

**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, DECEMBER 2, 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: Clerk Angie Sexton, Treasurer Sharon Clupper, Trustee Carl Davis, Trustee Matthew Sexton, and Supervisor Don Blackmond. Five members were present constituting a quorum.

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

The floor opened for public comments at 7:01 pm. Upon hearing no public comments, the public comments closed at 7:01 pm.

Don Blackmond moved to approve November 5, 2025, Regular Board meeting minutes as presented. Matthew Sexton seconded, and all were in favor. Don Blackmond moved to approve November 19, 2025, Special Workshop Board meeting minutes as presented. Matthew Sexton seconded, and all were in favor. Motion carried.

Guests of Board:

Tina Leary, Van Buren County Commissioner, was present. Van Buren County is working on a new facility master plan. They are doing assessments on the building for capital improvement planning. The courts need more space for security. The plan will be available for public viewing prior to adoption.

Rick Boze, Van Buren County Road Commission. The 2026 Township Road Plans are due. Van Buren County roads are rated 8th in Michigan. Van Buren County Road Commission does not plow on the weekends, but every road in the county gets plowed when there is snow.

Van Buren County Sheriff- Sheriff Deputy Slade Weekly was not present as he broke his hand. His replacement sheriff was present and informed the board that there were 34 incidents reported in the township for November.

Fire & Ambulance reports:

The Sister Lakes Fire Department – A report for the month of November was not submitted.

Keeler Township Fire & Rescue- Assistant Fire Chief Andy Lubbert went over the department's monthly report. The department had 23 calls for service in November, consisting of 21 EMS calls and 2 fire calls to a structure fire on CR 687 and electrical wires down call. Fire training was apparatus familiarization and operations; EMS training was over cardiac arrest. 1620 and 1635 had pump testing done, and both units passed. K.E.S.S.A purchased a battery-operated saw for the department. K.E.S.S.A would like to thank the Blackmond family and Round Lake Associations for donations received which helped purchase the new saw.

VBEMS- VBEMS submitted a report for November with 4 Priority 1 calls for service with an average response time of 8:36, 5 Priority 2 calls with an average response time of 11:48 and 5 Priority 3 calls with an average response time of 12:43.

Treasurer's report - The beginning balance in the general fund for the month was \$198,498.41, deposits of \$18,911.38, interest of \$34.02; bills paid \$79,550.81, ending balance of \$137,893.00. The Michigan Class Investments balance is \$311,875.99.

Matthew Sexton moved to pay all bills and claims as presented. Sharon Clupper seconded, and a roll call vote taken of Davis- support, Blackmond- support, Clupper- support, M. Sexton- support, and A. Sexton- support. All were in favor. Supervisor Blackmond let the board know that during the repaving of the fire department, there was additional asphalt needed to complete the project and Triple-E Asphalt very generously donated \$7,560.00 for the cost of the asphalt. The township board appreciates Triple-E Asphalts donation to the fire department.

Zoning Administrator- Ryan Laylin wrote two zoning violations for a sign and a fence. Ryan Laylin said that things have slowed down significantly.

Trustee Carl Davis reported that the Planning Commission next meeting will be held on December 16, 2025.

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

Old business:

Recreation Plan- Still on hold.

Dangerous Building on 95th Ave. Update- A letter of debt collection was sent to the property owners.

Dangerous Buildings on Oak St.- The building inspector has red tagged a property on Oak St. that still contains two rental unit on the property and the property will go before a Dangerous Building Hearing that will be held at Keeler Township Hall in the future.

Mehlenbeck Lawsuit- Don Blackmond attended the small claims court proceeding on Thursday, November 6, 2025, for the loss of tree claim brought forth by resident Jennifer Mehlenbeck. The judge over the proceeding voted in favor of Mehlenbeck's claim for reimbursement. The township has spoken with legal counsel, and the township is appealing against the court's decision.

Short-Term Rental Ordinance- The board reviewed the Short-Term Rental Ordinance recommended to the board from the Planning Commission and suggested some changes. The board will hold another special workshop on going over the ordinance changes.

New Business:

Electronics Recycling- The Van Buren County Conservation District would like to hold an electronic recycling drive at the Keeler Township Transfer Site. There would not be any cost to the township for the event. The conservation district will park a semi at the transfer site for 2 weeks that will be available for Van Buren County residents and property owners to drop off electronics to be recycled during open hours on Saturdays. Don Blackmond moved to approve the electronic recycling event at the transfer site. Matthew Sexton seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Re-TRAC Report- The township is required to file a Re-TRAC Report yearly with the state to report all waste collected at the transfer site for the year. The township reported 34.11 tons of waste collected for the year.

Meeting Dates and Time- Don Blackmond moved for meeting dates to continue to be on the 1st Tuesday of the month except for August and November due to elections. The August and November meetings will be moved to the second Tuesday of the month. Angie Sexton seconded, and all were in favor.

Road Planning 2026- The township needs to submit its preliminary road plan to the county road commission so that they may get estimates to budget for supplies for the year. Don Blackmond moved for \$5,000 in boom mowing, two applications of dust control, access for township residents to purchase sodium chloride for dust control, three thousand tons of contract gravel and six miles of trap seal coat and fog seal. All were in favor of submitting this request to the Van Buren County Road Commission for 2026.

SLAUA Legal Counsel Consent- In the past SLAUA, the same legal counsel has represented Silver Creek and Keeler Township. SLAUA currently has different counsels than the townships but would like to be represented again by the same counsel as the townships. SLAUA needs consent from the townships to retain the same counsel. Don Blackmond moved to approve consent for Sister Lakes Area Utility Authority to use the same legal counsel as the township. Matthew Sexton seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

Poverty Exemption Application and Guidelines- The Keeler Township Assessor Anne Richmond has submitted the poverty exemption guidelines. Don Blackmond presented guidelines, instructions, and application for the property tax exemption from the State of Michigan. The minimum poverty threshold according to the state is \$15,650.00 for a single person. The amount increases by the number of people living in the household. The township is permitted by law to increase that amount by 10%, which it has done in the past. A 10% increase would bring the minimum amount to \$17,215.00 for a single-person household. The resolution

to establish the adoption of the Poverty Exemption Standards, instructions and application was read. Don Blackmond moved to adopt the Poverty Exemption Resolution with the 10% increase. Sharon Clupper seconded, and a roll call vote taken of M. Sexton- support, Clupper- support, Blackmond- support, A. Sexton- support, and Davis- support. All were in favor.

The floor opened to public comments at 7:45 pm. Rick Boze let the public know that the next road commission board meeting will be December 17, 2025. Jerry Morin thanked the road commission for their excellent job with plowing. Kenneth Clevenger was present to introduce himself. He is running for a Michigan Senate seat in the next election. Upon hearing no comments, public comments closed at 7:50 pm.

Correspondence: Supervisor Blackmond received a correspondence letter from Dan and Nancy Ryan concerning the sale of the former township property on Big Crooked Lake. Supervisor Blackmond read the letter and his response letter to Ryan's in their entirety to the public.

Motion by Don Blackmond to adjourn and seconded by Sharon Clupper. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Submitted by,

Angie Sexton, Clerk

