BERRIEN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FEBRUARY 10, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

Berrien Township Board of Trustees met on Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 7:00pm at the township hall for their regular meeting. Township Supervisor, Bryan Bixby, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and opened with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ROLL CALL
Members present: Cynthia Layman, Julie Burke, Michael Jenks, Bryan Bixby, Harold Bishop, Kevin Klug, Tory Parrish, Howard Henderson

Members absent: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Cynthia Layman made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Julie Burke. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 6 TRUSTEE MEETING MINUTES
Cynthia Layman made a motion to approve the January 6, 2026 meeting minutes. Second by Michael Jenks. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

REPORTS

Sheriff's Report - Deputy Burks
There were 50 calls in Berrien Township during the month of December resulting in 4 tickets issued, 0 animal control tickets issued and 5 arrests.

Fire Report - Norm Carl Jr
In the month of December there were 24 calls total. Of those calls there was 1 structure fire, 17 medical calls, 1 rescue call and 5 miscellaneous calls. They are anticipating delivery of the new truck in March. Feeding America will be on Friday from 4-6pm. The next meeting is the Joint Fire Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00pm.

Planning Commission - Julie Burke
They met on Monday, February 2nd for a public hearing regarding Cottage Forest School. The public hearing was tabled until next month in order to gather more information. Research is needed to verify the rights of the neighboring land owners to hunt on their land.

They also spoke about short term rentals. They are gathering information from other townships to put rules in place for our township.

Financial Report - Michael Jenks
The current profit & loss budget was presented.
Kevin Klug made a motion to approve amendments to the following line items in the budget as listed below. Second by Julie Burke. None opposed - **Motion carried.**

- Electrical Permits – Raise $2,000
- Building Permits – Raise $8,000
- Summer Tax Fees – Raise $200
- Metro-Road Right of Way – Raise $8,300
- Township Hall/Park Rental – Raise $300
- Election Reimbursement – Raise $4,300
- Income Other – Raise $300
- Delinquent Real Tax – Raise $4,400
- Special Assessment - Country Acres – Raise $8,400

- Cemetery – Sale of Lots - Raise $3,500
- Cemetery – Vaults/Bases - Raise $800
- Finance/Office Admin - Printing & Publishing – Lower $5,000
- Finance/Office Admin - M&R Equipment – Lower $2,000
- Finance/Office Admin - Expenses, other – Lower $1,000
- Clerk - Office Supplies – Lower $1,000
- Assessor - Temporary Help BS&A - Lower $4,000
- Twp Hall & Grounds - M&R Buildings – Lower $4,000
- Twp Hall & Grounds - M&R Equipment - Lower $2,000
- Twp Hall & Grounds - M&R Grounds - Lower $1,000
- Twp Hall & Grounds – Capital Improvements - Lower $7,000
- Cemeteries - M&R Grounds –Lower $3,000
- Highways and Streets - M&R Drains – Lower $4,000
- Planning Commission - Professional Services – Lower $2,000
- Community Services - Fireworks/Cherry Festival – Lower $1,000
- Township Park Rangeline - M&R Equipment – Raise $500
- Township Park Riverview - Capital Acquisitions - Raise $77,000

The Budget Workshop will be held on Tuesday, February 24th at 7:00pm at the Berrien Township Hall.

Greater Berrien Springs Recreational Authority - Cynthia Layman
The GBSRA met on Monday, February 9th. Current registration for Little Rocks Basketball is 110 boys and 80 girls. Wrestling is going well. Baseball, softball and soccer registration is underway. Michigan Moves day is April 26th. The groundskeeper job has been posted. They are working with Doug Hiatt, a grant writer, to see what grants they qualify for.

Building/Electrical Permits - Ross Rogien
Ross provided the yearly summary of permits for 2025. The grand total project values, as reported on applications, was $6,333,206.00. In the month of January there was 1 building permit issued and 2 electrical permits. There are more units that need to be pulled out of River Grove. Three were supposed to be removed by November so a plan of action needs to be discussed.

Emergency Management - Howard Henderson
Howard provided information from EGLE on types of spills to report and how to report them. He also informed the board that they are eligible for "FirstNet" cell phone service. It is a nationwide public safety broadband network, dedicated to first responders and those who support them.

IN/MI River Valley Trail - Deb Conley
There haven't been any meetings related to the trail. The I&M proposal is still on the table but there hasn't been any movement at this time.

Community Growth Alliance - Cynthia Layman
Nothing to report. The next CGA meeting will be Wednesday, February 11th at the Berrien Township Hall.

Approval of Monthly Township Bills
Cynthia Layman made a motion to approve the township bills in the amount of $48,941.24. Second by Tory Parrish. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

Approval of Monthly Fire Bills
Julie Burke made a motion to approve the monthly fire department bills in the amount of $8,559.85 with Berrien Township's portion being $5,529.66. Second by Cynthia Layman. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Early Voting Agreement
The county is asking municipalities to sign agreements to participate in early voting. We are required to offer early voting for 9 days before an election. If we offer early voting at the Township Hall we would be responsible for finding workers for all 9 days as well as the extra costs such as a new tabulator used strictly for early voting. If we enter the agreement with the county our residents will be able to vote in Bridgman for 9 days of early voting. The cost to Berrien Township is estimated at about $6,000. The cost of purchasing a new tabulator is $15,000 plus the other expenses that come with early voting.
Michael Jenks made a motion to enter into an agreement with Berrien County for Early Voting. Second by Cynthia Layman. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

Tarragindi Dig - Cemetery Signage
Leanne Sigvartsen spoke to the board about the work they have been doing at Long Lake Cemetery. They have had 350 children participate in the Archeology Dig program this year. She is requesting that the township put up a historical marker at the Long Lake Cemetery. The cemetery currently doesn't have a sign. The board discussed looking at all of the cemeteries in the township and coming up with a uniform sign and replacing the old signs that are existing.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of 3 Board of Review Resolutions; Alternate Dates (Resolution 01-2026), Accepting Letters of Protest (Resolution 02-2026) and Updating State Poverty Levels (Resolution 03-2026).

Cynthia Layman made a motion to approve resolution 01-2026 Board of Review Alternate Dates. Second by Michael Jenks.
Roll Call: Kevin Klug - yes, Harold Bishop - yes, Tory Parrish - yes, Bryan Bixby - yes, Michael Jenks - yes, Julie Burke - yes, Cynthia Layman - yes
None opposed - **Motion carried.**

Tory Parrish made a motion to approve resolution 02-2026 Board of Review Accepting Letters of Protest. Second by Cynthia Layman.
Roll Call: Kevin Klug - yes, Harold Bishop - yes, Tory Parrish - yes, Bryan Bixby - yes, Michael Jenks - yes, Julie Burke - yes, Cynthia Layman - yes
None opposed - **Motion carried.**

Julie Burke made a motion to approve resolution 03-2026 Board of Review Updating State Poverty Levels. Second by Cynthia Layman.
Roll Call: Kevin Klug - yes, Harold Bishop - yes, Tory Parrish - yes, Bryan Bixby - yes, Michael Jenks - yes, Julie Burke - yes, Cynthia Layman - yes
None opposed - **Motion carried.**

Medic 1
PWW Advisory Group was hired by Medic 1 and SMCAS for consulting purposes as they are considering a merger. There will be an in person presentation regarding the consulting groups findings and recommendations. These presentations will be 3/16/26 at 4:00pm at Corewell Health, St. Joseph and 3/17/26 at 9:00am at the Niles City Hall. Cynthia Layman will attend on behalf of Berrien Township.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Next Meeting:
The next meeting is the Joint Fire Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00pm.

The next Board of Trustee meeting will be the Budget Workshop held on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 7:00pm at the Township Hall.

TORY PARRISH BERRIEN TOWNSHIP CLERK

BRYAN BIXBY BERRIEN TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR