

Helena Township Board Meeting Synopsis

November 13, 2025 – Helena Township, Alden, MI

The Helena Township Board met with B.Peebles, O.Leffew, C.Rice and J.Schilling present. Absent- B.Bartz. Fire Chief Fabiano reported 23 calls and delivered updates on equipment, staffing and the retaining wall failure. Sheriff Hoch reported 85 calls, equipment updates and grant funding. Committee reports covered Parks and Recreation updates, proposed Planning Commission meeting updates and zoning permits issued. The meeting concluded with announcements for upcoming community events and special thanks to the Village Market for food donations. Meeting adjourned at 8:35p.m. Full draft meeting minutes can be found at the Helena Township website:

www.helenatownship.com

Helena Township Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 13, 2025 @ 7:00pm
8751 Helena Road, Alden, Michigan 49612

Call to Order: Chair B. Peeples called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: All present participated.

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

Approval of Agenda: Motion by C. Rice and seconded by J. Schilling to approve current agenda. Motion passed.

Conflict of Interest: None declared.

Public Comment: None.

Approval of October 9, 2025 Minutes: Motion by J. Schilling and seconded by O. Leffew to approve minutes. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report:

- \$ 42,891.94 – Receipts
- \$ 42,200.69 – Disbursements
- \$ 735,985.48 – Bank Balance

Motion by J. Schilling and seconded by O. Leffew to approve Treasurer report. Motion passed.

Presentation of Bills – October Balance Sheet:

- October Disbursements-\$ 42,200.69

Fire Chief Report: South Torch Lake Fire & Rescue: Report presented by Chief Paul Fabiano:

Total Calls: 23 calls for service in October. 13 of these calls were EMS calls. Responded to an apartment fire, provided mutual aid for a motor vehicle accident and responded to a brush fire.

Year-over-Year Comparison:

- October had 23 calls. October 2024 had 28 calls.
- Year-to-Date: 233 calls. Year-to-Date (2024): 207 calls

Equipment:

- Two cargo nets are on order to assist in water rescue.
- All vehicles passed their annual pump test and acquired their annual certification.

Building and Infrastructure:

- An insurance inspector and 2 engineers examined the failing retaining wall. The insurance claim was denied with their engineer citing "inadequate design including insufficient foundation size, insufficient reinforcement steel and the lack of drainage provisions". Engineer recommendations to remove retaining wall and the deck will be delayed until Spring 2026. Reinforcements are to be made next week. It is recommended to stay off the deck until safe.

Public Information:

- Community meals have resumed. Enjoy a great meal with your firefighters on Wednesday, November 26, 5pm-7pm. **Menu:** Pork Loin, scalloped potatoes, green bean casserole, and pumpkin pie.
- Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are available to the public. Installation and a fire safety survey are free of charge. Call the Fire Station at (231) 331-4204 to schedule an appointment.

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

Total Calls: 85 total calls reported for October. Up from 69 in October of last year. Increase was partly due to a rise in traffic stops. Sheriff Hoch thanked voters for supporting the law enforcement millage.

Equipment:

- 23 new body cameras purchased with half of the cost coming from a grant.
- 7 new vehicles are being outfitted with graphics by a local company.

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

- All is smooth.

Guest Speaker: None

Communications: None

Committee Reports:

Zoning: Report by Robert Logee:

- October 2025 zoning activities including 8 land use permits, 5 field checks, 12 public contacts, 3 meetings and 1 violation.

Parks and Recreation: Report by Steve Dell:

- DNR approved the Helena Township Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Plan (2026–2030) qualifying the Township for DNR grants.
- Decision to come on a split rail fence.

Planning Commission: Report by Jim Gurr:

- Reviewed Commissions revision to By-Laws (November 6, 2025). The Planning Commission will meet on the first Thursday of every other month at 5:00 pm in the Helena Township governmental room. The first meeting is scheduled for February 5, 2026.
- The revision will result in cost savings while maintaining the ability to manage Commission business.

Roads: None

Old Business:

- Tennis Park bathroom Auto-Lock Project is complete. Timer set to be unlocked from 7am to 9pm. Timer can be adjusted as needed. Thanks to Barry for coordinating the project as a volunteer.
- Report on the Tennis Park septic system being functional after a pump and scope but requires proper maintenance. Tree and root maintenance recommendations will be addressed.
- Flock camera invoiced and installed soon.
- New Coy Mountain signs are on order.
- Conference room table and chairs are still being researched.
- Flashing speed limit signs are in permitting stage.
- Spencer Creek Bridge Project will resume in Spring 2026.

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New Business:

- Website update will be ADA compliant, include functions such as calendars for community rentals, updated forms and will also be mobile friendly.
- License Plate Reading Cameras / Community Center – EPS Motion Cameras quote.
- Garage Door has been replaced due to damage made by an identified vehicle that crashed into it. Insurance claims are in progress.

Proposed adding license plate reading cameras to the Community Center.

Motion by C. Rice and seconded by J. Schilling. Motion passed.

Announcements:

- Christmas display on Saturday, November 29, 2025, from 3pm-7pm. Light refreshments will be served at the Methodist Church from 3pm-5pm. Santa Claus will make an appearance at 5:30pm. Donations of food and/or money are appreciated and will be used to assist local residents. Village Market has donated thirty (30) turkeys. Appreciation is noted for the work of the Alden Volunteers.

Motion to Pay Bills: Motion by C. Rice, seconded by B. Peeples. Motion passed.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm.

Oryana Leffew – Helena Township Clerk
clerk@helenatownship.com
231 (331)-4643

Supervisor Approval _____