

**KEELER TOWNSHIP
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE CLERK
64151 TERRITORIAL RD. W.
HARTFORD, MI 49057**

MINUTES OF THE TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2025

The Keeler Township Board Meeting was called to order by Supervisor, Don Blackmond, at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call of members present: Trustee Matthew Sexton, Treasurer Sharon Clupper, Supervisor Don Blackmond, Trustee Carl Davis, and Clerk Angie Sexton. Five members were present constituting a quorum.

Don Blackmond moved to approve the agenda as presented. Angie Sexton seconded, and all were in favor.

Public comment opened at 7:01 p.m. Mark Pajakowski wanted to thank the Van Buren County Road Commission for the placement of pedestrian signs along 95th Ave. and 15 MPH signs along the curve. He is hopeful that it will slow down traffic and make the area safer for pedestrians. Upon hearing no public comments, the public comments closed at 7:02 p.m.

Matt Sexton moved to approve May 6, 2025, Township Board meeting minutes as presented. Sharon Clupper seconded, and all were in favor.

Guests of Board:

Tina Leary, Van Buren County Commissioner, was present. She informed the public that the Veteran's Service Grant had been cut by \$27,000, which affected their dental program. The dental program would not schedule any new appointments for care, but they would continue to honor appointments already scheduled. The county audit presentation, for the first time in five years, found no findings. Van Buren County partnered with Market One to do a housing study to determine the locations most suitable for housing developments within communities. The digitization project of county paperwork in the basement of the Annex building should be completed by the end of fall.

Rick Boze, Van Buren County Road Commission. Roadside mowing is done in Keeler already. The road commission is a month and a half ahead of schedule, and VBCRC should be able to get three cuts for the season. The chip seal program is delayed a little because six million tons of hot mix asphalt is scheduled to being laid. Chip seal should begin June 16th or June 23rd. Fog seal will be placed down two to three weeks after chip seal and then painting will be done. There are currently only a few companies in Michigan licensed to paint Michigan roads.

Sheriff's Deputy John Horton was present. Deputy Horton read the May 2025 incident report. There were 56 calls for service in May; eight alarms, two animal problems, one assist other agency, one assault, two domestic, three EMS assists, two fraud, three general assists, one juvenile problem, two PD accident, three personal injury accident, three property damage, twenty traffic stops, two trespassing, one VIN check, two welfare check.

Fire & Ambulance reports:

The Sister Lakes Fire Department - May consists of nine calls for service, one in Keeler Township. 5/5/25 for a false carbon monoxide alarm. The month's average response time was nine minutes and fifteen seconds, with an average of nine responders.

Keeler Township Fire Department & Rescue- Assistant Fire Chief Andy Lubbert spoke on behalf of the fire department. The department had eighteen total calls for May, consisting of eleven EMS calls and seven fire calls. Two car accidents, one assistance to Sister Lakes Fire Department, a tree on 68th street, power lines on E. Oak, a tree into a house causing injury, and 6.5 hours of storm damage clean up. The month's average response time was seven minutes for medical and ten for fire calls. Fire training for the month was on chainsaw safety and maintenance.

VBEMS did not submit a report for May.

Treasurer's report - The beginning balance in the general fund for the month was \$296,130.49, deposits of \$229,002.69, interest of \$55.99, bills paid \$260,947.57, ending balance of \$264,241.60. The township's Michigan Class Investments balance is \$246,428.54.

16e)- MTA account- Clerk Sexton received the annual dues for Michigan Township Association and wanted guidance from the board if the board wanted to proceed with any package upgrade for the year. The board wanted to keep the same basic package as the previous year.

Matthew Sexton moved to pay all bills and claims as presented. Sharon Clupper seconded, and a roll call vote taken of Blackmond- support, Davis- support, Clupper- support, A. Sexton- support, M. Sexton- support. All were in favor.

Zoning Administrator Allyn Anthony wrote eight zoning permits in May for two fences, two garages, one gazebo, one swimming pool, one deck and one portable roof for the outside of Dockside Dan's. Allyn Anthony also let the board and public know that he had submitted his letter to Supervisor Don Blackmond for retirement effective July 1st, 2025, after 23 years of service. Don Blackmond spoke on behalf of the board and thanked Allyn Anthony for his years of service and dedication to the township; on a personal note, he thanked him for his guidance in becoming acquainted with the township when he became the Supervisor.

