

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

April 11, 2022

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, April 11, 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, Clerk Amy Skewes, Treasurer Betsy Smith and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink and John Ollila as stated by roll call.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

Will go into closed session at end of meeting.

Old Business – change agenda item to read “4th Draw”.

Meetings 4/11/22 Houghton County Rec. Authority at 1:30

4/7/22 Planning Commission Meeting

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

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Anderson to approve the March 15, 2022 regular meeting minutes and the March 28, 2022 special meeting minutes. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bills:

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

Review Clerk's Report:

- Election committee meeting on 4/6/2022
Skewes made a motion to increase the AV Counting Board pay to \$16.00 per hour and pay for any additional training other than the County wide training at the rate of \$20.00 per hour, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.
- Working on Audit
- Will be on vacation from 4/19 – 5/1/2022
- New Deputy Clerk – Esther Voght

Review Treasurer's Report:

- Working with our accountant on questions for audit

- Preparing for audit meeting starting 4/13/22

One of our CD accounts at Range Bank matured and was transferred into a new account.

Review Zoning Administrator's Report (John) for (March 2022)

Permits:

No Zoning Applications were submitted in March

Zoning Correspondence:

3/2 – question about zoning of former Hillside Restaurant site, 3/22 – inquiry about whether a lot on the SW end of Caribou in Hurontown is suitable for building a duplex, 3/24 – inquiry about the zoning of a parcel on south U.S. 41.

3/28 – seeking opinion of a fair price for lots S of Caribou in Hurontown.

3/29 – inquiry about setbacks for home addition in Woodland.

Correspondence:

Correspondence: Dave Rulison – Thank You Letter, MRWA – Construction Work Week & Wastewater Treatment, Brian Irizarry – Hurontown Rec. Area Playground Equipment, PAR Plan News, Brian Hutzler (CCSA) – Field Scheduling.

Review Fire Departments:

OLFD: No Report

HTFD: (Hurontown Grant Application) The Fire Department would like to go forward with the purchase of a 2024 Freightliner Pumper truck in the amount of \$218,600. They would like to put a deposit of \$50,000 down, pay another \$50,000 next year when the truck is ready for pick up and have the Township loan them the remaining \$118,600 with a repayment schedule of \$15,000 per year over 8 years. A motion was made by Bingham to approve this plan, which can be modified as needed when we see how the Fire Department funds look, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

Review Assessor's Report: Attached

Trustees Reports/Updates: Bingham asked Bruce to get a letter to the company that re-calibrates meters.

Public Comments: Brian Irizarry read a letter to the board regarding the shared use of the Township soccer fields in Hurontown between his group and CCSA. Fink said both organizations were instructed to work together to figure out their scheduling conflicts. Brian said he will keep the board informed on progress.

A resident asked if the zoning map in the Township office is current and official. Ollila replied that it is but there are more details on the parcel number-based map housed at WUPPDR.

A resident asked if there have been any requests to alter the boundaries in the residential R-3/B-2 area. Ollila replied no.

A resident asked if there would be a public hearing before there are any changes in the zoning. Ollila replied yes.

A resident asked if there were any requests made to the Planning Commission to change the zoning at Pilgrim Point to include seaplanes. Fink replied that no it was not requested at Pilgrim Point, it was for the Onagaming Property.

Old Business:

A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – 4th Draw – Shop Drawings

A motion was made by Bingham to approve the 4th draw on the USDA grant in the amount of \$12,005.81, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

Chris Holmes asked if the Township is planning on paving the east side of Green Acres Road since it will be under construction and offered to get a quote. The board said they have intention of paving the whole thing.

- B. Houghton County Road Commission – ARPA Funds Sharing – Road Repair (Note ARPA Funds now at \$306,033.00.)
- C. Centerline Ditch through Hurontown – Permitted – Contact Eric Danielson.
- D. Lift Station Roofs – Chassell Carpentry Has Ordered Materials. Will begin as soon as the weather allows.

New Business:

- A. P.C. Vacancy - Announcement on the Web-Page with New Application. (2) Applications – Petersen will recommend Will Cronin from the MSU Extension Service for the Position.

A motion was made by Fink to appoint Will Cronin to the Planning Commission, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

Ollila advised Bruce to keep other applications on file for future vacancies.

- B. True North Law – FOIA Update – Version 2 - Costs Sent. No response back yet.
- C. MTM Contracting – (2) New Circuits & Receptacles.

Bruce submitted a permit.

A motion was made by Bingham to accept the quote in the amount of \$575.00 to replace the circuits and receptacles, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- D. MDOT Annual Performance Resolution.

A motion was made by Fink to sign the resolution for MDOT, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- E. Vandalism at Dodgeville Restrooms – One Broken Window. Skewes suggested getting security cameras for the rink.

Meetings:

- A. B.O.R. March 14, 17, (Doelle Center & 22, 28, & 31 2022 at the Twp. Office to Finalize (36) Petitions.
- B. ARPA Funds – Houghton Co. Road Commission – March 28, 2022.
- C. Personnel Comm. – Review Personnel Manual – April 5, 2022.
- D. Cemetery Comm. – Review Possible Facility Updates – April 6, 2022.
- E. Planning Commission – April 7, 2022.
- F. Houghton County Rec. Authority April 11, 2022.

