

**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, AUGUST 5, 2025

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

Don Blackmond opened the hearing on the Round Lake Aquatic Weed Control Special Assessment District 2025-2029 at 7:01 pm. This hearing is to hear any objections to the proposed plan and costs. The board received a petition to extend the existing weed district on Round Lake. The board previously adopted a resolution that required the petitioner to submit plans and cost estimates for the type of work planned over the course of the year 2025-2029. Property owners that are within the district were issued notice of the hearing by mail and published in the local newspaper on July 17 and July 31. Legal counsel reviewed the notice. The special assessor went through and verified every parcel on the tax roll in the weed district. Don Blackmond opened the floor to public comments on the weed district hearing at 7:04 pm. Mark Pajakowski let the public know that the Round Lake Association collected 137 petition signatures out of the 160 landowners on Round Lake in support of continuing the Round Lake Special Assessment District. Darren Lane asked what the current cost of the special assessment district is yearly, and what the estimated yearly cost of a future SAD. Bill Kays, Special Assessor for the weed district informed the public that the current estimate is \$160.28 per parcel within the weed district bringing the total to \$25,370 per year. Which currently is lower than the previously proposed estimate of \$31,000 a year. A resident stood up in support of renewing the weed district. Emily Hickmott from the Van Buren County Conservation District let the public know that there is a grant program right now that makes native trees available for free to lake residents on certain lakes, which will help aid natural water filtration. Upon hearing no other comments, Don Blackmond closed the public comments portion on the proposed plan and costs at 7:09 pm. 85% of the residents on Round Lake signed the petition in support of a new SAD, and most public comments were in favor of the weed assessment districts renewal. Don Blackmond read the Resolution Establishing Round Lake Weed Special Assessment District for 2025-2029. Carl Davis moved to approve the estimates and approve the resolution for the Round Lake Weed Special Assessment District 2025-2029. Matthew Sexton seconded the motion. Roll call vote of A. Sexton- support, Davis- support, Clupper- support, M. Sexton- support, Blackmond- support. All were in favor. Supervisor Don Blackmond opened the floor up again for public comments on the hearing at 7:17 pm. Bill Clupper was asked if the Round Lake SAD plan included muck reduction and carp elimination and he was informed that it does. Upon hearing no other comments, the floor closed to public comments at 7:18 pm. Don Blackmond moved to adjourn the hearing on the Round Lake Aquatic Weed Control Special Assessment District. Angie Sexton seconded and all were in favor.

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

The floor opened for public comments at 7:19 pm. Connie Canfield wanted to make sure that the board was aware that there was a tree down at the cemetery. The board was already aware of the downed tree. Upon hearing no public comments, the public comments closed at 7:20 pm.

Matt Sexton moved to approve July 1, 2025, Regular Board meeting minutes as presented. Don Blackmond seconded, and all were in favor.

Guests of Board:

Tina Leary, Van Buren County Commissioner, was present. Palisades Nuclear Plant plans to be up and running by this fall and will be the first nuclear plant ever to go back online after decommissioning. The Van Buren County Digital Information office, formerly known as the GIS Department, is offering rural IDs for vacant farmland so that 911 will be able to locate an emergency in rural areas. There is an application online if you would like to get a rural ID for your vacant land.

Rick Boze, Van Buren County Road Commission. Chip Seal is 65% complete. Crews will come back in three weeks after chip sealing completion to Fog Seal. VBCRC plans to complete chip sealing by August 20 and then they are going to do subcontract chip seal work for Allegan County. The second round of roadside mowing began.

Sheriff Deputy John Horton was present and went over the June report of 6 alarm calls, 1 animal bite, 1 assist other agencies, 1 be on the lookout, 2 domestic calls, 1 electrical fire hazard, 1 property found, 1 fraud, 4 general assists, 2 parking problems, 3 property damage accidents, 1 public peace, 1 suspicious, 2 threats, 22 traffic stops, 2 trespassing, 1 vin inspection, 2 wanted persons, and 1 weapon offense. Bringing the total for June to 55 calls of service. For the month of July there were 65 call for service consisting of 3 alarms, 1 ambulance call, 1 animal cruelty, 4 animal problems, 1 blight, 1 burglary, 1 civil dispute, 2 EMS calls, 3 general assist, 1 hit and run, 1 illegal burning, 3 property damage accidents, 3 property damage, 1 road hazard, 8 thefts, 2 threats, 24 traffic stops, 1 trespassing, 2 vin inspections, and 2 welfare checks. Thefts in the area have been picked up and Officer Horton reminded everyone to lock their cars and report any incidents.

Fire & Ambulance reports:

The Sister Lakes Fire Department – Two calls in Keeler Township for the month. One on 7/11/25 and one on 7/24/25 for a fire alarm. They had eighteen total calls for service in the month with an average response time of ten minutes, thirty-eight seconds and nine responders.

