Gladwin County Board of Commissioners
Board Minutes, September 16, 2025
Mike Visnaw, District 1 Vice-Chairperson (Sherman, Butman, Clement, Secord)
Alan Donaldson, District 2 (Sage, Gladwin, and Gladwin City N. of M-61)
Tami O'Donnell District 3 (Bentley, Billings, Bourret, Grim, Hay)
Karen Moore, District 4, Chairperson (Tobacco, Buckeye, Beaverton City)
Tom Winarski, District 5 (Grout, Beaverton, Gladwin City S. of M-61)

The Gladwin County Board of Commissioners met for a regular Board Meeting on September 16, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Karen Moore. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll call found all Board members present.

Public Comment – Regarding agenda items.

Jerry Canze, Pratt Lake Board President. Commenting on agenda item 13d. Discussed the failure to get a Lake Level Board and his disappointment.

Leo, Pratt Lake. 11-year-old resident that enjoys his time on Pratt Lake. He stated how he can no longer jump off the dock because of the lack of water level and that he can't enjoy tubing as much with the amount of muck on the lake bottom. He asked the Board to reconsider their vote on reinstating the Lake Level Board.

Stacy Younkin, Pratt Lake resident. The residents are asking for a solution. They gathered the signatures needed to reestablish the Pratt Lake – Lake Level Board and were denied. Feels that the Advisory Board will leave them with no formal voice. Asked the Board to reconsider their vote to reestablish the Lake Level Board.

Brian Kusch, Pratt Lake resident. Lifelong Gladwin County resident. He stated that 88% of the lake property owners signed the petition and they were told that if they got 2/3 of the property owners to sign that was all they needed to have the Pratt Lake-Lake Level Board reestablished. Asked the Board for reconsideration of the Lake Level Board.

Vice President of Pratt Lake Association (No name stated). Asked that the Board reopen and vote on reinstating the Pratt Lake-Lake Level Board. Believes that time is not on the lake resident's side.

Merlin Bush, Pratt Lake resident. Asked the Board to consider the economic impacts that will happen if there is no lake.

Susanne, Pratt Lake resident. Offered to take the Commissioners out on her pontoon to show them the impact of the low water levels.

Jim, Pratt Lake resident. Stated that he bought his property in 2014 with the hopes of retiring on the lake. He asked the Board to reconsider their vote.

Roni Hall, Pratt Lake resident. Her property is next to the public beach. There are significantly less people at the beach and those who are there are sinking in the muck. The lake isn't just for those

who live on the lake but for everyone who likes to come there to fish and boat from all over the State of Michigan.

Ray Ford, Pratt Lake resident. Owns property and really wants to work with the County to find a resolution to the low water levels. He asked for the Board to reconsider their vote.

Tom, Pratt Lake resident. We did everything you asked us. These properties are our livelihood. We love our community, and we feel like you are shutting the door on us.

Bob K., Pratt Lake resident. He's been on the lake for 40 years. A voice without a vote does no good. We want a vote for Pratt Lake.

Christian Bush, Pratt Lake resident. Has been coming up to the lake for 55 years. Never seen the lake level this low. It's so low that without the channel it would technically be two lakes with the sandbar. They bought property and were set to build and add to the community. They decided to put off building due to the water levels; they aren't going to invest in a mud puddle. Asked the Board to reconsider their vote.

Robin, Pratt Lake resident. The current situation allows for water to divert from the lake when the water levels are too high, but we have no way of getting water in the lake. An elected official pulled the structure. We are only asking for our own Board; we want some control over our own future. Asked the Board to reconsider their vote.

John Lyon, Pratt Lake resident. He has two properties on the lake; one he rents out and those people cannot put a boat in and now they can't even get a kayak out into the water. The county will lose this tight knit community. We would like our voice to be heard.

Jon Curtis, Pratt Lake resident. Grew up on Pratt Lake. Bob Evans pulled the weir due to flooding of his farmland. I don't want the lake to be this low either, but when it's high I lose 20 acres.

Megan Lutz, Pratt Lake resident. Her family has owned property since 1950's. Hoping that something is done.

Chairperson Moore asked if Jerry Canze and Brian Kusch could come up to the front and allow her to ask them some questions.

Moore – Who told you that you needed 2/3 in signatures?

Canze – No one person, advice we received from multiple people.

