

Additional Check for Approval March 3, 2026

MRM – Snow Removal Twp/Cemetery	\$955.00
Jesse O’Jack	\$8250.00
OHM – Planner	\$6489.50
KCI – Assessment mailing	\$577.88
Comcast	\$271.85
Graphikitchen – website maintenance	\$895.00
Chase Card Services –	\$638.61
taxes, payroll services, calculator, BOR training, book	

Lodi Township Committee Meeting 02/20/26

2:00-4:00

Discussion was had on a policy to standardize the process to appoint members to the Lodi Township Boards. A shorter version will be presented to the board for review once everything is typed up.

Present: Foley, Matelski, Blackburn

2 members of the public

TO: Lodi Township Board
RE: Saline Area Fire Department Article of Incorporation
FROM: Jesse O'Jack
DATE: March 2, 2026

I have reviewed the most recent version of the Articles of Incorporation with a proposed adopted date of 3/16/2026 and it includes responses to the majority of my previous stated concerns, but not all. I also note that this version does not include the corrections/comments proposed by Christina and that as of the time I am writing this memo I have not yet seen any comments by any other board member.

I also note that to the best of my knowledge no one has ever explained the advantages/disadvantages of one over the other, nor provided proofs for each, and, therefore, the lack makes it difficult for the township to make a finding of what is in the best interest of its residents. Therefore, the resolutions I have prepared do not have much detail as there is not much that I have been provided to include.

PREVIOUS COMMENTS OF MINE NOT YET ADDRESSED OR, I BELIEVE, NOT SATISFACTORILY ADDRESSED

Regarding Article 12, I said about 12.2.C.iv:

I still do not think the timing of the millage vs non-millage is correct. Adding language that says "last levied and collected", I believe still leaves problems as the December 1 levy may not have been collected yet, and a different levy may have been collected at the beginning of the year (which would put it in the same year.) I don't think the articles can cover every contingency as when a levy is collected. Therefore, referencing the levy seems like the appropriate route (as was done in the previous draft. However, to keep the authority from double dipping, if a millage is levied on December 1, it seems to me that the language should say "on January 1 the second year following the last year that an AUTHORITY-wide millage was levied." Or language that says the same thing in another way so that, for example, if a millage is levied on December 1, 2026 (which if I understand correctly will pay for the year 2027), that the quarterly installments will not begin until January 1, 2028. Otherwise, the authority will be collecting twice in 2027. If I am wrong, please explain why—I don't see it.

Also, as I indicated previously, I believe that to avoid any confusion, additional language needs to be added that section 12 includes some language that if there is a millage and it is levied, that the obligation of the incorporating municipalities is replaced by the millage?

Below is an option that might handle both of my concerns at the same time:

- (iv) The Incorporating Municipalities agree to pay the annual amounts set forth in the approved budget in quarterly installments commencing on January 1 if, and only if, following the last year that an AUTHORITY-wide millage was last not levied the previous year, and collected by the AUTHORITY.

RESPONSE: My above concern has not been addressed in this version nor have I been provided any explanation as to why my analysis is incorrect.

Regarding Section 13.1 Property Tax Levy by AUTHORITY: My comment was that the section says that the election may be called by resolution of the Board. I do not see any language as to what type of majority. Therefore, as section 10.4 does not specify any other type of majority, this election can be called merely by the majority of those present rather than the majority of those appointed and serving. Was that the intent? If not, this election should be added to the list in section 10.4 that requires a majority of those appointed and serving.

RESPONSE: no change was made. Therefore, I just wanted to point out that this election can be called merely by the majority of those present. I take no position as to which it should be, I just want all to understand what it is pursuant to this version. The Township should decide whether this voting majority is acceptable to the Township.

I asked what happens to the current capital accounts.

RESPONSE: The following language was added with my understanding being that the capital accounts would be permanently transferred to the Authority.

The following language was added:

1.1 Transfer of Operating and Capital Accounts. Applicability of Withdrawal Provisions: Upon the formation of the Authority, all existing Operating and Capital funds maintained by the Saline Area Fire Department shall be transferred to, and thereafter administered by the Authority.

I understand that this response was intended to address my question and I believe was intended to say that all such capital accounts now belong to the Authority and the municipalities no longer have any right to them. However, I do not believe that the language transferred to and administered is specific enough. I think it is still unclear whether or not the separate municipalities still have a right to their accounts. Specific language needs to be added stating either that the municipalities still have ownership of those accounts or whether with the transfer they are giving up all rights to those accounts.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. A new section 12.2.B Temporary Use of Fund Balance to Address Millage Revenue Timing Gap has been added. The term "fund balance" is not defined? Should it be?
2. I still have questions regarding the timing of millages, etc. For example, last year at its November meeting, Lodi Township set its annual special assessment amount for fire. If an Authority millage is on the November ballot will Lodi Township have sufficient after

the ballot to decide whether it needs to set a special assessment amount or not? Do any other municipalities have their own millages? And, if so, what happens if both an authority millage and a municipality millage co-exist.

