

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF ALPENA - BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DECEMBER 15, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.
REGULAR MINUTES**

The Charter Township of Alpena Board of Trustees met in Regular session on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Charter Township of Alpena Offices, 4385 US 23 North, Alpena, MI 49707.

Present: Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski
Clerk Michele Palevich
Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers
Trustee Cash Kroll
Trustee Russ Rhynard
Trustee Norm Poli
Trustee Steve Lappan

Absent: None

Others present: Attorney Tim Gulden

Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. The following board members were present: Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. Absent: None.

AGENDA

Moved by Trustee Russ Rhynard and supported by Trustee Steve Lappan to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of New Business 10. EGLE Grant Resolution. Voice Vote. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda included: Payment of Bills, Minutes – November 24, 2025 (Regular), department reports and the following correspondence: none. Moved by Trustee Cash Kroll and supported by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to approve payment of the bills, to approve minutes and to receive and file department reports and correspondence as presented. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

MAPLE RIDGE TOWNSHIP – FIRE SERVICE AGREEMENT

Chief Tim Baker updated the Township Board that he had given Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski cost of service documents for review. Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski advised that she and the Chief would schedule a meeting with a representative of Maple Ridge Township and have an agreement for the January, 2026 Board of Trustees meeting.

WATER TOWER SECURITY

Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski updated the Township Board that she was working with AT&T to test a camera and the internet at the water tower but was having issues. Clerk Michele Palevich and Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers suggested also contacting Spectrum Charter, T-Mobile and Verizon to have additional options readily available if AT&T was not a workable solution.

COUNTY TREASURER OWNED PARCELS WITH UNPAID SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

In response to a letter dated November 20, 2025 from the Alpena County Administrator Jesse Osmer regarding parcels owned by the County Treasurer with unpaid special assessments, two entities presented options on what they could offer in terms of obtaining the properties. Lenny Avery, Executive Director of Target Alpena, informed the Township Board that Target Alpena is available to help the Township with grants, corridor improvement plans and economic development. Max Lindsey and Katie Wolf from Habitat for Humanity informed the Township Board of their objective and goals. Both organizations, with a letter from Jesse Osmer, Administrator for the County of Alpena, requested that the Charter Township of Alpena waive any money owed to them to make it financially feasible to develop (7) parcels of land in the Township that are owned by the County Treasurer and have the parcels back on the tax roll. Moved by Trustee Russ Rhynard and supported by Clerk Michele Palevich that the Charter Township of Alpena waive all unpaid special assessments owing for the following-described parcels of real property: 018-250-000-039-00, 018-250-000-037-00, 018-250-000-033-00, 018-250-000-015-02, 018-250-000-001-08, 018-045-000-420-00 and 018-045-000-362-00. Roll Call vote. AYES: Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 160 (Sanitary Sewer and Water Ordinance Amendment)

Attorney Tim Gulden presented the Township Board with Ordinance No. 160. Sanitary Sewer and Water Ordinance Amendment, to provide either monthly or quarterly water readings and to implement either monthly or quarterly water and sewage billings. Moved by Clerk Michele Palevich and supported by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to approve the introduction of Ordinance No. 160, Sanitary Sewer and Water Ordinance Amendment, as presented. Roll Call vote. AYES: Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

The Township Board also discussed the recommendation of Angela Bevan, Billing Specialist with F & V Operations, of consolidating irrigation bills with the customer's main water bill. No action was taken on consolidating bills.

FIRE DEPARTMENT – MILWAUKEE TOOL QUOTES

Chief Tim Baker presented the Township Board with quotes for Milwaukee battery-powered tools and recommended a hybrid purchase plan from Fitzpatrick Hardware and Home Depot. Moved by Trustee Steve Lappan and supported by Trustee Russ Rhynard to approve the total purchase of \$2,321.99 from Fitzpatrick Hardware (\$1,424.00) and Home Depot (\$897.00) for Milwaukee battery-powered tool as presented to be paid from GL #205-336-974.000, Equipment. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

2026 RESOLUTION FOR POVERTY EXEMPTION

The Township Board was presented with the 2026 Resolution for Poverty Exemption that was recommended by Assessor Allan Berg. Moved by Trustee Russ Rhynard and supported by Trustee Steve Lappan to approve the 2026 Poverty Guideline Resolution as presented. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

COMPENSATION COMMISSION RESOLUTIONS

Attorney Tim Gulden presented and read the Compensation Commission's Resolutions to Determine Salary for Charter Township of Alpena Elected Officials Pursuant to Michigan Public Act 359 of 1947. Burt Francisco, Chair for the Compensation Commission, informed the Township Board of the commissions process and research that was done to determine the salary for each position. The recommendation of the Compensation Commission for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2026 is a 3% increase for the Clerk, Treasurer and Supervisor and for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2027, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation calculator shall be used to calculate the increase in inflation, if any, between January 2025 and January 2026 with the salaries adjusted accordingly. The commission did not determine a salary for the Township Trustees because they receive monthly and per meeting per diem payments, rather than a salary, and those per diem payments should be determined by the Township Board of Trustees. Attorney Tim Gulden advised the Township Board that unless a recommendation is rejected by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Trustees, salary recommendations will be effective for the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years. Moved by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to reject the recommendation for the Supervisor's salary, no support, the motion died.

