

AGENDA
SOUTH HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
March 11, 2026

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2026
4. Correspondence
5. Public Comments, Audience Members are allowed 3 minutes to discuss items not on the Agenda (5 minutes for groups)
6. Approval of Agenda

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - A) Affordable Housing Updates
 - B) Short Term Rental Updates
 - C)

8. NEW BUSINESS
 - A) Habitat for Humanity/Affordable Housing Project
 - B) Resolution 26-05 Regarding LED Traffic Control Devices
 - C) Road Usage for Multisport Event
 - D) Local Zoning/Local Decision Alert from MTA
 - E) Land Division Act Amendment
 - F) Marijuana Tax Income
 - G) Lawn Maintenance
 - H) Lighthouse Ridge Apartments Pilot Request
 - I) Donation Agreement Senior Services
 - J)

9. REPORTS
 - Airport
 - Building/Electrical/Mechanical
 - Building Committee
 - Fire/Ambulance
 - Library
 - Park Committee
 - Planning Commission
 - Roads
 - Senior Services
 - Water/Sewer Authority
 - Zoning Board of Appeals

10. TREASURER'S REPORT

11. BOARD COMMENTS

12. ADJOURNMENT

**SOUTH HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026**

Present: Stein, Poole, Wiatrowski, and Fisher

Absent: DeGrandchamp, Bertorelli and Lewandowski

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Stein at 7:30 p.m.

Motion by Wiatrowski, supported by Poole to approve the Minutes of the January 14, 2026 Regular Meeting as presented. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Chief Brandon Hinz was in attendance and gave a report for SHAES. Chief Adam DeBoer reported for SHPD and Allison Berman from Joey Andrews office gave a report.

Motion by Poole, supported by Fisher, to approve the Agenda. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Graham Welling from Wallick Communities reported on the Lighthouse Ridge project. He will bring the Pilot before the township board meeting next month.

Motion by Wiatrowski, supported by Poole, to adopt Resolution 26-04 for the PUD and Rezoning of Lighthouse Apartments. All voted in favor by roll call vote. Motion carried.

Motion by Stein, supported by Poole, to accept the resignation of Jean Stein from the Library Board. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Reports from various committees and authorities were received. W.C. Askew was in attendance for the Road Commission. Diane Rigozzi reported for Senior Services.

Motion by Fisher, supported by Poole, to approve payment of anticipated bills in the amount of \$214,516.70. All voted in favor by roll call vote. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

LaManda Riston, Deputy Sup.

Ross Stein, Supervisor

Fwd: Lakeshore Habitat: Follow Up

1 message

Steins <steins1983@gmail.com>

Sun, Mar 8, 2026 at 11:24 AM

To: Brenda Bertorelli <shtwp.clerk@gmail.com>, Mike DeGrandchamp <mike@degrandchamps.com>, Hillary Fisher <shtwp.treasurer@gmail.com>, Maureen Lewandowski <molew@comcast.net>, Dave Wiatrowski <bigboredave@yahoo.com>, Phil Poole <ppoole@southhavenmi.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dave Rozman** <drozman@lakeshorehabitat.org>

Date: Thu, Mar 5, 2026 at 11:46 AM

Subject: Re: Lakeshore Habitat: Follow Up

To: Steins <steins1983@gmail.com>

Cc: James Royster <jroyster@lakeshorehabitat.org>

Thanks Ross for the follow up.

As far as a rough idea of what we would want to do, we have not put too much thought or concepts together as of yet. We wanted to see if it was a viable option but also discuss your zoning and desires for the property as well.

In general, we focus on affordable homeownership for those earning 30-80% of the area median income and our desire is to create community centric neighborhoods where individuals and families can thrive.

Here is a [video](#) of our current 42 unit development, in partnership with Jubilee Ministries, on the south side of Holland. This is an 8 acre site with 18 single family detached units and 24 townhomes. All for homeownership.

This can at least give you an idea and visual of what we are developing as a starting point.

If there is anything more specific that would help, or if it would be helpful for me to attend the township board meeting, please let me know.

