this year for the week of May 11th.

**SPECIAL GUEST** - Officer Sean Farrell arrived to present on behalf of the Sheriff's office. Officer Farrell provided a law enforcement update, highlighting a decrease in certain crimes and preventative advice.

- Call volume in the township is slightly lower or on par with the previous year. The township is considered a relatively low-crime area.
- A county-wide decrease in property and personal crimes has been observed, which is attributed to the winter season. An increase is anticipated in the spring and summer.
- Supervisor Smiley made a request for better advance notification of community events like bike races to improve public awareness and safety.
- Concerns were raised about commercial trucks failing to stop at intersections, specifically at Potter and Hawley.

VI. **Clerks Report** - The Clerk provided an update on recent activities, including cemetery records digitization. It was announced that Travis Ebmeyer will be the new deputy clerk. Currently organizing election worker training and working on scheduling for early voting. Handling several zoning violation complaints and meeting with the new zoning administrator. Issuing the first cemetery certificates and a new deed certificate. The Pinckney Cemetery records have now been fully digitized into an Excel spreadsheet format. Letters to individuals who purchased gravesites after 2018 but did not receive a certificate and providing them with an application to complete to receive a proper deed.

**The combined total for AP and payroll was noted as \$15,693.07.**

- Key Decision: Jeannie's final pay was officially changed from 6 days to 10 days - Motion made by Smiley, seconded by Christine, Motion carried → 4-0
- Key Decision: The accounts payable of \$11,344.84 was approved - Motion made by Hendrick, seconded by Pflugradt, Motion carried → 4-0
- Key Decision: The payroll of \$4,348.43 was approved - [Motion made by Holly, seconded by Christine, Motion carried → 4-0..

VII. **Zoning Report given by Sandy and Holli.** A review of specific non-compliance cases and the need to formalize enforcement procedures.

VIII. **Supervisors Report** - provided a Supervisor's Report detailing recent activities and accomplishments. Preparations for the upcoming cleanup day were confirmed. New water heater installed - Well sanitation discussed and pending. BOR went well with only 2 residents attending. Finishing up Road Contracts and color maps for the website by the end of March.

IV. **Unfinished Business** - Board Action on Budget.

1. **The budget was formally approved via a roll-call vote.** - The motion was made by Smiley and seconded by Melton. **Motion carried** → **4-0** in favor with one member (Nate) absent and no abstentions.

**Voting Yes: Hendrick, Smiley, Melton, Pflugradt. Voting no: None**

2. **ZBA Alternate** - The board appointed Travis as the new alternate for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Motion by Christine, Seconded by Pflugradt. **Motion carried** → **4-0**
3. **Adoption of the Principles of Government- MTA** - Motion to approved by Melton seconded by Smiley. **Motion carried** → **4-0**
4. **Board of Commissioners position and Keene Twp Support of Robert Simpson.**

The Keene Township Board will not make an official endorsement for the County Commissioner vacancy, but individual board members may endorse candidates in their personal capacity.

The discussion shifted to Road concerns, funding, culverts etc.

**V. Public Comment - Items on the Agenda -**

A call for public comments was made, and none were offered.

**VI. Motion to Adjourn** - Smiley made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Pflugradt (and Brad Potter)  
**Motion carried** → 4-0 meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM