

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

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, April 13, 2020 at 1 P.M. via Zoom meeting.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 1:00 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:

none

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Fink to approve the March 27th 2020 minutes. All in favor, motion carried by a voice vote.

Approval of the Bills: A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Fink to approve the bills as audited on April 13, 2020. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none

Review Clerk's Report:

- Election printer was found
- I have updated the 2019 budget as the board has given approval to do so. Changes are in red and circled.
- Working on billing the state for reimbursement for the March Primary

Treasurer's Report

- Working on end of year audit reports to auditor
- Working from home primarily, aside from one day/week and potentially Fridays in order to layer our use around each other
- All tax monies have been disbursed aside from those received and entered into QuickBooks from the county in tax buyout
- Transfer from general fund to Otter Lake Fire Department was made 12/31/2019 for 2019 and in March for 2020; it is completed for the year
- 425 monies have been allocated appropriately (2 mills of the 3 to GF, 1 mill split 60/40 HTFD/OLFD)
- Billed the Houghton Portage Township School District for this year and the previous 2 years which had not been billed, the money was deposited (\$21,000)

Review Zoning Administrator's Report (John/Bill) for (March 2020):

John commented that back in January 2019 he and Bill Bingham gave Bruce questions regarding rentals to Nick which were never received by Nick. John now sent them to Nick and he has questions answered, John will send all questions and answers to everyone.

Review Fire Departments:

OLFD: Fires, 0 EMS. 1 in March

Ted Soldan commented that John Stone from Stanton Township heard request for surgical masks, he drove to Tapiola and delivered some. the department is in good shape with PPE's.

Review Assessor's Report: Distributed. Attached.

Trustees Reports/Updates: Anderson commented that she went for a walk and noticed the padlock was not locked on the pump cover near Isle Royal Estates. Bruce will call Mike to get it locked. Anderson also commented that the Feb. minutes had misspellings and there was a vote recorded wrong. The misspelled word 'marihuana' is the Federal official spelling, so it is spelled correctly. Amy will research the incorrect vote.

Anderson asked that anything related to the Planning Commission be put in her box in the office.

Public Comments:

None

Correspondence:

Correspondence: EGLE – Monitoring Violation – Sample Bottle Breakage – Bruce has been emailing and calling regarding this violation, they determined that it was beyond our control and the fine will be waived. Nationwide Insurance – Retirement Plan Website, Copper Ridge Road Flush Warning – A letter was sent to the residents. Paul Lehto Support Letter - MTA

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer & Infiltration R. D. – Green Acres Rd. has a dilemma due to legal counsel. Nick Daavettila was appointed Judge and has notified Chris Holmes that he is done with legal services that he provides to any communities, he has all documents and he is at a point where they can be handed over to another person who will need to finalize the title review of the two parcels. This needs to be done before we can move forward.
A motion was made by Bingham, seconded by Anderson to have Chris Holmes and Bruce Petersen acquire a new attorney for the sewer project. Motion was carried by a roll call vote.
Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- B. City of Houghton – Waste Water Treatment Contract. Chris Holmes has the signed document and will get it to Bruce as soon as they can meet at the Township Office.
- C. Robert Olson – Six Point Improvement Plan. Bruce has sent letters to both the Houghton County Road Commission and Dan Crane and has not had a response yet.
- D. OPUS Web – New Updated/Formatted Web Page Construction.
- E. Rec. Marihuana Meeting – Spreadsheet Review. Ollila updated Smith with changes

14. New Business:

- A. Brian Miller – Short/Long term disability coverage & Life insurance. Brian Miller presented policies for Township employees for short/long term disability and life insurance. After discussion it was decided that the board would look over the policy and decide.
- B. Resolution No. 2020-2 (Temporary Emergency Measures) A motion was made by Bingham, Seconded by Ollila to accept the resolution with the changes. Motion carried by a roll call vote.
Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- C. Need to Find New Legal Counsel.

15. Meetings:

- A. Feb. 26, 2020 – Marihuana Board Meeting – Township Office
- B. Lory Burton – Insurance Liability Review by State – April 14, 2020 cancelled.
- C. Houghton Chapter MTA – Coming Up - Zoom Mtg. April 23, @ 7:00 PM est.
- D. EGLE On-line Mtg. – April 2, 2020 – Technical Problems Encountered.

17. Other Business: The board decided to change the next regular board meeting to 1:00 P.M. on May 11, 2020 via Zoom

18. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2 P.M.

Public Attendance:

Ted Soldan - Otterlake FD

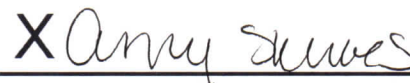
Vanessa Dietz

Chris Holmes - UPEA

Brian Miller

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Petersen", written over a horizontal line.

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Skewes", written over a horizontal line.

Amy Skewes
Clerk

March/April 2020 Assessor's Report

- March Board of Review
 - 58 petitions were heard.
 - Copies of the Board's decisions were mailed to the Petitioners and provided to the County.
 - 29 were related to appeals of assessment, 15 of these were granted/partially granted
 - 8 disabled veterans exemptions were granted (there may be 4 more to grant based on last year's exemption requests)
 - 1 poverty exemption was granted
 - 4 late personal property petitions were granted
 - 1 petition was not heard – petitioner was not owner, and did not have the owner's written permission to appeal
 - 9 petitions requesting combination of parcels, 7 were granted
 - 4 petitions were just asking a general question
 - 2 others
 - 2 items of correspondence were logged
- The required Assessment Reports have been submitted as required to the County and the State.
 - EMPP, L-4021, L-4022, L-4023, Assessor L-4037s, BOR L-4037s, L-4626
- A copy of the BOR L-4037s are attached (this report shows taxable values for the upcoming year).
- The 2020 Assessment Roll is on the table by my room. It is no ready to be officially turned over to the Township Clerk for records retention. Functionally I'd like to keep it and the Board of Review binder on the table for a 2 year period for citizen review.
- An electronic copy of the Township's Assessing Database was provided to the County.
- April is County Equalization month – the County reviews the Township's assessments / values.
- May is State Equalization month – the State reviews the County's numbers.

- Bruce asked me to track time spent; on average 34 hours per week (below is a summary of my hours)
 - 6 +/- hours per week on the phone
 - 3 +/- hours per week email responses and sending requested documents
 - 7 hours at township office (normally); on days I was able to be there, twice during February and March I was there for 10 hours. 5 +/- hours processing paperwork not handled on Monday
 - 4 +/- hours per week field prep
 - 10 hours per week field visits
 - 5 +/- hours field work follow up
 - During March I spent 30 hours on Board of Review, and 10 hours on year end reports (no field work)
- For the duration of the COVID-19 I will continue to work from my remote office. 906-358-0504. I have noted this on my (Township) voice mail message.
- For the duration of the COVID-19 the County Register of Deeds has volunteered to mail copies of all new deeds to me at my remote office.
- March and April are 'slow months' for field inspections. March concentrates on Board of Review, and April is too wet to visit properties (out of respect to property owners, I stay off their driveways/roads so as not to make a mess).
- This year for my "20%" I will be concentrating on properties located in platted areas and all properties along Green Acres and Superior Roads.