

Keene Township Board Meeting – Minutes February 10, 2026

- I. Call to Order: 6:00pm
- II. Attendees - Sandy Smiley, Christine Hendrick, Holli Melton, Nate Wolff. Absent - William Pflugradt
- III. **Approval of Agenda** with changes - A new agenda with highlighted changes was distributed Motion by C. Hendrick, second by N. Wolff → **Motion carried 4-0.**
- IV. **Approval of Minutes** January 13th, 2026, Regular Meeting Motion by H. Melton, second by S. Smiley → **Motion carried 3-0-1** (Nate abstained)
Approval of Minutes January 29th, 2026 Special Meeting - Motion by H. Melton, second by C. Hendrick → **Motion carried 4-0**
- V. **Public Comment & Guests** - Approximately eight members of the public were present. No public comments; no board member comments
- VI. **Reports**
 - 1) **Treasurer's Report** - January bank reconciliations posted and provided for public review. The last day for property tax collection is Monday the 16th, with staff available from 9 AM to 5 PM. Staff will also be available on March 2nd from 9 AM to 5 PM before turning the roll over to the county. The township's application was accepted for Michigan Fire Insurance Withholding Program, effective March 1st. Insurance companies will now notify the township after a fire. The MML Property and Liability Pool renewal for \$4,822 plus a \$225 membership fee. The policy covers the township, grounds, and cemetery, and saves significantly compared to previous insurance. Motion to approve by S. Smiley, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.** A 3% wage increase for the assessor, effective April 1st, due to excellent work and extra time spent on a state audit was proposed. Motion to approve by N. Wolff, second by S. Smiley → **Motion carried 4-0.**
 - 2) **Clerk's Report** - The clerk reported on activities including processing accounts payable, payroll taxes, website updates, handling cemetery inquiries and FOIA requests. Payment of Township monthly bills was Proposed for accounts payable of \$10,267.24 and payroll of \$4,891.79. Motion to approve by C. Hendrick, second by N. Wolff → **Motion carried 4-0.**
 - 3) **Planning Commission Report** - New officers were elected for the 2026-2027 term: Denny Briggs (Chair), Corey Wolbert (Vice Chair), and Nancy Solomon (Secretary). The Master Plan Survey questions have been finalized and are ready for board review. The commission is getting quotes for printing and mailing. Work on the data center ordinance is ongoing.
 - 4) **Zoning Administrator Report** - Report provided for the Public to review. **Code Enforcement for resident on White's Bridge Rd:** Ionia County Commission on Aging phone number was provided to them for assistance in the spring, concerns were raised about the lack of a firm deadline.
 - 5) **Supervisor's Report & General Updates** - After significant difficulty renewing, a processor was hired to update the township's SAM.gov registration. The supervisor will receive training for future renewals. This enables the township to apply for future grants. ARPA fund reporting will be handled for \$350, which begins April 1st. The supervisor and Holly met with ICRD to discuss this year's needs for our local roads. **A proposal was made** to approve a \$395 quote from "Anything Plumbing" to replace the old water heater in the hall. Motion to approve by C. Hendrick, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.** A resident's concern about electrical reliability was noted, but it is the responsibility of the utility and the MPSC.

Resignation of Zoning Administrator (Jeanne Vandersloot)

- The supervisor announced the withdrawal of the contract offer and the resignation of Jeanne Vandersloot as Zoning Administrator, effective February 6th. The supervisor had already begun seeking alternatives. A motion to formally accept the resignation by C. Hendrick, second by S. Smiley → **Motion carried 4-0.**

