

Tawas Area Schools
Special Board of Education Meeting
October 24, 2025

I. Call to Order

The special meeting of the Tawas Area Schools Board of Education was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by President Ulman.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Malewska.

B. Roll Call

Present: Bruning, Edmonds, Malewska, Ulman

Absent: Jenkins, Miller

Tardy: Butzin

C. Public Comments – Information and Proposals

1. Suzi Billingham expressed her strong support for Mr. Mel Rettell, noting that her son, a goalie on the hockey team, has played under Mr. Rettell for four years. She emphasized that without his leadership, there would be no hockey program and commended his dedication and success in growing the program.

2. Marty Brummeler stated that he learned of the situation through rumors circulating at the school. He expressed concern for the student-athletes, noting the timing of the decision—just days before the season’s start—and urged the Board to prioritize the students’ interests moving forward.

3. Michele Bernard spoke on behalf of her son, a member of the hockey team, expressing that the players are concerned and wish for Mr. Rettell to remain their coach during his senior year. She urged the Board to consider the impact on the students.

4. Larry Baker voiced his support for Mr. Rettell, highlighting his commitment and countless hours dedicated to the hockey program, describing the rink as “Mel’s legacy.”

5. Theresa Indreica expressed concerns regarding the manner in which the situation was handled, characterizing it as unprofessional and inconsistent with past Board practices. She stated that the community learned of Mr. Rettell’s non-approval before he did, which she viewed as unethical. Ms. Indreica emphasized Mr. Rettell’s dedication and professionalism and encouraged transparency with the community.

6. Liz Schnettler read a statement from Mr. Matt Buresh, who endorsed Mr. Rettell both personally and in his capacity as a Board member of the Huron Hockey & Skating Association. Mr. Buresh noted Mr. Rettell’s positive impact on the program. Ms. Schnettler suggested that, if there are concerns, the Board consider implementing a probationary period with clearly defined expectations rather than removing him.

7. Kevin Jungquist shared his perspective as a high school hockey official, commending the integrity of the Tawas hockey program. He noted that the players and coaches consistently demonstrate respect, often exceeding the standards of other programs.

II. Action Items

A. Routine Matters

1. Hockey and Bowling Coach Compensation

- ☐ Motion by Ulman, supported by Butzin, to send a Letter of Understanding to the Union to adopt the Tawas hockey coach position at 80% of the base wage and both the girls' and boys' bowling coach positions at 60% of the base wage, in accordance with Appendix A. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

- ☐ Motion by Ulman, supported by Butzin, to authorize the Superintendent to appoint an interim hockey coach until the vacancy is filled. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

President Ulman thanked everyone involved in the process. Mrs. Bruning clarified that the actions taken were based on the recommendation of the district's legal counsel. President Ulman stated that the hockey coaching position will be posted as soon as possible and that all interested candidates are welcome to apply.

Mr. Butzin noted that the process has been ongoing for some time and was not delayed until the last minute. He added that the Board intends to review and improve the hiring process for future coaching positions. President Ulman concurred, emphasizing the Board's commitment to making the process more efficient and transparent.

III. Adjournment

Motion by Ulman, supported by Butzin, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:19 a.m.