Trustee Carl Davis reported that the Planning Commission met on May 27, 2025, for an adjustment on the Wonder Woods Campground Site Plan. The commission tabled the matter until some questions could be clarified.

Trustee Matt Sexton reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals did not have a meeting in May.

Quarterly Supervisors Meeting- Supervisor Don Blackmond met for the quarterly supervisors meeting. Midwest Energy Communications was present and went over the completion timeline for fiber broadband. Van Buren County Soil Conservation District went over materials management and planning. There is a push for more recycling across the state. There is a new program that requires municipalities to have transfer sites to register and report tonnage. Market One was present and their focus currently is on grant readiness. They have hired a person who specializes in grant writing, and she will be focused on helping municipalities learn what type of grants are available and she will write grants for the municipalities and help them work through the grant process.

Old business:

ARPA Funding and MEC construction- Midwest Energy Communications is still completing the project and it will submit the bill to the township for the agreed upon \$58,500 after project completion, and residents are all connected. All unserved residents will have the availability of internet service before the project's completion.

Recreation Plan- Still on hold.

Dangerous Building on 95th Ave. Update- The township may proceed after June 10, 2025, with raising the building and clearing the property. The township previously received a bid from Cross Excavating to do the cleanup. Supervisor Blackmond has requested an updated bid and then the township can proceed.

Fire Station Siren Repair- The department turned in a quote of \$1,251.60 from C-Comm to repair and upgrade the fire siren to restore it to working order so that it can be set off for severe weather without the need for anyone to be at the station. The quote was for some used parts and there was no warranty on the siren. The board let Assistant Chief Lubbert know that they had concerns with the parts used and had no warranty on the siren and would like a quote for a warranty system for comparison. Andy Lubbert said he would work on getting that quote. The board tabled the matter to get another quote.

New Business:

Keeler Township Cemetery- Mosier Wells came out to look at the cemetery. It has gone out and it can no longer be repaired. Mosier is willing to replace the current well with a new one and connect it to the current plumbing for \$6,000. There will not be water available at the cemetery to water any flowers until the well is repaired. Carl Davis moved to hire Mosier Wells to replace the cemetery well for \$6,000. Matthew Sexton seconded, and a roll call vote was taken of A. Sexton- support, Blackmond- support, Clupper- support, M. Sexton- support, and Davis- support. The motion carried.

Fireworks- Supervisor Blackmond noted that usually by this time each year requests have been submitted by Round Lake, Crooked Lake, and Magician Lake to hold an annual fireworks display on the lake. The township has not received such a request, and Blackmond asked the public to notify anyone they knew on the lake associations boards of the requirement to come before the township board to hold a firework display in the township before commencement.

Township Hall- Sharon Clupper presented a quote from the township hall cleaning contractor Odds & Ends of \$175.00 to wash and clean the township hall windows. Sharon Clupper moved to approve the payment of \$175.00 to Odds & Ends for the one-time cleaning of the inside and outside of the township hall windows. Don Blackmond seconded, and a roll call vote taken of Davis- support, M. Sexton- support, A. Sexton- support, Clupper- support, and Blackmond- support.

Washout Repair- Clerk Sexton let the board know that the township mowing company J & E Lawncare had let her know that the townships property on Center, Magician Lake Fire Lane and the township property across from The Strand had washed out and he was unable to gain access to the properties easily to mow and that soil and seed needed to be placed at two of the properties and one of the properties was in need of some crushed asphalt or concrete to stop the wash out. The board agreed to get some quotes for repair from prior companies used for repair in the township.

The floor opened to public comment at 7:58 p.m. A gentleman let the public know that he attended the Memorial Service at the Keeler Cemetery and that it was very well presented and that he enjoyed it. Thank you. Upon hearing no other comments, public comments closed at 7:59 p.m.

Correspondence: Supervisor Don Blackmond received notice from MEC that they would be performing vegetation spraying under power lines. MEC will send notices to any affected residents. Sister Lakes Lions Club and Pipestone Creek are having golf outings. Keeler Township's new Zoning Ordinance went into effect on May 17, 2025. It is available to read on the township's website.

Motion by Carl Davis to adjourn and seconded by Angie Sexton. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Submitted by,

Angie Sexton, Clerk