FREEMAN TOWNSHIP BOARD
CLARE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

At a meeting of the Freeman Township Board of Clare County, Michigan, held at 7280 Mannsiding Road, Lake, Michigan

Regular Meeting and Public Hearing #2
Thursday, the 13th of August, 2026

Present Board Members: Supervisor Johnson, Clerk LaFave, Treasurer Lackie, Trustee Young, Trustee Eckardt

TIME: 7:00 p.m. Call to Order and Pledge to the Flag

Roll Call was taken, all members present

Supervisor Johnson stated that our first order of business is to open the public hearing regarding the Lake Taho aquatic weed control special assessment. Trustee Eckardt made the motion to open the Public Hearing, supported by Trustee Young. Ayes – 5, Nays -0
If you are here from Lake Taho and have not already done so, please be sure to sign in.
Supervisor Johnson gave a summary of the purpose of this Public Hearing and the last Public Hearing.

The primary purpose of the public hearing is to hear your input, and determine whether to continue on with the process.

However, we will note that the purpose of hearing is input from the public to help inform decision-making of the Board. Know that the Township Board is not intending to generally engage in public debate or discussion during public comment – but instead will listen closely and carefully, and consider whether to incorporate thoughts from the public in any project.
Thus, you should not expect a dialogue or responses from the Board during public comment.

The Board will then provide a public comment period for members of the public to make statements regarding the proposed lake improvement project.

To summarize, the plan for the project is to provide a continued lake improvement project on Lake Taho to eradicate and/or control aquatic weeds and plants and conduct related improvements, such as water quality testing, algae control, and education to the public.

The costs of the improvements are estimated at $10, 895.00 for the first year and will also include ancillary costs such as legal fees and notice costs. Those costs and the Special Assessment Tax Roll are on display on the table in the back of the room.

The special assessment district for the lake improvement project generally encompasses the same properties included in the special assessment district that was previously established for Lake Taho improvements. All of the properties in the special assessment district were also mailed notice of today's public hearing.

Before we get to public comment, I would like to acknowledge that we received five emails commenting on this public hearing I am going to read them entirely, but will be summarized for purpose of these minutes. All letters have been made available to Board members and will be on file at the Township.

The first email to be read if from Greg and Alison Spiewak, 3559 Lake Taho Trail – they are in favor of SAD

The next email is from Judy and Jim Allard, 3319 Lake Taho Trail- they support the SAD

Email from Scott Rider, 3419 Lake Taho Trail – he is in favor of the SAD and treatment of the weeds.

Email from Andrew Shekoski, 3880 Lake Taho Trail – in favor of the SAD

Email from Ann and Rick Bloemendal, 3159 Lake Taho Trail – supports continuing the SAD and treatment of the lake

At this time, members of the audience may provide public comment regarding the proposed lake improvement project. Please note that there is a separate public comments period later in the meeting agenda for comments that do not relate to Lake Taho

We have a few rules for public comment:
* Please be civil, everyone is in titled to their opinion
*Each person will have 3 minutes to share their public comment
*Each person may speak once, and you cannot give someone else your time to speak
*Please address the Board with any comments. Note that this is not a Q&A period, and the Board will not respond to questions or comments. But it will listen very carefully and may incorporate thoughts and feedback from the public in any decision-making.

Trustee Eckardt made the motion to open the Public Comments section of the hearing on the proposed Lake Taho special assessment district. Seconded by Trustee Young. Ayes – 5, Nays – 0

Dennis Kilborn, 3039 Lake Taho Trail – He is against the SAD and would like to have it tabled until the current SAD expires in 2028

Theresa Daust, 3780 Lake Taho Trail – in support of the SAD. She stated that her understanding of the perpetual SAD is that it basically stays the same as the current, but we don't have to go through this process every 10 years.

Jan Boehlke, 3989 Lake Tahoe Trail – She asked Dennis Kilborn what the negative ramifications of the SAD were, he did not explain? Supervisor Johnson interrupted to state that they could discuss after the meeting but the Public Hearing was not for questions and answers. She also stated that her sewage problems were not the result of the lake level, but too much toilet paper.

Bruce Sable, 3988 Lake Tahoe Trail – wanted to know why his assessment is the same as those who live on the lake. He doesn't agree with that part and is not for the SAD

Jackie Rau, 3783 Lake Tahoe Trail – they support the SAD

Jeffrey Kelly, 3679 Lake Tahoe Trail – supports the SAD

Scott Wiltse, 3560 Lake Tahoe Trail – Questions the confusion on the end date of the current SAD and the bookkeeping of the Lake Tahoe Board. He is not in support of the SAD

Tim Daust, 3780 Lake Tahoe Trail – supports the SAD and believes the majority of the neighborhood does as well and the lake improves property value

Dick Blain, 3999 Lake Tahoe Trail – 30 years on Lake Tahoe. Supports the SAD

David Vanderford, 3259 Lake Taho Trail – He and his wife, MaryAnn support the SAD.

Roger Diederich, 3619 Lake Taho Trail –In favor of the SAD.

Mark Kovach, 3149 Lake Taho Trail – 33 years on Lake Tahoe, in favor of the SAD and wants it to continue.

Ken Vandrick, 3879 Lake Taho Trail – He would like to see the lake maintained but is not in favor of the SAD. He read several ideas he thought would work better.