Thanks

Dave Rozman / Executive Director

Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity / 12727 Riley Street Holland MI 49424

direct 616.393.8001 x104 / mobile 616.403.5814

www.lakeshorehabitat.org



We build
strength, stability
self-reliance
and shelter

From: Steins <steins1983@gmail.com>
Date: Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 10:45 AM
To: Dave Rozman <drozman@lakeshorehabitat.org>
Cc: James Royster <jroyster@lakeshorehabitat.org>
Subject: Re: Lakeshore Habitat: Follow Up

Good morning gentlemen,

I have spoken with the township attorney about disposing of township property. He said that it wouldn't be a difficult to do. The township is still working on updating the zoning ordinance and land use map. If you could provide me with a rough idea what you would like to do, I can bring it up at the township board meeting next week.

Thanks,

Ross

On Wed, Feb 25, 2026 at 2:27 PM Dave Rozman <drozman@lakeshorehabitat.org> wrote:

Good afternoon Ross,

I wanted to follow up to our conversations around the property that SH Township has that you have identified as a potential spot for affordable housing.

I believe you were going to have some conversations internally about the property as a next step.

We would like to continue conversations with you if this property is an option for a potential affordable housing development.

Thanks Ross,

Dave Rozman / Executive Director
Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity / [12727 Riley Street Holland MI 49424](https://www.lakeshorehabitat.org)
direct 616.393.8001 x104 / mobile 616.403.5814
www.lakeshorehabitat.org



We build
strength, stability
self-reliance
and **shelter**

Resolution Regarding LED Traffic Control Devices

WHEREAS, South Haven Charter Township desires the installation of LED Traffic Control Devices on Intersection of 16th + 72nd Street; and

WHEREAS, the Van Buren County Road Commission's (VBCRC) current Sign Policy (2018-05) allows for the installation of LED Traffic Control Devices as they are in compliance with the MMUTCD. However, they are costly to install and/or replace and also require maintenance and can be subject to failures/breakdowns.

NOW, THEREFORE, the South Haven Charter Township Board resolves and agrees as follows:

1. That South Haven Charter Township will pay for any and all costs associated with the purchase and installation of a LED Traffic Control on 16th + 72nd St..
2. That South Haven Charter Township will pay for any and all costs associated with the maintenance, replacement and/or removal of a LED Traffic Control Devices on 16th + 72nd St. as may be deemed necessary by the VBCRC for a minimum of 10 years following installation.
3. That the VBCRC's Engineering Staff shall have the sole discretion, based upon sound engineering decisions made in the best interest of the VBCRC, to remove the LED Traffic Control Devices at any time following installation upon written notice to South Haven Charter Township.

The foregoing Resolution offered by _____, second offered by _____.

Yes: _____

No: _____

Absent: _____

Resolution Adopted/Rejected.

The Supervisor declared the Resolution adopted/rejected (circle one) on March 11, 2026 at a Regular Meeting of the South Haven Charter Township Board.

Township Clerk

ACTION ALERT: Local zoning could no longer be a local decision- CALL NOW

1 message

Michigan Townships Association <legislation-michigantownships.org@shared1.ccsend.com> Thu, Feb 19, 2026 at 4:08 PM
Reply-To: legislation@michigantownships.org
To: shtwp.clerk@gmail.com



ACTION ALERT

Local zoning could no longer be a local decision

A bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators announced this week a package of bills to strip local governments of their ability to plan their community's future. While the legislation purports to address the state's housing shortage, rather, it is yet another attempt to preempt local authority and local decisions. Affordable housing is essential across the state, but it should not come at the expense of local input by requiring local governments to follow one-size-fits-all, prescriptive requirements from the state. The legislation does not consider the full scope of factors impacting attainable housing, including labor shortages, rising labor, material and land costs, and state mandates, and instead places the blame solely on local governments. We ask lawmakers to instead work toward a true, comprehensive solution to help resolve the housing shortage, rather than imposing top-down measures that silence voices in Michigan's communities.

The proposal consists of nine bills, four of which were before the House Regulatory Reform Committee today. The local preemption bills are expected to be approved quickly by the House.

MTA urges you to contact your legislators immediately.