Moore – How do you think it will be different if you had a Lake Level Board rather than the Advisory Board?

Canze/Kusch – We have ideas and no method to discuss those ideas with the Drain Commissioner. We want a board so we can have meetings with all parties. When we give information to the Drain Commissioner, it goes nowhere.

Moore – It's very expensive to have the authority, have you discussed the financial impacts this would have on the Board and the residents?

Canze/Kusch – We have had those discussions.

City Administrator's Report

Kim Hines, Gladwin City Interim Administrator-The Hazardous Waste Day invoice has been received, the total was $37,000 for the city to hold this event. May ask for more money from the Townships in the future. Discussion.

The EV Super Chargers are up and running at City Hall now. Currently you can only use it through the app.

Consent Agenda – The Board reviewed the consent agenda. Agenda item 13b and 14b are removed from today's agenda. Motion by Commissioner O'Donnell, supported by Commissioner Visnaw, to approve the agendas with the corrections. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Approval of the Board Minutes:

A. August 26, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

Department Head Report

A. Christopher Haupt, Spongy Moth update. Numbers have been way down since 2022. It's important to keep up on any issues. He wants to be preventative instead of responsive. Discussion.

B. Equalization. Pete Preston could not make the meeting but submitted the Winter L-4029 2025 Tax Rate Request to be signed. Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner O'Donnell to allow County Clerk Constance Thurlow-White and Chairperson Karen Moore to sign the L-4029. Ayes carried, motion passed.

C. Michael Hargrave, Airport. Thunder on the Strip had a great turnout and no accidents. The weather station final contract has been submitted. This will allow for construction to begin. Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner Donaldson to allow Chairperson Moore to sign the Airport Contract with MDOT. Roll call taken. Ayes: Donaldson, Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

D. Robert North, Emergency Manager. Presented the opportunity to purchase high visibility vest, radios and other emergency equipment that will be fully reimbursable under Citizen Corps designated funds. Motion by Commissioner O'Donnell, supported by Commissioner Donaldson, to allow the use of the county credit card to make purchases at a total of $8,000 that will be fully reimbursed. Discussion. Roll call taken. Ayes: Visnaw, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski, Donaldson. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Finance Reports/Claims and Accounts General Fund

A. Request for approval of FY 25/26 Budget. Motion by Commissioner O'Donnell, supported by Commissioner Donaldson to approve the FY 25/26 Budget as presented. Roll call taken. Ayes: Donaldson, Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.
B. Request for approval to hold the FY 24/25 financials open until December 1, 2025. Motion by Commissioner O'Donnell, supported by Commissioner Donaldson to approve to hold open the FY 24/25 Financials until December 1, 2025. Ayes carried, motion passed.
C. Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner Donaldson to allow Accounts Payable to pay all FY 24/25 Finances through the end of the fiscal year. Ayes carried, motion passed.
D. Data Committee – County computers need to upgrade to Windows 11. Motion by Commissioner Visnaw, supported by Commissioner O'Donnell to allow the purchase of computers for Windows 11 upgrade at a cost of $10,047.40 from line 101-258-815.005. Roll call taken. Ayes: Visnaw, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski, Donaldson. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.
E. James Cuddie, Undersheriff. Requested to allow four employees to attend Discipline & Disciplinary Interviews at Kirkland College. Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner O'Donnell to allow four employees to attend the Discipline & Disciplinary Interviews at Kirkland at a cost of $445 per person, plus meals and mileage reimbursement from line 302-000-804.000. Roll call taken. Ayes: Donaldson, Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.
F. James Cuddie, Undersheriff. Requested to allow two deputies to attend Reid Interviews & Interrogation Training at Delta College. Motion by Commissioner Donaldson, supported by Commissioner Winarski to allow two deputies to attend the Reid Interviews & Interrogation Training at Delta College at a cost of $575 per person, plus meals and mileage reimbursement from line 302-000-804.000. Roll call taken. Ayes: Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Donaldson, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.
G. Steven Worpell, Court Administrator. Presented by Deputy Administrator Melanie Thume and Treasurer Christy VanTiem. Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner O'Donnell to allow for additional appropriations of up to $100,000 for Childcare Fund 292. Discussion. Roll call taken. Ayes: Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Abstain: Donaldson. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Committee Meeting Reports

A. Data 9/5/2025
B. Planning Commission 8/6/2025

Routine Payments Made Within Department's Budget, less than $500.

