

Helena Township Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 09, 2025 at 7:00pm
8751 Helena Road, Alden, Michigan 49612

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Supervisor B. Peeples at 7:02pm.

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

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

Members Absent: Butch Bartz

Conflict of Interest: No Conflicts

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Catherine Rice to approve agenda; seconded by Jim Schilling. Agenda approved.

Approval of Minutes: November 14, 2024 Minutes; Motion by Catherine Rice, seconded by Tony Smedra. Minutes approved.

Public Comment: None

Treasurer's Report:

November 2024

Beginning Balance:	\$442,244.05	
Total Receipts:	\$ 3,659.33	Total Disbursements: \$ 71,503.29
Ending Balance:	\$374,400.09	

December 2024

Beginning Balance:	\$374,400.09	
Total Receipts:	\$288,317.99	Total Disbursements: \$ 53,235.73
Ending Balance:	\$609,482.35	

Motion by Butch Peeples to approve November and December 2024 Treasurer's reports and seconded by Jim Schilling. Treasurer's reports approved.

Presentation of Bills: November - \$38,257.00
December - \$70,091.10

Motion to pay bills was approved.

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

- The smoke detector program continues [installation with ten (10) year sealed batteries]

- The DNR awarded a matching grant of \$3750.00 towards the purchase of three new portable radios.
- In 2024 there were 248 runs, compared to 269 runs in 2023 runs within Helena Township.
- Helena Township Community Dinner is planned at the Fire Station on Wednesday, January 29th, 2025 from 5-6pm.

Sheriff Report: Reviewed the Sheriff’s report from Kevin Hoch. In December 2024 there were 68 calls for service, bringing the total Helena Township calls for service in 2024 to 826.

Township Ambulance Authority (TAA) report: Reviewed the TAA report from Rick Teague.

- There were sixteen (16) ambulance runs and three (3) mutual aid runs in December.
- In 2024 there were 185 runs total.
- Next month the township will be receiving two (2) new ambulances.

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

Communications: Terry VanAlstine shared that the exterior Courthouse project work has stopped until spring and warmer weather.

Guest Speaker: None

Committee Reports:

Zoning: Reviewed November and December Zoning reports with Bob Logee. Motion to adopt the Poverty Exemption Resolution was approved. The members present voted yes: Tony Smedra, Catherine Rice, Butch Peeples and Jim Schilling.

Parks & Recreation: Jim Gurr reviewed the Helena Township Board approved improvement activities that have begun at the Ball Park. The work completed, and future ball park improvement activities are made possible by resident(s) donations.

Planning Commission: Jim Gurr reviewed the Helena Township Planning Commission.

- Finalizing ordinance language and activities are on-going. Currently, the ordinance work product is being sent to the attorney for review.
- The ZBA members and alternates have mandatory training to be completed this year.

Roads: Butch Peeples reviewed the Antrim County Road Commission report schedule for 2025, which included some unfinished 2024 roads improvements. However, only \$12,000.00 was allotted from Antrim County for road improvements in Helena Township for 2025. Motion approved to complete McPherson Road (Alden Highway to Helena), Paige Road (E. Torch Lake Drive to Chapman), and N, Lake Street/Elder Road (all).

New Business: A forensic audit will be scheduled in the first half of 2025. Motion to approve by Jim Schilling and seconded by Tony Smedra; unanimously approved.

Old Business: Doors ordered in October for the building east side have not been received yet.

Announcements:

- Mike Lee will be replacing Rick Teague as the TAA Committee Representative with the Helena Township Board. Motion to approve by Butch Peeples, seconded by Tony Smedra; was approved by a vote of Yes-3/No-1. Rick was thanked for his many years of service to the community.
- Butch Peeples will be taking operational control of all maintenance for the time being.
- Butch Peeples will be taking on the role of Cemetery Sexton.

Public Comment:

- Correction to the November minutes was identified:
 - Will be corrected in Helena Township Board records, and in the Antrim Review;
- Chris DeWald inquired about the plowing/clearing of snow from sidewalks in Alden Village business district with the township owned John Deere 425 tractor. Many volunteers offered their time and expertise to get the John Deere tractor 425 running;
- Julie Schlecker inquired if Helena Township had a blithe ordinance;
- Paul Sak indicated that two (2) other townships in Antrim County have 2025 contracts with the sheriff's office for ~ 10 hours/month of enforcement service.

Motion to pay bills: Tony Smedra motioned to pay bills, seconded by Jim Schilling; unanimously approved.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Butch Peeples, seconded by Jim Schilling. Adjournment passed unanimously; adjourned at 8:20pm.

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