Three of the four bills introduced impacting townships are:

- **HB 5529 - Lot Size**, sponsored by Rep. Kristian Grant: Prohibits local ordinances from requiring a minimum parcel or lot size greater than 1,500 square feet for detached single-family residence where the parcel is accessible and will be served by public sewer and public water. The bill is co-sponsored by Reps. Joe Aragona, Reggie Miller, Carrie Rheingans, and Stephen Wooden.

- **HB 5530 - Lot Size**, sponsored by Rep. Jennifer Wertz: Prohibits a minimum parcel size greater than 1,500 square feet for detached single-family residence where the parcel is accessible and will be served by public water and public sewer. The bill is co-sponsored by Reps. Joe Aragona, Kristian Grant, Carrie Rheingans, and Stephen Wooden.
- **HB 5531 - Study Requirements**, sponsored by Rep. Cynthia Neeley: Creates a 60-day decision shot clock after receipt of an application by a local unit of government, even an incomplete application. Permits local units of government to require reasonably necessary studies in reviewing a site plan application but limits when additional information can be required for the same application after initial studies requested. Limits circumstances of when additional information can be required for the same application after initial approval. Co-sponsored by Reps. Kristian Grant, Reggie Miller, and Carrie Rheingans.

Five remaining bills pending introduction that are also part of the proposed package include:

- **Duplex by Right:** Creates a statewide definition of “duplex.” Mandates duplexes are a permitted use in any district where single family residences are allowed and not subject to any procedures different from a single family residence.
- **Parking Requirements:** Mandates parking requirements at no more than one space per dwelling unit for multi-family residential use of property and allows mobile homes in any residential zone.
 - **“Mobile home”** means a structure that is transportable in one or more sections, built on a chassis, and designed to be used as a dwelling, with or without a permanent foundation, when connected to the required utilities, and includes the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained in the structure.
- **Accessory Dwelling Units:** Creates a statewide definition of “accessory dwelling unit” (ADU). Mandates ADUs are permitted by right in residential zoning districts and **not subject to a public hearing**. ADUs are prohibited from density calculations, additional parking requirements, and owner occupancy requirements. Also allows mobile homes in any residential zone.
- **Setback Requirements:** Mandates setback requirements at **15 feet or less from the front property line and five feet from the sides and rear** for dwellings or outbuildings if the local unit of government is located in whole or part within a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or is located adjacent to a MSA area. This would impact 662 townships in Michigan.
 - A Metropolitan statistical area is determined by the decennial census (updated April 10, 2025) and there are 16 MSAs in the state
- **Dwelling Size:** Prohibits a minimum area requirement greater than 500 square feet for a dwelling.

MTA remains committed to working with lawmakers to find solutions to provide affordable housing and preserve local authority as communities must balance housing, infrastructure, economic growth, community identity and natural resources.

Contact your state representative today to ensure residents and locally elected leaders have the freedom to engage in vigorous debate on matters that impact their community every day.

Michigan Townships Association | 512 Westshire Drive, Lansing, MI 48917

michigantownships.org



Michigan Townships Association | 512 Westshire Drive | Lansing, MI 48917 US

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DONATION AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered into this __ day of __, 2026 (the “Effective Date”), by and between SENIOR SERVICES OF VAN BUREN COUNTY, INC. (“SSVBC”), a Michigan nonprofit corporation, whose address is 08337 M-140 Highway, South Haven, MI 49090, and CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH HAVEN (the “Township”), whose address is 09761 Blue Star Highway, South Haven, MI 49090 (each of SSVBC and the Township shall individually be a Party, and, collectively, the “Parties”).

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, SSVBC is funded, in part, through funds paid to it by the Township from a millage authorized under the Activities Or Services For Older Persons Act, Act 39 of 1976 (MCL 400.571 *et seq.*) (the “Act”); and

WHEREAS, SSVBC owns the real estate commonly known as 8729 M140 Highway, South Haven, MI 49090 (Tax Parcel No. 80-17-015-005-01) (the “Property”) and desires to sell the Property for development as senior affordable housing, with SSVBC carrying on as a partner in the partnership developing the Property for housing under Michigan’s Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (“LIHTC”) program; and

WHEREAS, the Township supports SSVBC’s plan to develop the Property for senior housing; and

