

Keene Township Board Meeting – Minutes May 12, 2026

I. Call to Order: 6:00 PM

II. Attendees ~ Supervisor: Sandy Smiley

Trustees: Christine Hendrick, Holli Melton, William Pflugradt, Nate Wolff

Agenda & Minutes

III. Approval of Agenda - Agenda amended to add Planning Commission Rep report after Clerk report
Motion by Christine, seconded by William → **Motion carried 5-0**

IV. Approval of Minutes - April 14, 2026 - approved as written Motion by William, seconded by Nate →
Motion carried 5-0

V. Public Comment & Guests - Approximately 7 members of the public were present.

Community concern about a culvert/sinkhole on Whitesbridge Road between Potters and Sparks Rd causing access and safety issues; discussion on whether a culvert exists and recurring collapse. Supervisor and Clerk called the Road Dept. and 911 to have the road closed. Whitesbridge is a county road; repairs will be taken care of by the Road Dept.

Candidate Introduction – Tim Ross for County Commission - his background includes prior county commission service (Lapeer), village council, planning commissions, and party leadership. Supports local control over renewable siting; criticizes PA 233; Explained special election timeline (August primary; winner sworn in after November certification) and priorities (roads, law enforcement, veterans, seniors).

VI Reports.

1. Treasurer's Report - Financials displayed; Discussed Audit Progress, and Budget Procedures. Auditor spent fewer days in person; the remaining work remotely.. Improvement over the prior year.

Quarterly budget amendments - needed by Supervisor before June, September, December, and March meetings for presentation and board approval.

- **Journal Entries Review Process** - New control: print monthly journal entries for review & initialing by Supervisor.
- **Fund process defined**; reconciliation and annual interest allocation established.
- **Front Office Payment Window Proposal** - Safety/ergonomics concerns for tax payment handling. Proposal to add a sliding window with locks and a possible small shelf; preliminary vinyl window ~\$177 plus installation. Conclusion: No purchase approved; obtain estimates for next meeting.
- **Consideration of a Workplace Pet Policy** - Insurance confirms existing coverage applies; no added cost. Example policy provided. Conclusion: Read materials and place it on a future agenda.
- **Newsletter Content and Timeline** - Contributions due by the end of May 2026; Include an introduction and contact info for new ZA (Larry) Conclusion: Proceed with content collection and production timeline.

2. Clerks' Report - Financial Reports, Budget Line Adjustments, and AP/Payroll for approval. Revenue & expenditures review. Separate Payroll and AP reports provided.

- **Updated pay rates** and Board member/Term expiration lists.
- **Contractor** Contact list compiled.

- **Invoices** noted (Foster Swift, postage machine rental, Progressive Companies); Private Road escrow offset some costs.
- **BS & A Reclassify Zoning Administrator** from wages to contractual (department 702; code 802).
- **Auditor guidance:** monitor department totals and adjust quarterly.
- **Election Inspector/Admin Training and Early Voting** - Free training in Ionia; compensate attendees' time. Cost discussion: \$20/hour, two people, 3 hours (up to \$120 total). Motion language noted "up to \$60 for Cori, with broader intent to cover both attendees under the election training/wages budget.

Motion to approve compensation for time training by Nate, seconded by William → **Motion passed 5-0**

Approval of Payroll and Payables; Christine made a motion to approve AP \$7,796.18 and Payroll \$3,999.84 (combined \$11,796.02); with a second by William → **Motion carried 5-0.**

Disposal of Old Windows 8 Laptop - Device not upgradable. Options: drill drive (recommended), professional recycler with documentation. Conclusion: Research and dispose securely; document method.

3. Planning Commission Report - Reviewed private road application; need policies/procedures for future applications. Master plan mailing pricing update pending; data center/cryptocurrency mining ordinance under review; schedule a Zoom call (Denny, Sandy & possibly Cori) with Foster Swift to resolve questions before a final ordinance & public hearing.

VII. Zoning Report provided for review: Review of permits, Land Splits, and specific non-compliance cases. Many inquiries via email/website; callers seeking the ZA should be directed to [Larry Mercer]'s number; Larry prefers email for contact.

