

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

March 15, 2022

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2022. The board of trustees attended in person at the Township office and the public logged in via zoom.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 6:00 PM.

In attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Treasurer Betsy Smith and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink and John Ollila as stated by roll call. Absent: Clerk Amy Skewes.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

New Business – OPUS Web quote and Adam's water rate increases.

A motion was made by Bingham, seconded by Ollila to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Anderson to approve the February 23, 2022 regular meeting minutes. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bills:

Anderson commented on the plowing bills in Tapiola and would like to discuss something different for next year.

A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Fink to approve the bills as audited. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

Review Clerk's Report:

- Received questions from residents as to why we do not put the "draft" minutes on the website. After discussion it was decided that we would continue to only put a draft copy of minutes in the Township office for review until minutes are approved at the monthly meeting.
- Seaplane FOIA has been submitted
- Working on Audit

Review Treasurer's Report:

- Met with the accountant
- Working towards audit prep

Review Zoning Administrators' Report (John) for (Feb. 2022)

Permits:

2/15 – house & guest house, corner of Denton & Fairview, approved, fire # to be determined, 2/23 –

46751 Paradise Rd., yurt, approved

Zoning Correspondence:

2/1 – inquiry about former Hillside Restaurant becoming a dwelling, 2/1 – prospective buyer of house on Peepsock, 2/7 – another inquiry about former Hillside converted to dwelling, 2/14 – setbacks for house & guest house on corner of Denton & Fairview, 2/22 – inquiry if township inspection is required for resale of house, 2/2 – question about yurts being permitted in RUR.

Correspondence:

Michigan Rural Water Assoc. – Confined Space Entry & Annual Conference, EGLE – Drinking Water Monitoring Schedule for 2022 - E-Mailed to Mike and Copy Placed in His Box.

Review Fire Departments:

OLFD: 1 EMS, 0 fire

Ted commented that the old pumper is being re-fitted, and stated that Mark Little is doing a great job plowing. Ted reported that the February plowing bill was so high because of the excessive snowfall and the large area being plowed.

HTFD: Houghton DNR Fire Dept. Assistance Project. – No one present yet.

Review Assessor's Report: No Report

Trustees Reports/Updates: Fink spoke with Elizabeth from the County regarding the church property, the church has asked for a year grace period before they begin building.

Bingham commented that the revised revenue sharing was released and based 2021 census and the Township is going to receive about \$14,000 less.

Public Comments: A resident asked if there were any seaplane related zoning applications. Fink responded that there were none on the zoning report.

Someone asked if we had heard from the County, Ollila replied that we had not.

The board will take applications until the end of March for the planning commission vacancy.

Chat messages from other members of the public are included as attachments.

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – Pre-Construction Site Showing. Will Start later in Sprg. 2022 to allow the area to dry out.

A motion was made by Bingham to approve the third draw on the USDA grant in the amount of \$21,037.80, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

- B. PHF – Pickle Ball – Rec. Grant Application Submitted for Grant Funding.

- C. B.O.R. Vacancy - Mike Bach has formally applied. A motion was made by Ollila to approve the appointment of Mike Bach to the Board of Review, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

A motion was made by Ollila to raise the hourly rate of the Board of Review to \$30.00 per hour retroactive to 3/14/2022, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

- D. Assessor Computer Repair/Replacement Update – Up and Running Quote. Ollila made a motion to repair the laptop because the personnel committee still has not had a meeting with the Marquette attorney to review assessor job description, benefits, etc, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.
- E. Rukkila/Negro Commitment Letter sent back for 2021 Year Audit.
- F. OPUS web quote – A motion was made by Smith to upgrade the township website to include announcements (news and events) for \$300.00 (this is a one time fee), seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.

New Business:

- A. P.C. Vacancy - Announcement on the Web-Page with new application. (Thank you note for Dave Rulison for his service) Ollila commented that while doing zoning inspections he has met many people in the Township that might be a good fit for this position. The township will accept applications until 3/31/2022.
- B. Portage Lake District Library – Sylvia Matthews would like to continue. Bruce will inform her the board is happy to have her continue.
- C. Another break in 1938 waterline from Adams Twp. – Work together with Adams Twp. to pursue a EGLE Grant to replace or hook into Hancock Line.
- D. Another “Open The Books” FOIA – Wages & Pay Rates for Staff & Officials.
- E. Opt out of the “Hard Cap” Limits for Medical Benefit Plans. A motion was made by Bingham to opt out of the 20% copay for medical insurance for the 2022 year, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Smith. Nay: none.
- F. Jeremy Shannon – MTU Geoscience Instructor – Closed Landfill Site, class project using ground penetrating radar.
- G. Houghton County Road Commission – ARPA Funds Sharing – Road Repair. If the Township decides to use some of their ARPA money, the county may match for road repairs. Chris Holmes will ask if we can use road millage money or only ARPA money. Township will have a meeting to discuss roads on March 28, 2022 at 3 PM
- H. Adam’s Township water increase. They have notified us of a water rate increase of .10 per 1000 gallons of water effective with the April usage.

Meetings:

- A. March 2, 2022 – Amy Schultz Attorney – P.C. Administrative Review.
- B. March 9, 2022 -Julie Riolo & Scott McGinness – Cemetery Improvements.

C. March 8,14 & 17, 2022 – Organizational & (2) Public Meetings @ Doelle.

Public Comment: A resident asked about board discussion on an open mic after our last meeting regarding finding out who owns some property near the seaplane site and if anything came about regarding this. Supervisor responded that no one looked into the matter. Another resident voiced her concerns regarding how our Township picks and chooses people to be on boards and commissions, and said she felt discouraged from applying.

Other Business: The meeting went into closed session at 8:00.

The meeting returned to open session at 8:28.

Hurontown Fire department now present, they were absent due to a fire call. Looking into a grant for a new tanker, Bingham commented that they have a large savings and bank account which should cover the cost. Bruce recommended that the fire department meet with rural development to get guidance. Lengthily discussion with HTFD about grant funding to obtain new tanker truck, options include help from Supervisor, UPEA and private grant writers.

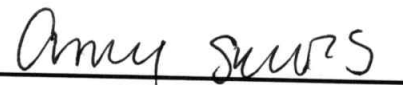
Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Public Attendance:

Brandon Scholie
Carol Sowards
Jon Rector
Chris Holmes - UPEA
Ted Soldan
R Sowards
Amy Skewes
Ted Soldan
Chris Holmes - UPEA
Susan Schwenk
David Aittama
Glenn

X 

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes
Clerk

From Me to Everyone 06:24 PM

I have muted everyone and people can open microphones during public comment

From carol sowards to Everyone 06:29 PM

I was a bit confused with the zoning report. Can John clarify if any of those issues related to the seaplane issue?

Me to Brandon Scholie (Direct Message) 06:29 PM
are you there?

Me to Ted Soldan (Direct Message) 06:30 PM

Thanks for your backup tech support!

From carol sowards to Everyone 06:34 PM

Also has the PC heard back from Houghton County regarding the letter they sent regarding proposed seaplane?

From Ted Soldan to Me (Direct Message) 06:39 PM
comment