WHEREAS, improvement of senior housing is one of the activities and services to be promoted under the Act (see MCL 400.572(c)); and

WHEREAS, in order to assist in the development of the Property as set forth above, SSVBC desires for the Township to join it in issuing a Request for Proposal (the “RFP”) for developers of the Property; and

WHEREAS, the Township desires to assist the SSVBC in issuing a Request for Proposal (the “RFP”) for developers of the Property; and

WHEREAS, SSVBC is making a restrictive donation of a ten percent (10%) interest in the Property, as more fully described in this Agreement, so as to allow the Township to have an ownership interest in the Property for purposes of furthering the RFP process and the desired development of the Property;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and obligations herein contained, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, it is agreed by and between the Parties as follows:

ARTICLE I - PURPOSES AND NATURE OF THIS AGREEMENT

Section 1.01 Purposes of this Agreement

The Parties hereby enter into this Agreement for the term provided and for the purpose of setting forth their respective rights and obligations in connection with the restrictive donation of the Property interest from SSVBC to the Township and their joint ownership of the Property.

Section 1.02 Nature of the Tenancy

This Agreement shall not constitute the Parties as general partners or joint venturers, nor constitute any Party as the agent of the other except as herein expressly provided, nor in any manner limit the Parties in carrying on their respective separate businesses or activities, nor impose upon either Party any fiduciary duty by reason of a Party's carrying on its separate business or activity, nor impose upon either Party any liability or obligation except as herein expressly provided. The Parties shall be tenants in common with respect to their ownership of the Property.

ARTICLE II – RESTRICTIVE DONATION & TERM

Section 2.01 Timing and Form of Restrictive Donation

Contemporaneously with the execution of this Agreement, SSVBC shall transfer a 10% tenant in common interest in the Property to the Township by Quit Claim Deed in the form attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, with the transfer being effective as of the Effective Date. There shall be no purchase price to be paid by the Township to SSVBC for the transfer of the aforementioned interest in the Property. Restrictions on the Township's rights to use and control the Property and also limits on its liability related to the Property are set forth more fully in Article III.

Section 2.02 Term

This Agreement shall be in effect for a term beginning on the Effective Date and shall continue until the time at which the developer selected through the RFP submits to MSHDA a LIHTC Application and that Application results in either a credit being allocated to the Property or a rejection of a credit. If the Application is granted and a credit is allocated to the Property, the Township's intent of aiding the construction of senior housing on the Property will be achieved and the Township will then deed its interest in the Property back to SSVBC upon SSVBC's request. If the Application is denied through no credit being allocated to the Property, the Township's intent of aiding the construction of senior housing on the Property will not be achieved and the Township will then deed its interest in the Property back to SSVBC upon SSVBC's request. There shall be no purchase price to be paid by the SSVBC to the Township for the transfer of the aforementioned interest in the Property.

ARTICLE III - MANAGEMENT OF THE PROPERTY

Section 3.01 Management of the Property

- a. The day-to-day management and control of the Property shall remain vested in SSVBC during the term of this Agreement, with SSVBC being solely liable for any costs related to the Property, including maintenance costs, insurance, and property tax/assessment (if any).
- b. SSVBC shall be entitled to take any rental income paid with respect to the Property during the term of the Agreement, free of any claim from the Township.

Section 3.02 Request for Proposal Process

For purposes of developing the Property as more fully described in the Recitals, SSVBC and the Township will cooperate in publishing the RFP and then compiling, reviewing, and analyzing any responses to the RFP received from prospective developers. The Parties will promptly review the submissions received through the RFP after the close of the submission deadline and will jointly decide whether to select a proposal received through the RFP process.

ARTICLE IV - SALE, ASSIGNMENT, TRANSFER, OR OTHER DISPOSITION

Section 4.01 Prohibited Transfers

Except as provided in this Agreement, no Party may sell, transfer, assign, or otherwise transfer or mortgage, hypothecate, or otherwise encumber or permit or suffer any encumbrances of all or any part of its fractional undivided interest in the Property, and the Party's rights under this Agreement unless approved by both Parties. Any attempt to so transfer or encumber any such interest without such approval shall be void.