Mark Marchewka, 3359 Lake Taho Trail- he does not think spraying for the weeds is helping much but did not give an opinion on the SAD

Cindy Bromell, 3739 Lake Taho Trail – she believes the lake treatments are helping and is in favor of continuing the SAD

Sandy Diederich, 3619 Lake Taho Trail – she is pleased with the way the lake looks and appreciates the SAD and in favor of it continuing

Arlene Wladysiak, 3359 Lake Taho Trail – talked about weeds from the run off, but did not give an opinion on the SAD

Supervisor Johnson asked for a motion to close the Public Comments and Hearing. Clerk LaFave made the motion to close the comments and hearing, supported by Trustee Eckardt. Ayes – 5, Nays - 0

REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS

Trustee Eckardt made a motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes from July 09th, 2026, motion was supported by Trustee Young. Ayes – 5, Nays - 0

TREASURERS REPORT

A motion was made by Trustee Eckardt and seconded by Trustee Young to approve Accounts Payable Checks #017039 - # 017053. Ayes – 5, Nays – 0

SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Supervisor Johnson gave a summary of Resolution #4 of 4 for the Lake Taho Aquatic Weed Control Special Assessment District. He assured the audience that the board has heard the comments of the Lake Taho residents and read the comments that were sent in and taken them all into consideration. He stated that he has also shared with the rest of the board the discussion he had with 3 residents who requested a conversation with him. So, with that Trustee Eckardt made a motion to approve Resolution #4 as written, supported by Trustee Young. Roll Call Vote taken. Ayes – 5, Nays – 0

Many thanks to our new Chairperson of the Planning Commission, Tim Kiefer for creating a draft for a Data Center Moratorium for Freeman Township. This would put a one year stay on any action should anyone want to bring a Data Center to Freeman Township and give us that year to react. We cannot legally stop a Data Center from coming in but we can prepare our ordinances to best suit us. Supervisor Johnson read some interesting research, in Michigan there are 26-30 proposed or operating Data Center sites, in the state of Virginia there are 400 Data Centers operating and another 300 new ones being proposed. Michigan has an abundance of fresh water, a lot of flat open land close to high voltage powerlines. And Governor Whitmer recently eliminated the 6% sales tax on qualifying Data Center equipment as an incentive to come to Michigan. Michigan's cooler climate also makes for ideal conditions to operate. In Michigan there are 52 cities/townships that have a Moratorium, we would like to join that list. Supervisor Johnson asked the board to look over the Draft and give him feedback.

Supervisor Johnson mentioned that our new driveway in the cemetery was put in today. Blain Excavating also filled in the ditch in front of the cemetery and cleared some brush and trimmed a large tree by the new section of the cemetery

CLERK'S COMMENTS

Clerk LaFave stated that the Primary Election on August 4th, 2026 went well and wanted to send a big thank you to all the election workers who stuck with it through a long day and did their jobs well and made it a success. Freeman Township had 380 voters vote in the Primary, 10 Early Voters, 370 Election Day and Absentee Voters. We have 1160 registered voter so that is approximately 32% voter turnout. Election results are posted on my office door.

General Mid-Term Election will be held November 3rd, 2026. Election Day voting here at the township hall. 9 days of early voting will be held at the Clare County Courthouse.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning –Chairperson Tim Kiefer. The Planning Commission is really focused on the Data Center issue and trying to be proactive. We would like to get this Moratorium in place as soon as possible. This will give us time to put a lot of thought behind the requirements that we can put on them for water usage, noise, impacts on power and more. The more reasonable our requirements are the better chance we will have of enforcing our ordinances. The more reasonable our ordinances the better chance of fighting the powers that be. So, we want to be prepared for it, this will buy us time to work on those things. We are not on a list for now and have not heard of any interest in Freeman Township but the commission is going to get out in front of this.

Zoning and Blight – Doug Johnson – We have issued 4 zoning permits this month. One deck, one pole barn, one carport and one shed.

Please report blight to Doug Johnson, but remember poor housekeeping does not mean blight. We have 12-15 extreme blight situations in Freeman Township; it is very difficult to address these. We can write a ticket; they may pay it. We can take them to court and it will cost the township a lot of money. Supervisor Johnson stated that our best approach in his opinion is persistence, to keep visiting them.

COMMENTS/CONCERNS FROM CITIZENS

Theresa Daust asked Tim Kiefer if townships could band together to fight against Data Centers? Tim stated that he thought we would all be on our own, depending on where they are able to purchase land to build.

Someone asked how much land are the Data Centers looking for? Supervisor Johnson stated that they can range from 100 acres to 1,000's of acres.

Clay Basler asked if the Planning Commission could put a limit on the size of any business moving into Freeman Township? Tim Kiefer said he will look into that.

Connie Crawford talked about the impact the Data Center is having on the small township of Saline, Michigan. Supervisor Johnson added a comment about how the township could not afford the cost of a legal battle.

Annette Koweck asked if Freeman Township had the ability to pay Clare County Sheriff Department any extra to patrol, especially at night? Treasurer Lackie responded that we already send a portion of our taxes collected to the Sheriff Dept. Someone suggested to start a Neighborhood Watch.

Connie Crawford asked if it is possible to get more tornado warning sirens? Supervisor Johnson stated that he spoke with the Emergency Management at Clare County. They said we would need at least 4 more sirens to cover our whole township, at a cost of $45,000 each. They recommended putting an app on your phone or utilizing weather stations on radio and television.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Clerk LaFave, seconded by Trustee Eckardt. Ayes-5, Nays-0

TIME: 8:23 p.m.

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Doug Johnson, Supervisor Lacinda LaFave, Township Clerk