Keeler Township Fire & Rescue- The department had fourteen total calls for July, consisting of eleven EMS calls and three fire calls: two assists to Sister Lakes Fire for one structure fire and a fire alarm and one illegal burn. The month's average response time was eight minutes for medical calls and ten minutes for fire calls. Fire training for the month was on drafting and dry hydrants and live fire training with Lawrence Fire Department. 1620- had a primer motor go out and parts are on order. 1635 had an electronic fill valve go bad, and they replaced it with a manual valve. Reid Management completed the epoxy floors in the bay and kitchen were by. The company also painted stripes on the bay floor, drain boards and installed rubber base boards for free. The department received the Lucas CPR apparatus from VBEMS on July 29th and as of June 1 the department will receive \$25 per call instead of the previous amount of \$30 per call per the agreement for the donation of the Lucas device. VBEMS will be paying the \$1,500 charge to have it serviced every year. The department received an application from Lexi Scott for employment with the fire department. Chief Don Bogart submitted the new quotes to get the emergency siren on top of the fire department able to be set off remotely. Don Blackmond moved to approve estimate #13537 from C-Comm for the installation and replacement of parts to get the emergency siren working. Matthew Sexton seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken of Clupper- support, M. Sexton- support, Blackmond- support, A. Sexton- support, Davis- support. All were in favor. Matthew Sexton noted that the hiring committee received the application for Lexi Scott and approved her employment as a probationary member. Matthew Sexton moved to approve Lexi Scott. Don Blackmond seconded the motion and a roll call vote of Davis- support, A. Sexton- support, M. Sexton- support, Blackmond- support, Clupper- support. Motion carried. Chief Bogart submitted a request to remove Natalie Light from membership as she has not attended the required three fire department trainings this year, which is not enough to maintain her certification for the Fire Marshall. Supervisor Blackmond suggested placing her on administrative leave and giving her notice to attend the September 2, 2025, meeting for an employment hearing and give her the opportunity to talk about it and speak on her behalf.

VBEMS- VBEMS submitted a report for July consisting of four Priority 1 calls with an average response time of 12:04, three Priority 2 calls with an average response time of 10:11, and three Priority 3 calls with an average response time of 11:44.

Treasurer's report - The beginning balance in the general fund for the month was \$375,643.24, deposits of \$13,443.60, interest of \$60.13, bills paid \$143,377.06, ending balance of \$245,769.91. The township's Michigan Class Investments balance is \$248,235.48.

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

Zoning Administrator- Ryan Laylin wrote eight zoning permits in July for one business sign, one AG storage building, one commercial addition, one home renovation, one back yard gazebo, one new build, one garage and one porch/deck.

Trustee Carl Davis reported that the Planning Commission met on July 22, 2025, approved the final site plan update on the Wonder Woods Campground. The commission discussed proposed short-term rental and will meet with counsel to go over the proposed ordinance. There was no update on the solar battery storage ordinance.

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

Old business:

Recreation Plan- Still on hold.

Dangerous Building on 95 Ave. Update- Demolition of the building is to begin on August 5, 2025.

Fire Station Siren Repair- addressed during 10 (b.).

Parcel No's 80-12-031-045-00 & 80-12-170-067-10 update- The township assessor has given the cost of \$5,850 per linear foot for the two parcels. The assessor has informed the board that sale prices suggest a higher value is possible, but they should not be sold for less. Legal counsel suggests offering the sale of the lots to both owners on each side of the property. The lots would then be split between both owners. The board agreed to let Don Blackmond talk with legal counsel to verify what needs to be done if the board decides to move forward.

Sister Lakes Brewing Company Soapbox Derby Fundraiser- The board previously approved the closure of the road on the west side of the brewery to hold their annual soapbox derby on July 19, 2025. Due to rain the brewing company needed to postpone the event. They are requesting a rain out date of August 9, 2025, to close the road. The Van Buren County Road Commission has already approved it pending township approval. Don Blackmond moved to approve the rescheduled rain date of August 9, 2025, for the fundraiser. Carl Davis seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Motion carried.

New Business:

Resolution 06-02-2020-1 Keeler Lake Canada Goose Nest Destruction and Relocation- Kim Stover of the Keeler Lake Association is requesting the renewal of Resolution 06-02-2020-1 for the relocation and nest destruction for the Canada Goose should the State of Michigan ever open the permits up again for another round up. The resolution does not end until April 1, 2026. The board decided to hold off on the matter until later and speak with legal counsel.

The floor opened to public comment at 8:16 pm. Mark Pajakowski informed the public that a third defibrillator has been installed at Driftwood on Round Lake for emergency use by the fire departments and the public. The defibrillator purchase was made possible thanks to generous donations. Emily Hickmott from the Van Buren County Conservation District wanted residents to know that they offer opportunities for residents, agriculture, and recycling. Their last recycling event will be held on October 18 in Lawrence. Upon hearing no other comments, public comments closed at 8:22 pm.