Section 4.02 No Partition

Notwithstanding anything in this Agreement or any rule or law to the contrary, no Party shall file or pursue any partition, dissolution, or liquidation petition or action in any court with respect to the Property.

ARTICLE V - GENERAL

Section 5.01 Notices

All notices, demands, or requests provided for or permitted to be given pursuant to this Agreement must be in writing, which shall be effective upon being deposited in the United States mail.

Section 5.02 Governing Laws

This Agreement and the obligations of the Parties hereunder shall be interpreted, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan. Venue for any action filed to enforce this Agreement shall lie only in Van Buren County, Michigan.

Section 5.03 Entire Agreement

This Agreement and **Exhibit A** constitute the entire agreement between the Parties relative to the Property and its operation. No variations, modifications, or changes shall be binding upon any Party unless set forth in a document duly executed by or on behalf of such Party.

Section 5.04 Severability

If any provision of this Agreement or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be invalid or unenforceable to any extent, the remainder of this Agreement and the application against the Parties hereunder shall be enforceable in equity as well as at law or otherwise.

Section 5.05 Binding Agreement

Subject to the restrictions on transfers and encumbrances set forth herein, this Agreement shall inure to the benefit of and be binding upon the undersigned Parties and their respective legal representatives, successors, and assigns. Whenever, in this instrument, a reference to any Party is made, such reference shall be deemed to include a reference to the legal representatives, successors, or assigns of such Party.

Section 5.06 Recitals

The Recitals are hereby incorporated by reference into this Agreement and the Parties acknowledge the accuracy and completeness of the Recitals.

SENIOR SERVICES OF VAN
BUREN COUNTY, INC.:

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH HAVEN:

By: _____
Diane Rigozzi
Its: Executive Director

By: _____

Its: _____

EXHIBIT A

QUIT CLAIM DEED

Title and Survey Examination Not Requested

The Grantor, SENIOR SERVICES OF VAN BUREN COUNTY, INC., a Michigan non-profit corporation, quit claims to CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH HAVEN, whose address is 09761 Blue Star Highway, South Haven, MI 49090, a Ten Percent (10%) tenant in common interest in and to the following described premises situated in the Township of South Haven, County of Van Buren, and State of Michigan:

Beginning at a point found by commencing at the Northeast corner of Section 15, Town 1 South, Range 17 West; thence North 89 degrees 21 minutes 13 seconds West on the North section line, 1316.14 feet to the West line of the West 1/2 of the Northeast 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4; thence South 00 degrees 00 minutes 21 seconds East on same, 909.06 feet to the place of beginning of this description; thence South 89 degrees 21 minutes 13 seconds East 342.08 feet; thence South 00 degrees 00 minutes 21 seconds East 200.01 feet; thence North 89 degrees 21 minutes 13 seconds West 342.08 feet to the West line of the West 1/2 of the Northeast 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4; thence North 00 degrees 00 minutes 21 seconds West on same, 200.01 feet to the place of beginning;

Tax Parcel No.: 80-17-015-005-01 (for 2026);
Commonly Known As: 8729 M 140 Hwy, South Haven, MI 49090.

For the sum of less than ONE HUNDRED AND NO/100 (\$100.00) DOLLARS on both the County and State tax. This conveyance is exempt from the State transfer tax pursuant to MCL 207.526(a) and is exempt from the County transfer tax pursuant to MCL 207.505(a).

Subject to zoning regulations, easements, leases, building and use restrictions, reservations, covenants, conditions and restrictions of record and conditions that would be disclosed by an accurate survey of the premises, and further subject to all taxes and special assessments which shall hereafter become due and payable.

Together with all improvements, fixtures, easements, hereditaments and appurtenances associated with the subject premises.

The Grantor grants to the Grantee the right to make zero divisions under Section 108 of the Land Division Act, Act No. 288 of the Public Acts of 1967. This property may be located within the vicinity of farmland or a farm operation. Generally accepted agricultural and management practices which may generate noise, dust, odors, and other associated conditions may be used and are protected by the Michigan Right to Farm Act.

Effective date of conveyance: February __, 2026.

SENIOR SERVICES OF VAN BUREN COUNTY, INC.:

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2026.

By: _____
Diane Rigozzi, Executive Director

[NOTARY'S SIGNATURE CONTAINED ON FOLLOWING PAGE]

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) SS.
COUNTY OF)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this ____ day of _____, 2026, by Diane Rigozzi, acting in her capacity as Executive Director of Senior Services of Van Buren County, Inc., A. WALKER, to me known to be the same person described in and who executed the within instrument, who acknowledged the same to be the free act and deed of Senior Services of Van Buren County, Inc.

Notary Public,
_____ County, Michigan
Acting in: _____ County, Michigan
My Commission Expires: _____

Drafted by and return to:
ANDREW W. BARNES
BUTZEL LONG P.C.
Attorneys for Senior Services of Van Buren County, Inc.
317 Center Street
South Haven, MI 49090
269-287-2010

SOUTH HAVEN AREA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY MINUTES

February 18, 2026

Pursuant to Act 267 of 1976, as amended (Open Meetings Act), the Board Members of the South Haven Area Regional Airport Authority (SHARAA) met at the South Haven Area Regional Airport, 73020 C.R. 380, South Haven, Michigan on Wednesday, February 18, 2026.

Jon Woodhams Called a regular meeting of the South Haven Area Regional Airport Authority Board to order at 7:30 pm.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jon Woodhams, Geneva Township, Chairman
Brent Nichols-City of South Haven, Vice Chairman
Mary Hosley, City of South Haven
Mike Gillian, Covert Township
Julian Allen, Covert Township

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jim Sankofski, Casco Township
Fred Bower, alternate for Covert Township
Todd Jensen, South Haven Township
Ross Woodhams, alternate for City of South Haven

- I. **Agenda:** Mary Hosley motioned to approve the agenda for the February 18, 2026, Airport Board meeting. Brent Nichols seconded this motion. **All voted in favor. The motion to approve the agenda carries. YEA 5 / NA 0**
- II. **Public Comments:** NONE

Mary Hosley motioned to approve the consent agenda, and Brent Nichols seconded this motion:

Consent Agenda:

- Expenses from:
- November 2025 totaling: \$12,791.40 and December 2025 totaling: \$67,419.82 and January 2026 totaling: \$29,673.33
 - Manager's reports dated: December 17, 2025 and January 21, 2026, and February 18, 2026
 - Minutes of November 19, 2025 and January 9, 2026

A roll call vote to approve the consent agenda was taken and **all voted in favor. The motion carries. YEA 5 / NA 0**

III. **Committee Reports:** NONE

IV. **Old Business:** NONE

V. **New Business:**

Airport Management presented an overview of the funding timeline associated with the Airport Terminal Program (ATP). Following discussion, a general consensus was reached to obtain additional information before proceeding further. Staff will coordinate a follow-up meeting with engineering consultants Mead & Hunt to review outstanding questions and provide further clarification on the program, and the funding requirements associated with the grant.

VI. **Member Comments:** NONE

Brent Nichols moved to adjourn the meeting and Mary Hosley seconded this motion.
The meeting was adjourned at: 8:22pm

SOUTH HAVEN AREA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Jonathon Woodhams, Chairman
Brent Nichols, City of South Haven, Vice Chair
Todd Jensen, South Haven Township
Mary Hosley, City of South Haven
Ross Woodhams, alternate for City of South Haven
Mike Gillian, Covert Township

Julian Allen, Covert Township
Jim Sankofski, Casco Township
Fred Bower, alternate for Covert
Township
Nancy Kelley, Treasurer
Dan Sanborn, Secretary



Van Buren Conservation District March 2026 Program Update

Spring will be here before we know it, and we have a lot in store for Van Buren County. As always, the VBCD is here to help you, our community, and natural resources. We'd love to hear from you!

Grant Received - The Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development recently awarded us a Regenerative Agriculture Education & Outreach grant to expand and enhance education and outreach events that promote regenerative agriculture practices and farmer-to-farmer networks. Be sure to check out our Farming for the Future conference (March 11) and an on-farm field day that will be scheduled later this year.