Public Comment: Fink asked Roy Britz for an update on the Church Property. Britz stated that the church is keeping the property for 1-3 years so as of now the County has no plans to purchase.

Other Business:

The meeting went into closed session at 7:42 PM

The meeting returned to open session at 7:57

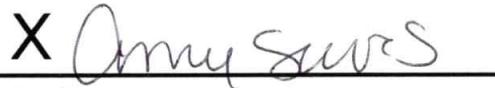
Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Public Attendance:

Brandon Scholie
Carol Sowards
Roy Britz
Chris Holmes - UPEA
Brian Irizarry
R Sowards
Susan Schwenk
David Aittama
Will Cronin
Clayton Adams

X 

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes
Clerk

April Assessor's Report

2022

March Board of Review

Veteran's Exemptions (we had 11 exemptions last year)	14 SEV/TV \$1,388,061/\$1,032,273 although there are bills pending / proposed to reimburse the Municipalities, there is nothing in place at this time. 3 not filed yet SEV/TV \$165,885/\$97,307
Poverty Exemption	1 SEV/TV \$31,988/\$24,849
Assessment Appeals	16 7 of which were granted or partially granted
Late Tax-Exempt Status requests	2 (1 granted)
Late Personal Property	3 (granted)
Late requests to combine / split	4 total requests, involving 11 parcels
Late PTAs – reverse uncap requests	3
	total 40

SEV = State Equalized Value, aka Assessed Value

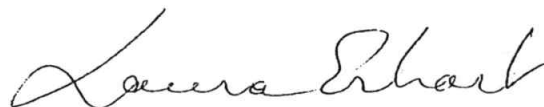
TV = Taxable Value

The Township's Change in Values

	2021	2022
Assessed Value	\$166,923,002	\$172,862,015
Taxable Value	\$114,187,785	\$123,008,929

- It is important to bear in mind that an increase in revenue cannot be calculated by simply subtracting last year's taxable value from this year's value. On June 1st the 2022 Millage Reduction Fraction (MRF) Formula as required by MCL 211.34d will be given to us by the County. The MRF is multiplied against the Township's millages. The multiplier is never greater than a 1.0000; in other words the MRF can only have the impact of holding the millage values as they were last year, or reducing the millages. The MRF is applied to the millages on the L-4029.
- April is County Equalization Month. Once the County has equalized for the 2022 year, I will be able to create the next year's (2022's) database.

Up & Running installed the upgrade to the Assessing Laptop, it is running much better! *thank you*



Good evening Charter Township of Portage Board of Trustees,

My name is Brian Irizarry and I am president of Houghton FC, a 501(c)3 non-profit youth soccer organization serving many families in Portage Township and beyond.

Houghton FC's board of directors voted unanimously to merge with CCSA in order to streamline the local youth soccer scene. CCSA initially rejected the offer, but as of last week, has expressed interest in a possible merger. I put together a slide deck as a way to communicate how the two clubs could better serve the community by working together, accomplishing more together than either club could accomplish individually. I am optimistic on the outcome of these discussions, I will keep you informed of any developments.

In the meantime, Houghton FC and CCSA are working on de-conflicting our schedules and our use of Hurontown soccer field for the U15-U18 age groups.

I would like to present three points on this particular age group, which supports Houghton FC's first choice to the field in the event of an unavoidable schedule conflict:

1. According to current schedules shared by Houghton FC and CCSA for the U15-U18 age groups, Houghton FC plans to run three seasons that are each 8 weeks long; while CCSA plans to run one season that is 6 weeks long. What's more, Houghton FC teams practice twice a week while CCSA teams practice 1 to zero times per week.

1. According to last year's U15-U18 player registration numbers for the summer season, Houghton FC had around 100 players while CCSA had zero players because they did not have a season for this age group at any point during the year.

1. CCSA removed their goals for the U15-U18 age groups and brought them to Hancock where they sit today. CCSA left Hurontown Soccer Field and moved to Hancock. Meanwhile, Houghton FC bought two pairs of goals and added them to Hurontown's Soccer Field. Hurontown Soccer field is home to Houghton FC's U10 and U12 game fields. With regards to field maintenance, Houghton FC is dedicated to raising \$20,000 over the next five years and (with the Township's permission) spending it on professional contractors to re-grade and seed the Hurontown Soccer Field so that it matches the quality of our showcase field along Main St.

Despite all of these reasons for having first choice to field scheduling, Houghton FC has still managed to draft a field schedule that accommodates CCSA's request for Wednesday evenings. This avoids any schedule conflicts during the weekdays and hopefully creates an opportunity for the two clubs to play together on that day.

The only unavoidable schedule conflict that remains is a two-hour window on Saturday morning, when both clubs would like to play games on that field. Houghton FC would respectfully suggest that CCSA be given the softball field while Houghton FC be given the soccer field. The softball field can be used for the U15-U18 age groups, Houghton FC used the softball field for those age groups last year and it was fine. CCSA's president told me that they are able to meet in a few weeks to discuss scheduling, so I hope that we can resolve this Saturday morning schedule conflict at that time.

If the two parties are unable to reach an agreement, I would ask that Houghton FC receive its first choice of field use.