VIII. Supervisors Report -

- **Clean up Day** - About 64 loads processed; efficient use of equipment reduced dumpster needs (5 deployed; 2 unused). Costs significantly decreased versus last year (approx. \$2,275 vs. ~\$3,550 prior year); expected net around \$2,000 pending Portland Steel check.
- **Community Materials Management and Battery Collection** - County hazardous waste days: April 18-19 and September; accepted materials include paints, batteries, mercury, etc. Proposal to place a small can at township for battery drop-off; pickup logistics and liability need definition.
- **Daily News Press Box at Township Hall** - Daily News offered to place a self-funded press box to sell papers; no objections.
- **ARPA Funds Reporting Status** - Report reviewed (dated 4/24) with no issues;
- **Fire Equipment Grant Application** (Temporarily Suspended) - Supervisor intends to apply for up to \$50,000 to offset fire service costs and the township's share of future apparatus (e.g., water tender expected 2029). Suspension notice received; Conclusion: Apply when suspension lifts; prepare materials.
- **Speeding and Unsafe Driving on Potters Road** - Resident Complaint about extreme speeding/drag racing near 9040-9060 Potters between Feuerstein and Higgins. Options discussed: police monitoring, speed studies, signage, flashing indicators, rumble strips; actions require county coordination.
- **White's Bridge Historic Marker Logistics** - New marker delivered and stored at the County road department. Need to coordinate the removal timing of old marker Preference to retain old sign locally.

IV. Unfinished Business/Updates

1. **Code Enforcement- Policies & Forms** - Adopted a zoning enforcement procedure emphasizing voluntary compliance with structured timelines and exceptions for immediate threats.

Resolution 5-12-2026 A: to adopt code enforcement procedure - Christine motioned to approve with revisions to the word violation as violation(s) Nate seconded - **Roll Call vote initiated:** Nate - Yea; Christine - Yea; Sandy - Yea; Holli - Yea; William - Yea. 0 Nays, 0 abstain or absent→**Resolution adopted 5-0.**

- a. **Postcard Warning card** - for code enforcement after complaint. Motion by William to approve design and cost to purchase 150 cards estimated at \$50.00 (not including shipping) seconded by Holli → **Motion carried 5-0**
- b. **Complaint Form and Requirement for written complaint** - Form requires name, address, signature, and will be confidential.

Resolution 5-12-2026 B to adopt a written complaint requirement for all zoning violations, general complaints, and concerns. Holli motioned to approve the complaint form with minor revisions to increase the font size and add a check box to item #2. Sandy seconded - **Roll Call vote initiated:** Nate - Yea; Christine - Yea; Sandy - Yea; Holli - Yea; William - Yea. 0 Nays, 0 abstain or absent→**Resolution adopted 5-0.**

2. Cemetery/Survey/Marker - Need to locate/recover aluminum markers for unsold plots prior to surveying/enlarging plots; plan volunteer dig-out with metal detectors and shovels coordinated around mowing and surveyor (Mulder). Holli, Nate and Will will coordinate and facilitate work.

V. New Business

1. **L-4029 & Road Millage** - Plan to combine L-4029 and Fire and EMS Special Assessment public hearings into one meeting; Wait for the August 4 road millage vote outcome before finalizing L-4029. Schedule July meeting with Tony Koster to preview fire board packet and align special assessment timing with January fire budget; coordinate notices and timing with election results.
2. **FOIA Request from Sunlight Access (a Virginia entity)** - FOIA seeks AP-related reports from Jan 2022–Feb 2026. BS&A exports are feasible since April 1 last year; pre-BS&A QuickBooks data retrieval would be time-consuming/costly. Supervisor Smiley will respond and offer to provide BS&A period first, request a 10-day extension to estimate costs for earlier records. Also clarify the FOIA was requested for Keene Township in Michigan and NOT Keene Township in Virginia.
3. **Master Plan Survey Pricing** - The board is proceeding with PE Office Solutions printing quote \$614.90 (no postage); but quote addition of #9 return envelope up to \$130; postage up to \$0.43 each for ~715 pieces. Including return envelope to improve response; target mailing around the election; update cover letter with return instructions, a 10-day deadline, and firm drop-dead date; use an in-office collection box; check compiling results.

Motion to approve using PE Solutions by Sandy, seconded by William -Motion carried 5-0 to proceed within specified cost limits and conditions; finalize logistics and content.

VI. Public Comment - A call for public comments was made, and none were offered.

VII. Motion to Adjourn - Nate made a motion to adjourn, seconded by William. **Motion carried** → **5-0 meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM**