Payments required by Collective Bargaining Agreement

Miscellaneous

A. Parks & Rec RFP opening. Chairperson Moore recommended they be forwarded to the Parks & Rec Committee for review and recommendations. No action taken.
B. Removed from agenda.
C. Kim Hines, Professional Concepts & Designs. Presented the proposal for Regional Parks & Recreation for the Master Plan. Discussion. Motion by Commissioner Donaldson, supported by Commissioner Winarski to move forward with the Wade Trim bid for Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Ayes carried, motion passed.
D. Terry Walters, Drain Commissioner. Also, present was Lucy Zeestraten, Deputy Drain Commission and Attorney for the Drain Commission Stacey Hissong. Attorney Hissong spoke on the difference between an Advisory Board and a Lake Level Board. Discussion.

   Motion by Chairperson Moore, supported by Commissioner Donaldson, to reconsider prior decision to establish an Advisory Board. Discussion. Roll call taken. Ayes: Moore, Donaldson. Nays: Visnaw, O'Donnell, Winarski. Abstain: 0. Motion failed.

   Chairperson Moore presented Resolution 25-015 Pratt Lake – Lake Level for creation of an Advisory Board and appointment of members. Motion by Commissioner Visnaw, supported by Commissioner O'Donnell to approve Resolution 25-015 Pratt Lake-Lake Level as presented. Roll call taken. Ayes: Donaldson, Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

New Business

A. Constance Thurlow-White, County Clerk. Spoke about the County Board of Canvassers for the County Election process. Every odd year two of the board members' appointments expire and in Michigan Election Law it is to be brought to the Board of Commissioners to elect the Canvassers by ballot with the requirement of the Open Meetings Act to have the election be public. Information was provided to everyone as given by the party chairs to the Commissioners. Commissioners marked their ballots and read aloud their vote as follows:
   Democratic candidate, Linda Clark: O'Donnell, Winarski, Donaldson
   Democratic candidate, Michael Fields: Visnaw, Moore
   Republican candidate, Joseph Kulak: Visnaw, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski, Donaldson

Old Business

A. Kim Hines, Professional Concepts & Designs. Requested approval to submit the LEO Rural Readiness Grant application. Discussion. Motion by Commissioner O'Donnell, supported by Commissioner Winarski, to allow Kim Hines to submit the application for the LEO Rural

Readiness Grant. Roll call taken. Ayes: Visnaw, Donaldson, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

B. Kim Hines, Professional Concepts & Designs. Presented Resolution 25-016 CDBG Mi Neighborhood and the request to submit the application for the grant. Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner Donaldson to allow Kim Hines to apply for the CDBG Mi Neighborhood grant and to approve Resolution 25-016 authorizing the submission of the Mi Neighborhood CDBG Program homeowner rehabilitation application and designating the officials named herein to carry out all necessary actions. Roll call taken. Visnaw, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski, Donaldson. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Chairperson Comments

Chairperson Moore agrees with the statements of the other board members with regards to Pratt Lake, but she also believes in giving the people what they want. Moore would like consistent feedback from the members of the committee, as well as the Drain Commissioner. She appreciated everyone being at today's meetings. There were a lot of great comments and she appreciated the dialogue.

Board Member Comments/Report

Mike Visnaw, District 1:

- Stated that although he doesn't live on Pratt Lake, he is very interested in what is happening and wants to be kept up to date.
- Attended the Health Board meeting on 8/27.
- Attended Animal Control and Planning Commission meetings on 9/3.
- Attended Butman and Clement Township meetings on 9/10.
- Attended the Airport meeting on 9/11.
- Attended a meeting with Clare County discussing Union Contract negotiations on 9/12.
- Attended the Township Supervisor meeting on 9/15.

Alan Donaldson, District 2:

- Encouraged the members of the community to get involved with the Advisory Board for Pratt Lake or any other committee they may be interested in joining. He would also like to be kept up to date on everything happening with the Pratt Lake Advisory Board.

Tami O'Donnell, District 3:

- Wanted to express that she really does understand where the Pratt Lake residents are coming from and she believes that this committee will give them the organization that they need and if it doesn't then come back to the Board.

