

Helena Township Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7:00pm
8751 Helena Road, Alden, Michigan 49612

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Supervisor, Butch Peeples at 7:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: All in room stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Butch Peeples, Catherine Rice, Jim Schilling, Butch Bartz and Tony Smedra

Conflict of Interest: No Conflicts

Approval of Agenda: Motion by J. Schilling, seconded by B. Bartz. Agenda approved.

Approval of Minutes: May 08, 2025; Motion by J. Schilling, seconded by B. Bartz. Minutes approved.

Public Comment:

- Bonnie Robbins submitted her resume for position of Helena Township Clerk in the event that the role becomes open.

Treasurer's Report March 2025

\$ 60,936.19 – receipts
\$236,931.89 – disbursements
\$902,327.89 – bank balance

Motion by T. Smedra to approve May 2025 Treasurer's report , seconded by B. Bartz. Treasurer's report approved.

Fire Chief Report: Review of the South Torch Lake Fire & Rescue report from Chief Paul Fabiano.

- The service calls per month continue to rise in 2025 over 2024.
- Helena Township Community Dinner is planned at the Fire Station on Wednesday, June 25th, 2025 from 5-6pm.

Sheriff's Report: Review of highlighted activities from Sheriff Kevin Hoch.

- There were 75 calls in Helena Township in May 2025.
- The second K9 dog continues to acclimate into their new role within the sheriff's department.
- The community will see new leased vehicles on the road.

Township Ambulance Authority (TAA) Report: No report

All reports are linked with the minutes on the township website www.helenatownship.com

Guest Speaker: Marilyn Barber Coszewski shared thoughts about honoring the veterans in Helena Township Cemetery.

- Currently there is no cemetery ceremony for veterans on Memorial Day.
- Veteran grave emblem markers which hold the flags should be placed on these graves. Both the Sheriff and Fire departments volunteered to provide grave emblem markers they may be able to obtain. Mortensen Funeral Home may also provide assistance with additional flags.
- Marilyn is interested in cleaning the headstones with the appropriate cleaner(s) so as to not damage the headstones.
- Marilyn will submit a plan to B. Peebles to accomplish the above.

Communications:

- B. Peebles advised the Helena Township Budget meeting has been moved to July 8th, 2025.
- J. Schilling thanked Paul Fabiano and Kevin Hoch for sheriff and fire departments involvement in the Alden Village Memorial Day Parade.
- C. Rice advised the Alden Library annual contract renewal has been completed.

Committee Reports: Terry VanAlstine shared the expected plans for an August 2025 vote regarding the new Public Safety Center bond.

Zoning: Bob Logee presented the May 2025 zoning activities.

Parks & Recreation: Jim Gurr reviewed the following:

- Fences are being installed at the ballpark.
- Additional sidewalk (4 feet wide) has been installed at Alden Safe Harbor for safety purposes.
- An ADA compliant ramp is planned for installation at the ballpark.

Planning Commission: Jim Gurr reviewed the following:

- Public Hearing will be conducted on June 19th, 2025 regarding to Ordinance 5.02.02.
- Planning Commission member salary increases were discussed. Motion by C. Rice, seconded by B. Bartz. Motion was approved.
- Public Hearing meetings will be on Zoom in addition to meeting in person.

Roads: Butch Bartz reviewed the following:

- Approved road repair work has begun.
- Paige Road and each end of Cemetery Road are completed.
- Completion of road repair is scheduled to be end of summer.

New Business:

- South Torch Lake fireworks scheduled for July 3rd, 2025 has been confirmed. Respective security and fire departments have been engaged to ensure safety protocols are followed.
- Painting of the Alden Park pavilion has been completed.
- Donation of playground equipment is on-going. Site prep work needs to be evaluated (age appropriate for safety, placement at the Alden Park, 1200 square foot platform, confirming location of septic...).
- New toilet to be installed in the women's bathroom.

Old Business:

- J. Schilling has received the bid for two Michigan DOT flashing speed limit signs at each end of Alden Village. Motion to approve bid for signs and installation by C. Rice, seconded by J. Schilling. Motion approved.
- J. Schilling and B. Bartz are leading effort with Burt Thompson to ensure sign placement meets Michigan DOT requirements.
- At Alden Park a bid was received to resurface the tennis courts, and will move forward in 2026.
- The owner of MaMa's Kitchen structure needs to be contacted, and responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of both the building and grounds. Planning Commission to investigate zoning ordinances (blight?).
- The bridge over Spencer Creek is progressing with a mid-July completion date.

Announcements:

- Strawberry Social is scheduled for Sunday, June 16th from noon to 4pm at the Depot.
- The Farmers Market in Alden has opened for the summer months.

Public Comment: One inquiry about having speed signs installed prior to July 4th holiday. J. Schilling will check into this.

Motion to Pay Bills: Motion to pay bills by J. Schilling, seconded by T. Smedra. Unanimous approval to pay bills.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by J. Schilling, seconded by B. Bartz. Unanimous approval and meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Fay M. Vandenberg, Helena Township Board Recording Secretary