3. I previously asked for clarification regarding substations. I did not get a direct response, but from reading the email chains I think the steering committee did not believe it was necessary to put in the Articles. I believe that to avoid later disputes there should be language regarding the location and costs of future substations. Or at least how the decisions are made. Obviously, the location of a substation will benefit certain participants much more than others. Therefore, should there be rules on how the cost is allocated? As written as of now, there is no guidance whatsoever, not even as to the vote. Therefore, as written, a costly substation could be added that is absolutely little benefit to certain participants and the doing so would require only the majority vote of the Board present, not even of those elected and serving. The Township needs to decide if it is satisfied with that.

4. I also have questions about the scope of emergency services. Subsection 6.2.B allows the Authority to pass ordinances for the recovery of the costs for providing emergency services. Therefore, I checked the definition of emergency services as set forth in Article 2 which says it “means fire protection or any other emergency health or safety related services (except police protection services) designated in these articles.” It is sort of like a catch 22. The definition restricts emergency services to those “designated in these articles”, but the articles appear to only refer to the definition for “emergency services” as to what is included. So, as far as I can tell, there is no clear scope.

While all participants might agree that response to a fire or accident is clearly within the scope, what about other services? For example, Fire Marshall services. For example, if one municipality wants to do rental or business inspections, and wants the assistance of the Fire Marshall, should this service be within the general scope of service or should it be something that municipality should pay extra for?

5. Advantages/disadvantages of the Authority versus the Saline Area Fire Department. While there may be others, the only advantage that I have heard discussed is that it would be easier for the department to not have to go to the municipalities each year to approve funding. I have heard no other advantages/disadvantages discussed. For example, I have seen no breakdown on the cost of the Authority to the residents of Lodi Township versus the cost to Lodi Township residents under the current methodology. I would suggest that the Township Board may want to know what the advantages/disadvantages are before determining that they are or are not in the best interest of the township residents.

6. The Township Board has discussed many times of late the need to provide information to the public and then get public input. Does the township board want to hold a public hearing?
7. I believe the current Saline Area Fire Department is a participant in other groups (for example, MABAS). While the proposed Articles give the authority the power to enter into such agreements, there is no explanation that I can find as to what happens to the current agreements.
8. Last I knew the Saline Area Fire Department had a supporting organization, the Friends of the Saline Area Fire Department. I have seen no language or explanation as to what happens to that or, if it is to continue, how it is transferred to supporting the authority.

Township of Lodi
Resolution No. 2026-010

March 3, 2026

A resolution to deny approval of the Articles of Incorporation of Saline Area Fire Authority Adopted March 16, 2026.

WHEREAS the Saline Area Fire Department Steering Committee recommends that all participating municipalities of the Saline Area Fire Department pass resolutions approving Articles of Incorporation of Saline Area Fire Authority (with an adoption date of March 16, 2026 and attached as Exhibit 1) which would create an Authority under the provisions of the Emergency Services to Municipalities Act, 1988 PA 57, as amended, MCL 124.601 *et seq.* to replace the current Saline Area Fire Department which would be dissolved simultaneously by separate resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Lodi Township Board has insufficient information to find that the such an Authority would be in the best interest of the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Lodi Township, including the cost to its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Lodi Township Board finds that the proposed language still needs additional revisions; and

WHEREAS, the Lodi Township Board finds that neither the Board nor the residents of Lodi Township have had sufficient time to review and comment on the proposed Authority.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that approval of the Articles of Incorporation of Saline Area Fire Authority Adopted March 16, 2026, attached as Exhibit 1, is denied.

Township Trustee _____ moved the adoption of the foregoing Resolution, which was seconded by Township Trustee _____ and thereupon adopted by the Lodi Township Board of Trustees by a roll call vote of the Township Board at the regular meeting, held this 3rd day of March, 2026.

The following members voted:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent or abstain: .

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Christina Smith, Lodi Township Clerk

Township of Lodi
Resolution No. 2026-010

March 3, 2026

A resolution to approve Articles of Incorporation of Saline Area Fire Authority Adopted March 16, 2026.

WHEREAS the Saline Area Fire Department Steering Committee recommends that all participating municipalities of the Saline Area Fire Department pass resolutions approving Articles of Incorporation of Saline Area Fire Authority (with an adoption date of March 16, 2026 and attached as Exhibit 1) which would create an Authority under the provisions of the Emergency Services to Municipalities Act, 1988 PA 57, as amended, MCL 124.601 *et seq.* to replace the current Saline Area Fire Department which would be dissolved simultaneously by separate resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Lodi Township Board of Trustees finds that it would be in the best interest of the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Lodi Township to approve the resolution conditioned on the simultaneous dissolution of the Saline Area Fire Department.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Articles of Incorporation of Saline Area Fire Authority Adopted March 16, 2026, attached as Exhibit 1, is adopted subject to the condition of the simultaneous dissolution of the Saline Area Fire Department.

Township Trustee _____ moved the adoption of the foregoing Resolution, which was seconded by Township Trustee _____ and thereupon adopted by the Lodi Township Board of Trustees by a roll call vote of the Township Board at the regular meeting, held this 3rd day of March, 2026.

The following members voted:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent or abstain: .

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Christina Smith, Lodi Township Clerk