- Attended the Wixom Lake Association 6th Annual Dam Golf Scramble.
- Attended the Heartland Materials Management meeting. They received approval for the plan, and they are waiting for the funding from EGLE.
- Attended Billings and Bentley Township meetings.
- The Council of Local Government meeting will be on 9/29 at 6:30 p.m. at the Secord Township Hall and she encourages all local officials to attend.

Karen Moore, District 4:

- Thunder on the Strip was this past Saturday. The event had a great turnout and raised money for the local community.
- The Opioid Task Force will be meeting again. At the last meeting they requested a change of terms of the contract for the new hire which was granted. It was also requested by the Medical Examiner's office for some iPad's for use and at the time the request was denied; at the next meeting we will revisit that request.
- The City of Beaverton has an Archery Tournament coming to the Calhoun Park in 2026 that will bring in a lot of participants as well as revenue for the city and the businesses.

Tom Winarski, District 5:

- Commented on the establishment of the Pratt Lake Advisory Committee.
- Attended Union contract negotiations.

Administration Report

Board Communications

Report of Civil Attorney

Public Comments:

Linda Kutch, Trout Lake. Our goal is to restore the lake and campground. She would appreciate any help from the Board.

Shane, Sherman Township resident. Moved up here in 2010 and was introduced to Trout Lake and the campground. He started inviting family and friends up to enjoy the lake and the campgrounds. It was a great place, and he'd really like to see it restored.

Linda Hall, Pratt Lake resident. Stated that during the meeting at City Hall with Representative Hoadley that it was him that asked if they believed the Board of Commissioners were doing anything illegal, that was not brought up by any Pratt Lake resident. She said that a Commissioner stated that the Drain Commissioner is experienced but overwhelmed and that worries her and the other residents because they don't have time to wait.

Stacy Younkin, Pratt Lake resident. She will be holding everyone there accountable. She didn't appreciate Pratt Lake being compared to Wixom Lake because the two situations could not be more different.

Jim, Pratt Lake resident. There is zero accountability with the Advisory Committee. There is no mandate in that guideline for accountability. There is no hope of getting our lake back now without the Lake Level Board. This group is different from the past group; we are willing to help and we are interested in an actual solution.

Guy Bradmon, Trout Lake. There is no amount of water anywhere; the stream is just a trickle. There's not even any water in the culverts. This group wants to try and model the Pigeon River.

Leo Derosha (sp?), Pratt Lake resident. Thank you to Commissioner Donaldson. He thanked all the Commissioners for their explanation.

Brian Kusch, Pratt Lake resident. Thanked the Commissioners for their detailed reasoning of why they voted no.

Jerry Canze, Pratt Lake resident. We talked a lot about Pratt Lake and how the weather and drought have affected the lake level, but we are disappointed that there is no resolution here today. He hopes that the Commissioners choose the best people from the lake residents to sit on the committee. Canze also commented on the Community Garden; he'd like to see the people be able to get their same plot back. He spent a lot of time on his plot that's weed free and every year someone takes the plot he spent so much time on the year before.

Heidi, Trout Lake. When the DNR did the study of the use of Trout Lake, they only used the numbers of the campers and never considered the "day visitors". They never did a wildlife study or wetland study. I think it would be good to ask them to come back here so we can talk to them and ask them why.

Motion by Commissioner Winarski, supported by Commissioner Visnaw to go into closed session at 12 p.m. to discuss collective bargaining strategy, pursuant to MCL 15.268(1)(c). Roll call taken. Ayes: Visnaw, Donaldson, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner O'Donnell, supported by Commissioner Visnaw to return to open session at 12:31 p.m. Roll call taken. Ayes: Visnaw, Donaldson, O'Donnell, Moore, Winarski. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Motion by Commissioner Visnaw, supported by Commissioner Winarski to approve the contract that was discussed in closed session. Roll call taken. Ayes: Winarski, Moore, O'Donnell, Donaldson, Visnaw. Nays: 0. Ayes carried, motion passed.

Discussion on inviting the DNR to the next board meeting or special board meeting to discuss Trout Lake. The Board would also like to have Melanie reach out to Representative Hoadley to attend the meeting.

Receive & File

August 2025 Library stats

Adjournment at 12:38 p.m.

Constance Thurlow-White, County Clerk

Karen Moore, Chairperson