VII. Unfinished Business/Updates

- (1) **Civil Rights Case Update** - The Michigan Department of Civil Rights (DCR) approved the submitted educational materials. However, with the resignation of the party involved, training is no longer possible. An email has been sent to the DCR to request the case be dismissed.
- (2) **Engineer Contract (Private Road)**: A Motion to approve the engineer contract by S. Smiley, second by C. Hendrick → **Motion carried 3-0** (Holli abstaining), on the condition that it be amended to remove the name of the resigned zoning administrator. The attorney will be told to pause review of the associated road maintenance agreement until updated documents are ready.
- (3) **Cemetery Application** - The board reviewed the proposed amended cemetery applications. A motion to approve was made by C. Hendrick, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.**
- (4) **Cemetery Fee Schedule** - A motion was made to approve a new cemetery fee schedule via formal resolution, including resident rates (\$200 + \$100 perpetual care) and non-resident rates (\$1,000 + \$100 perpetual care) by S. Smiley, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.**
- (5) **Cemetery Ordinance** - The board reviewed the proposed amended cemetery ordinance. Terminology was standardized to "gravesites," and definitions were updated. A motion was made to approve the amended cemetery ordinance by C. Hendrick, second by N. Wolff → Motion carried 4-0.
- (6) **Township Cleanup Day** - April 25th was selected as the date for the annual township cleanup day. The previous year's event cost was \$3,555.

VIII. New Business

- 1. Board of Review Appointments and Training:** A Motion was made by supervisor S. Smiley to appoint Polly Wolff as Board of Review alternate for a two-year term, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 3-0** (N. Wolff abstaining). A Motion was made by supervisor S. Smiley to appoint Dan Kinsey as Board of Review alternate for a two-year term, second by N. Wolff **Motion carried 4-0.** Both were sworn in as Board of Review alternates for a two-year term. A motion was made to approve the \$125/person training cost for the two new alternates and the supervisor by C. Hendrick, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.**
- 2. Printer/Scanner Lease:** A motion was made to approve a \$143/month lease for a new Canon imaging system that will copy, scan, and meet ADA requirements by S. Smiley, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.** The lease includes maintenance and toner.
- 3. Ionia County Hazard Mitigation Plan:** A motion to approve Resolution 21026B was made officially adopting the county plan to ensure FEMA eligibility by S. Smiley, second by C. Hendrick → **Motion carried 4-0.**

4. Life EMS Contract: A motion to approve the 2026-2027 Life EMS contract for a total annual cost of \$12,452.68, representing a 1.7% increase, was made by C. Hendrick, second by N. Wolff → Motion carried 4-0.

5. Road Maintenance: Due to a depleted general fund, The Board discussed the greatest township needs and budget restrictions. A Motion to approve a list of projects and a road budget of \$91,109 was made by S. Smiley, second by Melton → **Motion carried 4-0.**

2026 Road Projects:

- **Mowing:** No roadside mowing will be performed this year to save ~\$2,500 for critical roadwork. A notice will be added to the summer newsletter to inform residents.
- **Graveling:** Marble from Centerline to Sayles 1 ½ miles \$22,530, Sayles Pinckney to the East ½ mile \$7,510, Marble Richmond to Heether 1 ½ miles \$22,530: For a Total of \$52,570 Projects on Rickert Road and Sayles Road were postponed to save funds.
- **Brine Application:** \$32,049.20 was approved for two brine applications.
- **Culvert Repairs:** Critical (very large) Culvert: Rickert Rd, just east of Harley Rd \$10,000, Critical (16 inch) Culvert: Rickert Rd. west of Lee Rd. \$700, Critical (12 inch) Culvert: Richmond Rd. between Whites Bridge & Marble \$700, Critical (30 inch) Culvert: Centerline east of Hawley Rd. (cleanout) \$300, Plus \$2,300 for unexpected work. For a total of \$14,000.

6. Road Millage: A road millage was identified as necessary for future funding but would not provide funds until the next fiscal year.

7. Budget Workshop: A budget workshop was scheduled for March 4th at 3:00 PM to finalize the budget, which must be voted on by March 10. The BS&A software accounts will be cleaned up and simplified.

IX. Public Comment Items on the agenda:

White's Bridge Painting and Sign: A local doctor has agreed to donate a painting of White's Bridge to the township in two years. It was also confirmed that the brass/copper sign on the bridge will not be moved. Six cameras are installed to prevent theft.

X. Adjournment: A Motion to adjourn by S. Smiley, second by H. Melton → **Motion carried 4-0**
Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM