

MINUTES OF THE SALEM TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING HELD MARCH 10, 2026

Members Present: Jim Pitsch - Supervisor, Renee Busscher - Clerk, Ashley Brower – Treasurer, Dan Striegle – Trustee, Don Sebright – Trustee
Also preset: Craig VanBeek – County Commissioner, Tom Dykstra –Deputy Fire Chief, Lisa Vandebunte – Library Director
Absent: n/a

Meeting was called to order by Jim Pitsch at 7:00PM
Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Reading of previous board meeting Minutes and Bills, if no additions or corrections Minutes and Bills were approved and paid by consent.

County Road Commissioner: n/a

County Commissioner: VanBeek presented, see attached report. Wanted to stop in to help clarify any questions about the hot meals program. Allegan co put out RFP, Meals on Wheels and Community Action bid. There was significant difference in the bids. Recommendation from commission of Aging was to switch to Meals on Wheels from current provider, Allegan Community Action. Meals on Wheel provids frozen meals, but more options, 3 times per week. Community Action had provided hot meals 5 times per week. This service is covered under the senior milage.

Community Action Director Lisa Evans: Presented hot meal program for Senior Citizens

Comments from Commissions & Departments of:

- *Zoning:* n/a
- *Planning:* Dan Striegle – finished amendments to backyard farming centered around chickens, will go to board next months, and talked about moratorium for data center, and discussed trainings
- *Fire:* Tom Dykstra presented, see attached report. Advised we can get smoke alarms for hard of hearing. We have a current request in the township
- *Ambulance:* budget board meeting on 3/11/26
- *Library:* Lisa Vandebunte presented, see attached paper. Check out Library webpage for all information <https://saletownshiplibrary.org/>
- *Parks Planning:* As soon as we can have an excavator up here, parking lot will start and court will start. Moving dirt to level and have soccer field relocated. Construction entrance will be more west of the library parking lot. When done, the entrance will be continual with the library lot.
- *Roads:* County is working to complete project.

Public Comment:

Local ordinance 136th Ave near 32nd – neighbors rev-ing engines late at night 1 am, 3 am – cops say they cant issue citations since they are local ordinances and need our OK to start issuing. They have been dealing this for some time and not getting anywhere, made multiple reports.

Supervisor to talk with Sheriff, and will also talk with supervisor of Monterrey since it shared road. Will get back in touch the homeowners.

Question about construction permit. Looking to see about exception to build taller than 4ft fence in front yard.
Will need zoning board of appeals meeting through PCI.

Parks and Recreation Programs – Jaclyn Hulst presented
All free of charge, register through ODC

Old Business:

1. IT Issues: Leave Corporate Technologies in pursuing a different IT Company:
Postponed

New Business:

1. Data Center Moratorium for 9 months:
Moved by Ashley Brower, seconded by Renee Busscher
Discussion: State might do a year, planning commission was advising to a year. The reason is to give us time to research and review, Dan abstains (voted in planning commission)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Resolution for Community Action Hot Meals Program:
Postponed for more information by Dan Striegle, seconded by Ashley Brower
Discussion: none
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Maintenance Charges for Storm Warning Sirens:
Moved by Ashley Brower, seconded by Dan Striegle
Discussion: none
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Comment:

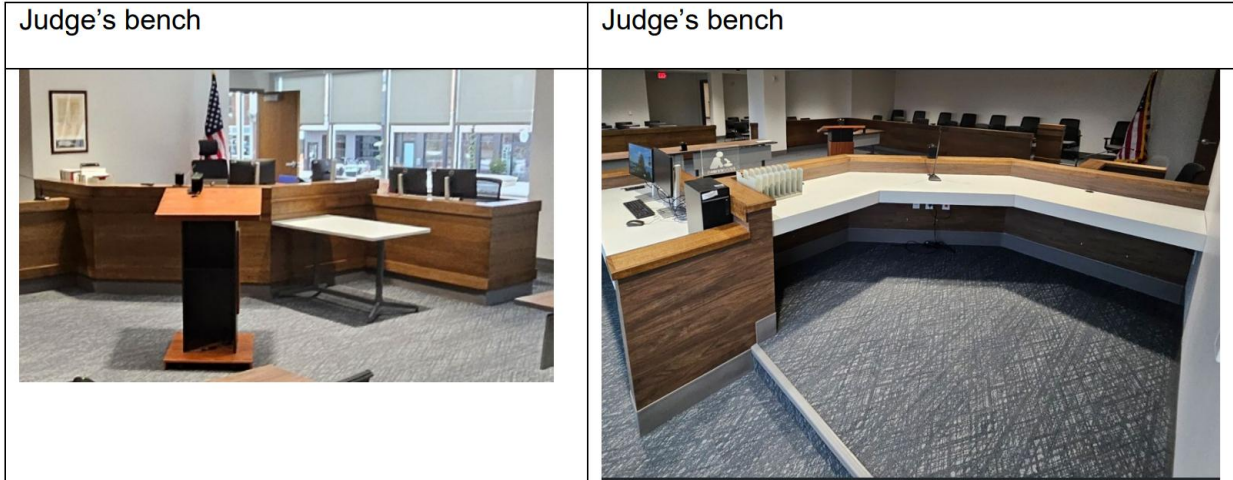
Question regarding drain commission and bills on taxes. How can we keep costs down?
Notices for meetings are in the paper. Township has no say in it.

Round table Discussion: Planning commission to sign up for Citizen Planner online

Adjournment:

Moved by Ashley Brower, seconded by Renee Busscher to adjourn meeting at 8:38 PM
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Courthouse Renovation – During the week of February 23rd, several enhancements will be implemented in Circuit Court courtroom C, presided over by Judge Bakker. Notably, the judge's bench will be elevated by seven inches, the stationary desktops will be replaced with height-adjustable ones, and sound-dampening panels will be installed above and below the courtroom to reduce sound propagation.



Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Renovation and Carpet Replacement – The State is expected to fully execute the Lease Change Order following their Administrative Board Meeting on February 17. Once approved, construction can begin in March with completion estimated by June 30, provided the State doesn't experience any delays with its furniture acquisition.

Medical Care Community (MCC) Building Renovation – Following the initial project kickoff meeting on January 29, representatives from the County, the architectural firm Eckert & Wordell, and the construction management company Beckering convened to discuss potential cost-saving measures aimed at reducing the overall project expenses. During the February 13 project meeting, the first round of proposed ideas was presented, resulting in an estimated \$700,000 in potential savings. These items will be included in the overall construction plans but will be specified as add-alternates in the request for proposal (RFP).

Parks, Recreation and Tourism 2025 Allegan County Equestrian Trails Lease Report

2025 marked the 17th year of the 25-year lease agreement between Allegan County and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the Allegan County Equestrian Trail System (ETS). In accordance with lease requirements, the County continues to document staff time, volunteer contributions, and material expenditures associated with maintaining the trail system. The total documented investment in the Equestrian Trail System for 2025 was \$36,527.25. The County's continued collaboration with volunteers and the State ensures the Allegan County Equestrian Trail System remains a well-maintained and valued recreational asset for residents and visitors.

Calkins Dam – On February 9, 2026, the Lake Allegan Association held a meeting with Confluence Hydro, the proposed new owners for the Calkins Bridge Dam. Confluence Hydro seeks to modernize the dams and prepare for relicensing with the goal of keeping Calkins Bridge operating for decades. The presentation is attached to the email. Calkins Bridge's FERC license expires in 2040. On behalf of the 390+ members of the Lake Allegan Association, the president submitted testimony to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) in support of the sale to Confluence Hydro. The sale by Consumers Power is under review by the MPSC and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Not everyone supports the sale, and some residents and state agencies have raised concerns.

Inmate Worker Program – The Animal Shelter has historically worked in coordination with the Allegan County Sheriff's Office to utilize inmate workers for kennel cleaning, dog exercise, and other tasks. Generally, this has been up to three inmates, 7 days a week. Several challenges are facing this program, resulting in a reduced number of available inmate workers. This has placed an additional burden on shelter staff. Shelter management is evaluating adjustments to the inmate worker program and looking at all sustainable solutions. In response, the staff is seeking the use of approved volunteers and community service workers on a short-term basis and is exploring additional structured partnerships within the community to supplement labor needs. The focus is to ensure continuity of operations while maintaining safety, accountability, and efficiency. The Shelter staff appreciates the continued collaboration with the Sheriff's Office and will provide updates as solutions are implemented.

Commission on Aging – The Commission on Aging (COA) held the first meeting of 2026, as the January meeting was canceled due to weather. The first annual COA meeting was held on February 18, 2026, where current financial and service delivery information was shared, including year-end service delivery and financials for 2025. Election of Officers took place at the start of the meeting; Sally Heavener was appointed Chair, and Mary Campbell was appointed Vice Chair, both with unanimous votes.

Public Health Newsletters – Public Health shares monthly e-newsletters with the community and specific audiences. These community newsletters include information from community partners, community spotlights, public health news/related topics, testing information, and other preventative education/tools. You will find the newsletter attached to the email.

Radiological Emergency Response Team Training – On February 5-6, the ACHD Radiological Emergency Response (REP) Team visited the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant for an informational training. This included an overview of plant operations and the roles of Holtec staff during normal operations and emergency response. This training provided a great introduction to staff new to the REP team, as ACHD works to build capacity in radiological emergency response.

Personal Health Immunization Program – The Immunization team closed out the year by providing 279 immunizations in the fourth quarter, the most provided in a single quarter of 2025. The vaccine most requested was Influenza, commonly known as the flu. The single best way to prevent severe influenza and shorten the duration of illness is to get vaccinated every year. There is still time to receive a flu shot this year. To receive your vaccine or receive more information, contact your primary care provider, use the vaccine locator at <https://www.vaccines.gov>, or contact the Allegan County Health Department Immunization team at 269-673-5411.



SALEM TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

CHECKOUTS 2026

Physical Items **4,725**



Digital Items **1,516**



Hotspots **20**



Steam Kits & LOT Items **73**



CHECKOUTS 2025

Physical Items **5,116**



Digital Items **1,503**



Hotspots **24**



Steam Kits & LOT Items **77**



%

-8%

1%

-20%

-5%

ITEMS LOANED OUT

Number of physical items that were borrowed by other libraries

2026

2025

454

421

179 ITEMS ADDED

Number of physical items that were added to our collection

17 NEW PATRONS

VISITS

Number of patrons who visited the library

2026

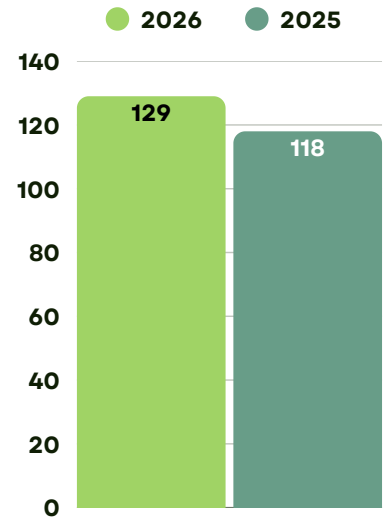
659 Adults 409 Kids 1,068 Total

2025

403 Adults 665 Kids 1,068 Total

REFERENCES

When patrons ask for information



FEBRUARY PROGRAMS

Library programs provided and participant counts

- Adult Book Clubs: 12
- Lego Club: 14
- Play-Doh Fun: 5
- Play N' Learn: 51
- Outside Snow Day: 0
- Story Times: 76
- Board Game Afternoons: 5
- Stuffie Sleepover: 17

MARCH PROGRAMS

Current & upcoming library programs and events

- March 2: Knitting and Crocheting Night @ 6pm
- March 2: PM Book Club @ 7pm
- March 5: Kids' Winter Craft @ pm
- March 12: Play N' Learn @ 11am
- March 14: Lego Club @ 11am
- March 16: Knitting and Crocheting Night @ 6pm
- March 18: Board Game Afternoons @ 1pm
- March 19: Play-Doh Fun @ 11am
- March 23: Bath Bomb Making @ 6pm
- March 30: AM Book Club @ 8:30am

LIBRARY NEWS

What's happening at your library

- 64 people participated in Adult Winter Reading; 41 completed their reading.
- The Library Director is taking some time to audit staff roles and responsibilities.



Salem Township Fire Department
Monthly Report
February 2026

| Projects | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SOGs | Working on updating operational SOGs |
| Equipment ordered | All but 1 item has come in and the equipment has been placed on the trucks |
| Ford Explorer | Out for door replacement |
| EV/ Battery Safety class | Hosting a 4-hour seminar on EV and Battery incident response safety at the New Life Church 3/14/26 |
| MABAS | Chief was named Executive Board member for Michigan MABAS representing Allegan County and overseeing the continued on boarding of the county |
| Equipment IDs | Adding color coordinating markings to all equipment to ID which truck the equipment came from. |

| Total Fire and EMS Year To Date- 35 | | | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------|
| Fire Incidents | Total -5 | YTD-5 | Incidents in Sandy Pines- 0 |
| Type | Number of Incidents | District | Notes |
| Dumpster Fire | 1 | 1-Salem | 2 yard dumpster at New Salem General store |
| Lift Assist | 1 | 1-Salem | Requested by WAEMS for more personnel |
| Crash Alert | 1 | 1-Salem | No incident found |
| Public Assist | 1 | 1-Salem | Installed smoke alarms |
| Carbon Monoxide Alarm | 1 | 1-Salem | Found a faulty furnace causing CO |
| Year to date Incidents in Sandy Pines- 0 | | | |

| EMS | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total -12 | YTD-2537 | Incidents in Sandy Pines-1 | Incidents in Rehoboth- 1 |
| District | Number of Incidents | | |
| Salem- | 12 | | |
| Monterey- | 0 | | |
| Canceled Medical alarms- | | | |
| *Disregarded Priority 3 medical* | 6 | YTD Priority 3: | 10 |
| Year to date Medical Incidents in Sandy Pines- 1 | | Year to Date in Rehoboth- 4 | |

Salem Township Fire Department has a dedicate group of personnel that respond from home and work to help keep the residents of Salem Township and the surrounding communities safe.



Salem Township Fire Department
Monthly Report
February 2026

| Trainings/Meetings | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Topic | Number of Personnel |
| Ice Rescue | 15 |
| Work Detail for new squad | 12 |
| Officers meeting | 5 |
| Equipment Checks | 6 |
| SCOTT SCBA Level 1 Technician class | 2 |
| Mi-TRT-5 rope rescue quarterly | 1 |
| Chiefs Meeting | 1 |
| MABAS committee meeting | 1 |

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