PLANNING COMMISSION CONSULTANT

Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski informed the Township Board that Rick Deuell, planning consultant, was closing his office and recommended Denise Kline from NEMCOG as planning consultant. Moved by Trustee Russ Rhynard and supported by Trustee Norm Poli to hire Denise Cline from NEMCOG as planning consultant for the Planning Commission. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

ALPENA COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION PEBBLE/MEMORY LANE INVOICE

Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski presented the Township Board with an invoice from Alpena County Road Commission for work done at Pebble/Memory Lane. Moved by Trustee Cash Kroll and supported by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to approve the payment to Alpena County Road Commission in the amount of \$4,542.64, which is the Township's half of the cost, to be paid from GL #101-446-820.000, Highway Streets & Bridges. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

F & V OPERATIONS INVOICE – MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE OVERAGE

Nathan Lytle, Operator in Charge from F & V Operations, presented the Township Board with an invoice for the overage of the maintenance allowance from September, 2024 through August, 2025. Moved by Clerk Michele Palevich and supported by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to approve payment to F & V Operations in the amount of \$5,525.01 to be paid from GL #592-537-801.000, Professional & Contractual Service. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD OF REVIEW AND PLANNING COMMISSION RESIGNATIONS

The Township Board was presented with a letter from Kathleen Muszynski to resign from the Board of Review effective December 9, 2025. Moved by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers and supported by Trustee Steve Lappan to accept the resignation of Kathleen Muszynski as presented. Voice Vote. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

The Township Board was presented with an email from Roxann Brown to resign from the Planning Commission effective December 10, 2025. Moved by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers and supported by Clerk Michele Palevich to accept the resignation of Roxann Brown as presented. Voice Vote. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESIGNATION

Moved by Clerk Michele Palevich and supported by Steve Lappan to accept the emailed resignation of Lt. Chris Stephens effective December 10, 2025. Voice Vote. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

FIRE DEPARTMENT 2026 VOLUNTEER FIRE CAPACITY PROJECT AGREEMENT

Chief Tim Baker advised the Board that the Township was awarded the 2026 Volunteer Fire Capacity Project Grant through the DNR. This is a match grant up to \$5,000.00 that would help purchase wildland fire gear. Moved by Trustee Steve Lappan and supported by Clerk Michele Palevich to approve the 2025 Volunteer Fire Capacity Project Agreement as presented. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

FIRE DEPARTMENT – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Fire Chief Tim Baker presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from IAFF Local 1859 to change the process for filling full time shifts due to current open shifts and recommended approval of the MOU. Moved by Trustee Steve Lappan and supported by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to approve the Memorandum of Understanding from IAFF Local 1859 as presented. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

EGLE GRANT RESOLUTION

Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski informed the Township Board that a resolution was required to submit a grant application to the Water Resources Division in the amount of \$25,000.00 for a Zoning Ordinance update and Wetland Inventory to commit that the Township will match if the project is funded. Attorney Tim Gulden read the resolution. Moved by Clerk Michele Palevich and supported by Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers to approve the EGLE grant resolution as presented. Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers, Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Beverly Banks commented on the fire department, wages/salaries, statutory duties, job descriptions, education and policies.

CLOSED SESSION – WATER & SEWER LITIGATION

Attorney/Client Privilege – Water Litigation

Moved by Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski and supported by Trustee Steve Lappan that we enter into closed session under MCL 15.268(e) to discuss settlement strategy with Township Counsel in City of Alpena v Charter Township of Alpena, case number 24-002721-CK because doing so in an open meeting would have a detrimental financial effect on the Township's litigating and settlement positions to consult with the Township attorney regarding trial strategy in the water and sewer rate litigation pending before Alpena County Circuit Court pursuant to MCL 15.268(1)(e). Roll call vote was taken. AYES: Trustee Cash Kroll, Trustee Russ Rhynard, Trustee Norm Poli, Trustee Steve Lappan, Clerk Michele Palevich, Treasurer Laura Ellery-Somers and Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski. NAYES: None. Absent: None. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board entered closed session at 8:12 p.m.

The Board exited closed session at 8:35 p.m.

DISCUSSION

Trustee Norm Poli inquired about insurance for the recycle bins and if there was an agreement or contract with NMMMA.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Steve Lappan and supported by Trustee Russ Rhynard to adjourn. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Clerk Michele P. Palevich

Supervisor Abbi Kaszubowski