Tree Sale - Last chance! The pre-sale period closes March 29 at 11:59 PM. Leftover seedlings will be available for sale April 10 and 11, but we usually sell out of many species before then. Adding these seedlings to your property encourages large scale pollinator and wildlife habitat building and adds to our community's beauty. Profits from the sale go back into our conservation efforts and programs. Shop the sale at VanBurenCD.org/Shop

Farming for the Future - We're excited to host our 19th Farming for the Future Conference! Supporting Van Buren County farms, businesses, and stewardship is important to us. The event includes the resources, experts, and topics to support that vital work.

Date & Time: March 11, 2026 | 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Van Buren Conference Center | 490 S Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064

Registration required. Lunch will be provided. [To register, click here.](#)

Emily Hickmott

Emily Hickmott, Executive Director

Upcoming Events (details available on [our website](#))

- Farming for the Future Conference | March 11
- Discover with the District: Kal-Haven Trail | Saturday, March 21 | VanBurenCD.org/discover-2026
- VBCD Board Meeting | March 25 | VanBurenCD.org/About
- Tree Sale Order Pickup & Leftover Sale | Friday, April 10 & Saturday April, 11 | VanBurenCD.org/shop
- VBCD Board Meeting | April 22 | VanBurenCD.org/About
- VBCD Annual Meeting & Director Election | July 17 | details to be announced



Van Buren Conservation District

March 2026 Program Update

Program Updates

Resource Recovery & Recycling (*Kalli Marshall, Jacob Diljak*) – Five communities have worked with us to make their drop-off centers a place that you can bring foam in for recycling year-round. You can learn more about where and how by checking out the announcement at VanBurenCD.org/foam-recycling Our 2026 collection events have been announced. This year's electronic recycling opportunities have been changed to make it easier to keep those valuable materials in the economy. VanBurenCD.org/van-buren-county-recycling-collections

Outreach (*Jacob Diljak*) – Jacob delivered annual reports to our local municipal offices and partners, highlighting the impacts of last year's work. He is wrapping up the Food, Farm, Fun Guide, which should be ready to check out in April, just in time for our Tree Seedling Sale event which he's also been working hard to organize and make a success. Our goal is to see over 13,000 native seedlings planted in Van Buren County and Southwest Michigan through this sale this year.

Agriculture & Water Quality Team (*Erin Fuller and Colleen Forestieri*) – In 2025, we helped local farmers install 396 acres of no-till and 3,112 acres of cover crops. These best management practices prevented about 1,150 TONS of sediment runoff to our lakes and streams. We provided \$100,128 in cost-share dollars to help farmers try conservation practices. We also worked with lakefront landowners to plant 300 native trees and shrubs to help keep our lakes clean.

Invasive Species SWxSW Corner CISMA Team (*Alex Florian and Jena Johnson*) – We should receive decisions from funders on the grant applications we submitted last fall in the coming weeks which helps us finish planning our invasive species management and education for the rest of the year. February saw us connecting with local contractors about their role in preventing the spread of invasive species. We also started the process of hiring the VBCD's seasonal Invasive Species Strike Team Crew.

Conservation Technical Assistance Program: MAEAP and Regenerative Agriculture Programs (*Kyle Mead*) – Kyle has been visiting producers for both new and re-assessments and has completed several verifications this last month. He also restarted a state-wide CTAP Tech Team Monthly Meeting (virtual) to provide MAEAP training to newer technicians. These help other technicians get producers to the finish line of MAEAP Verification. The tech has also been assisting NRCS staff with I&E worksheets (5 producers) needed for NRCS Contracting as well as Record Collecting from producers to verify compliance for CSP payments (6 producers).



Van Buren Conservation District March 2026 Program Update

Natural Resource Technical Assistance (*Gabriel Francisco*) - Gabe continued to meet with landowners about their resource concerns on-property and in the office. Federal conservation program payment deadlines and application deadlines continue to be a focus of his time. Contact our office for help navigating federal programs to assist with land and water concerns.

Forestry Assistance Program (*Benjamin Savoie, Barry Conservation District*) - Ben is working across nine counties, including Van Buren County, supporting our forests. Working with landowners, Ben works in the Qualified Forest Program to save landowners money and strengthen forest health. Thank you to Van Buren County's Digital Information team for helping Ben connect with landowners who could benefit from this program.