

Call to Order: Chair B. Peeples called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Governmental Meeting Room.

Pledge of Allegiance: All present participated.

Roll Call: Present – B. Peeples, C. Rice, J. Schilling. Absent – B. Bartz and O. Leffew

Approval of Agenda: Motion by J. Schilling, seconded by C. Rice to approve current agenda. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Conflict of Interest: None declared.

Approval of February 12, 2026 - Helena Township Board Regular Meeting Minutes: Motion by J. Schilling, seconded by C. Rice to approve motion to approve minutes. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

\$1,097,574.62 - Beginning Balance
\$290,586.59 - Receipts
\$41,981.20 - Total Disbursements
\$1,346,180.01 - Ending Bank Balance

Presentation of Bills – February Balance Sheet:

Additional liabilities March 1–12 totaled \$3,685.40

South Torch Lake Fire & Rescue Report: Report presented by Jesse Lane:

17 EMS calls, 1 mutual aid camper fire, 2 additional service calls
Year-to-date calls total 41, compared to 34 at the same time last year.
Two new members joined the department. Cindy D. – State of Michigan certified EMT, Tyler S. – beginning fire training
Four members recently completed ice rescue certification training, bringing the department total to eight certified personnel.
The department will host its next community dinner March 25 from 5–7 PM.

Antrim County Sheriff's Report: Report presented by Sheriff Kevin Hoch:

The Sheriff's Office reported 43 calls for service in February, compared to 38 calls during the same month last year. Calls included welfare checks, fraud complaints, traffic stops, suspicious situations, accidents, and medical assists. Two deputies are currently attending the police academy through a Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards grant. The department also reported recent narcotics enforcement actions involving fentanyl and methamphetamine seizures.

Antrim County Commissioner Report: Report presented by Commissioner Terry VanAlstine:

Financial oversight and restructuring of the Antrim County Conservation District
Proposed updates to Article 12 of the sanitation code addressing failing septic systems
Continued planning for the Antrim County Public Safety Center

Township Ambulance Authority (TAA) Report: Report presented by Mike Robinson:

Mike reported that TAA's retired ambulance rig was sold to a department in New Jersey to replace a 1996 unit. The ambulance has arrived and will assist in covering two townships with about 2,000 calls per year

Guest Speaker: Paddle Antrim

Report on continued development of the Chain of Lakes Water Trail, which now includes over 100 miles of paddling routes and 84 access sites.
The trail has received Pure Michigan Water Trail designation.

Upcoming projects include universal kayak launches, improved access sites, and accessibility improvements.

Communications:

The Board discussed township communication systems and cybersecurity services, including review of IT firm proposals and internal system access needs.

Committee Reports-

Zoning: Reported by Robert Logee:

Zoning Administrator Robert Logee submitted his report, including updates on permits, zoning activity, and ongoing administrative matters. Trustee Schilling brought up disposal of a trailer, Logee is aware.

Parks and Recreation: Report by Steve Dell:

Discussion regarding Elmer's bid for the Tennis Park Tennis Court. Options discussed included resurfacing the existing courts or relocating the facility as part of a broader park redesign.

Board members reviewed the history of court repairs and previous grant funding through the DNR Recreation Passport program

Steve was directed to obtain an additional bid for a complete redo of the existing tennis court

The board agreed that additional public input is needed before major decisions are made. A Community Engagement Meeting is scheduled for April 22 at 7:00 PM.

Planning Commission: Report by Jim Gurr:

The Planning Commission reported continued progress on zoning amendments addressing shoreline regulations including boat density and anti-funneling provisions.

The board discussed scheduling a legal review with the township attorney prior to adoption.

The commission also announced a Public Hearing is being scheduled regarding zoning language related to data centers.

Old Business:

Community Center painting project completion: The Board acknowledged the overage on the painting project and discussed the reason for the increased cost

The Board reported that a grant application had been submitted for the LPR cameras

Cemetery boundary survey work

Public access and alley research

Upcoming .gov email domain transition

Community Center restroom remodel

Archiving in progress, old law books are free to anyone interested

Researching new insurance

A refund check is expected related to insurance coverage for the number of wells

Miller v Helena: Millers are selling property and lawyers are mediating, fence will be moved to proper placement

New Business:

Motion to approve Township Clerk - Oryana Leffew online access to Helena Township accounts at Alden State Bank.

Motion was seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Announcements:

Fire Department community dinner scheduled for March 25, 2026, from 5:00–7:00 PM

Open to the public

Menu: Chili, cornbread, salad and beverage.

Community Engagement Meeting scheduled for April 22, 2026, at 7:00 PM

Planning Commission Public Hearing scheduled for March 19, 2026, at 5:00 PM

Fire Department to conduct upcoming live fire training exercises

Public Comment:

Public comments were offered.

Motion to Approve Treasurer Report and Pay Bills: Motion by J. Schilling, seconded by C. Rice. All in favor, none opposed, so carried.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Submitted by-
Oryana Leffew
Helena Township Clerk
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Supervisor Approval _____

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