Correspondence: The residents across the street from the township hall have asked for permission if they can park their cars in the parking lot on August 9, from 4 to 9 pm for a baby shower. The board agreed that it would be fine.

Motion by Carl Davis to adjourn and seconded by Angie Sexton. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Submitted by,

Angie Sexton, Clerk

**KEELER TOWNSHIP
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING
ROUND LAKE WEED
SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT FOR 2025-2029**

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2025 the Township Board of Keeler Township considered the request of the Round Lake Association and tentatively established/re-established an expired Special Assessment District for Weed Control on Round Lake in Keeler Township, Van Buren County, Michigan in accordance with PA 188 of 1954, as amended and to spread the costs of the same for a period of (5) years through 2029; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board of the Township of Keeler notified property owners in the proposed district which is defined as:

“All of those properties with frontage on Round Lake, in Keeler Township, Van Buren County, Michigan”

of its intent to establish/re-establish the district via regular mail on July 15, 2025 and by publication in the Tri-City Record on July 17, 2025 and on July 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the district is to fund weed control on Round Lake in accordance with the treatment plan and cost estimates obtained by the Round Lake Property Owners Association; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board of Keeler Township finds that the properties identified in the Round Lake Weed Special Assessment 2025-2029 benefit from the weed control plans; and

WHEREAS, the plans and estimates of the costs and the special assessment district boundary maps and descriptions were filed with the Township Clerk for public examination and notice of the hearing on the establishment/re-establishment of such district for such purposes was mailed and published as required by law and statute as established by Affidavits pertaining thereto on file with the Township Clerk; and

WHEREAS, a hearing on any objections to the proposed improvement(s) and to the special assessment district proposed to be established for the assessment of the costs of such improvement(s) was conducted on August 5, 2025 at a regular meeting of the Township Board at the Township Hall, 64151 Territorial Road W, Hartford, MI 49057.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that

1. The Township Board approves the plans and cost estimates for weed control in Round Lake as follows; application of systemic and contact aquatic herbicides; mechanical

harvesting, benthic barrier mats; diver-assisted suction harvesting, muck reduction, and nutrient source control; water quality management; permitting; professional fees; and legal and publication costs respecting the weed control project and special assessment at an annual approximate cost of between \$31,000 and \$33,000 per year for 5 years; to be paid by the properties in the special assessment district.

2. The Township Board hereby establishes and defines the 2025-2029 Round Lake Weed Special Assessment District within which the costs of such improvements shall be assessed, according to the benefits, against the properties in the district which is described as:

"All of those properties with frontage on Round Lake, in Keeler Township, Van Buren County, Michigan".

Said benefitted properties in the district are identified by parcel number on the attached Exhibit A.

3. The Township Board does hereby approve carrying over any remaining surplus (excess) funds that remain unspent from the existing Round Lake Special Assessment District 2020-2024.
4. The Township Board hereby directs the Supervisor and Assessing Officer to make a special assessment roll on which shall be entered and described all parcels of land in the district to be assessed with the names of the respecting owners thereof; and a total amount per parcel to be assessed thereon for the project, on a per-parcel basis; with the six parcels sharing a single lake shore property only assessed at 1/6 of a per parcel amount, a payable over 5 years with a maximum of 5% interest per year on the unpaid balance. The special assessment district roll shall be prepared for the first year; and for each consecutive year for the following four years. When the roll has been completed, the Supervisor or Assessing Officer shall affix thereto his certificate stating that it was made pursuant to this Resolution.
5. Be it further resolved that a hearing on the assessment roll shall be held on September 2, 2025 commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Keeler Township Hall, 64151 Territorial Road W, Hartford, MI 49057. The Township Clerk is instructed to give proper notice of such hearing by mailing/publication in accordance with the provisions of PA 188 of 1954, as amended.
6. Be it further resolved that all resolutions or parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Motion by Carl Davis, supported by Matthew Sexton to adopt the foregoing resolution.

The following voted "aye": A. Sexton, Davis, Clupper, M. Sexton, Blackmond

The following voted "nay":

The following was absent:

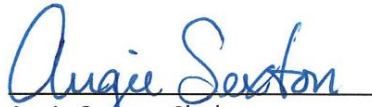
The Supervisor declared the motion carried and the resolution duly adopted.



Angie Sexton, Clerk
Keeler Township

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned, Angie Sexton, the Clerk of Keeler Township, Van Buren County, Michigan, hereby certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Board at a meeting held on August 5, 2025 and that said meeting was held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.



Angie Sexton, Clerk
Keeler Township

Attest:



Don Blackmond, Supervisor