

Charter Township of Portage  
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2020

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, January 13, 2020 at the Portage Township Hall.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 7:00 PM

**Pledge Allegiance:** Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bruce Petersen

In attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Clerk Amy Skewes, Treasurer Betsy Smith and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink, and John Ollila.

**Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:**

Dan Palosaari letter, Road Commission meeting

Ollila made a motion to accept the agenda with additions, seconded by Fink. All in favor

**Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes:** A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Fink to approve the Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> Monthly meeting and the Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> 2019 Final Budget work session. All in favor, motion carried by a voice vote.

**Approval of the Bills:** Anderson and Bingham had questions regarding snow plowing bills being sloppy and poorly written. They want to make sure bills are legible in the future. A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Bingham to approve the bills as audited on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none

**Review Clerk's Report:**

- Rosemary Grier, Debra Guilbault, Jessica Karvakko and myself attended Election Inspectors Training on 1/6/2020
- We need to schedule an election committee meeting (between 1/30 and 2/18) to appoint election inspectors
- Both 2019 and 2020 budgets have been updated. I will make any adjustments in the 2019 budget as soon as I receive all year ending reports and entries from the water/sewer accounts

**Review Treasurer's Report:**

- Working with Deb to allocate and funds for Rural Development. There are deficits in some accounts and we are working on setting up more "due to/due from's" to the General Fund to cover this. Smith recommended Township having a water committee meeting in the near future to discuss water/sewer rates for Portage water/sewer customers because those two accounts continue to go negative.
- Winter 2019 taxes are being collected. Disbursed much of what we have taken in for end of year book closure/to drain the tax account.
- Working with Up and Running – computer upgrades have happened. We are working with them on questions as we work within our new systems.

**Review Zoning Administrator's Report (John/Bill) for (January 2019):**

Ollila spoke to Todd LaRue regarding status on Milton Pykkonen/Carl Laitala illegal home, is now on the prosecutor's desk. Because Pykkonen's father-in-law owns the land, the father-in-law will be charged with the health department sewer violations and Milton with building code violations.

Ollila also commented on process of zoning changes – 1<sup>st</sup> the Township board votes to recommend any changes in zoning ordinance, it's then sent over to the Township Planning Commission, who by law then posts a notice of a public hearing within 15 days, the planning commission holds public hearing and their recommendation is then sent to the County Planning Commission for review, who then send it back with approval to the Portage Township Board for final adoption.

**Review Fire Departments:**

**OLFD:** Fires, 0 EMS. 2

The EMS expansion is on hold because the City of Houghton is now thinking of adding EMS service to their Fire Department.

**HTFD:** Rural Development has approved \$50,000 grant for the rescue truck, received letter for obligation of funds.

**Review Assessor's Report: None**

**Trustees Reports/Updates:** Anderson noted that 2/13/2020 is first Planning Commission date, also questioned PAAR plan, wondering if the Township has 16 vehicles

Ollila would like a copy of the ordinance violation form so he can look over and modify

**Public Comments:**

John Paul Pietela representing the 1<sup>st</sup> Apostolic Lutheran Church is requesting a re-zoning of land in Hurontown by the old Gundlach Building which is now zoned M1. He would like it re-zoned to R2.

A motion was made by Ollila, seconded by Bingham to adopt a resolution to propose changing the entire area by the Old Gundlach Building from M1 to R2. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None

**Correspondence:**

BCBS Pamphlet, Bridgefest Announcement, MRWA Workshop – Asset Management, Grace Wetton E-mail (forwarded to Roy Britz). Dan Palosaari letter asking about water service to Denton Road development.

**Old Business:**

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer & Infiltration Joint Project – Eng. Design & Bid Let Progress.  
Designs are largely completed, plans submitted to EGLE & MDOT for their review, should then have all permits needed. Easements are being worked on. Looking to advertise mid/late February with a March bid opening and in the spring of 2020 mobilization/construction should begin.

- B. ISD Collection for Summer Taxes – We charge Houghton Portage Schools \$3.00 per parcel for collection of summer taxes which has not been done in the last couple of years. (working on back billing) Smith made a motion to charge \$2.50 per parcel for collection taxes for the ISD and Baraga Schools, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- C. City of Houghton – Waste Water Treatment Contract.  
UPEA is adding an addendums into the contract. 50,000 gallons will be the new baseline ceiling for the Green Acres Road project. A 1.1% penalty will be applied to anything above baseline flows.

14. New Business:

- A. MI Rezoning on Gundlach Road – Church Purchase – Motion required to go to Township P.C. requesting their Action/Review of the proposed change.
- B. Non-Sufficient funds Check Charge for Returned Checks.  
A motion was made by Smith to charge \$45.00 for an NSF fee, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- C. We need to add a charge for Large, Digital FOIA requests

15. Meetings:


- A. December 18, 2019 Budget Work Session – Finalized 2019 Budget
- B. December 10, 2019 EGLE Meeting – Hydric Soils
- C. B.O.R. Training – Feb. 11, 2020 at Magnusson – Houghton
- D. Road Commission Meeting – January 13, 2020

17. Public Comment: None

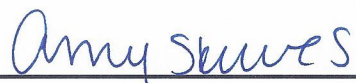
18. Adjourn: A motion was made by Skewes and seconded by Smith to adjourn at 8:20 PM. All in favor, motion carried by voice vote.

Public Attendance:

Ted Soldan - Otterlake FD  
John Paul Pietila  
Roy Britz  
Emily Shaw  
Petra Huentemeyer

X 

Bruce Petersen  
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes  
Clerk