

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

March 11, 2024

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, March 11, 2024.

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:

Old Business – WUPPDR resolution

New Business – Resignation letter

Meetings – Approve Rec hearing minutes

A motion was made by Ollila, seconded by Anderson 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 February 12, 2024 regular meeting minutes and the February 12, 2024 Rec Hearing minutes. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bills:

Anderson commented that staff can not purchase items on personal credit cards and ask for reimbursement.

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:

- Working on end of year stuff/adjustments
- Presidential Primary election was on February 27, 2024. There were 601 voters.

Review Treasurer's Report:

- Working on year-end balancing/reconciliations
- Property Tax Tax collection for past due 2023 property taxes is now at the county. Working on final year end disbursements.
- Marijuana Revenue Sharing: \$59K rec'd end of February (coded as income)
- Regular Revenue Sharing: rec'd end of February
- Treasurer out of office/town: 4/26-4/30

- Fire department grant: worked w/Jason Mittlestat & Anders Kallungi to secure a MI Fire Equipment Grant, approval received 3/6/24
- Soccer Field Property for sale – Township Recreation opportunity? Our only rec buildings are the Dodgeville Ice Rink/ Tapiola Pavilion and non-used space in the fire hall (Tapiola); With/ changing demographics and increasing tax base, wouldn't a public recreation center of some sort (very basic) with indoor options help further the mental health and wellness of our community/offer a drug free place to recreate?
- Township Floor Repair Timelines? Can we get this into the DPW queue b/c the floor in this old, dirty

Review Zoning Administrator's Report for (February 2024)

ZONING APPLICATIONS:

2/1 – New pole barn for Little Brothers, Haarala Road, Approved.

INQUIRIES & COMPLAINTS:

2/5 – Discussed possible uses for Bissonette site, 2/6 – Inquiry whether a motel is permitted in the MU District. 2/6 – Is a permit needed to tear down an old house?, 2/8 – Discussion with duplex site owner about the incursion of a new access road into the detention area, 2/12 – Minimum lot size required for septic in the township, 2/14 – Inquiry about options for building on the corner lot of Frederick and Main in Hurontown, 2/21 – Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms review of zoning for Laux business on Denton Road, 2/28 – Complaint about extra splits being permitted west of Fairway View Drive in Pilgrim Hills.

OTHER ZONING ACTIVITIES:

Prep for March PC meeting. Phone calls with MTA to review procedure to correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization errors in the ZO.

Correspondence: City of Houghton – Gaffney Road Repair Cost-Share Letter, City of Houghton Draft of Master Plan, MRWA – Annual Business Meeting – March 20, 2024, Dept. of Licensing & Reg. Affairs – Higher Love License, Miller Canfield – Corporate Transparency Act (CTA), SEMCO Energy – Preparedness for Upcoming Construction Projects.

Review Fire Departments: OLF 2 fire, 2EMS

Review Assessor's Report: No Report

Trustees Reports/Updates:

Ollila proposes the board schedule a special meeting regarding a Township Manager and possible personnel manual updates. Meeting scheduled at 2:30 on March 18, 2024

Bingham commented that the water/sewer readings are way off, three times as much sewage as water billing.

Public Comments: none

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – What Has been Completed This Fall & If There is Start-Up & Hurontown Center Ditch? Sewer Project on hold due to road restrictions and possibility of new snow.
- B. Russell Stein Proposed new P.C. Member – Has Engineering and Business Background. A motion was made by Petersen to appoint Russell Stein to the Planning Commission, seconded by Ollila. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- C. New 5 Year Recreation Plan (2023 to 2027) Resolution Signed. A motion was made by Bingham to approve and sign the 5-year resolution, seconded by Fink. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- D. WUPPDR resolution – a motion was made by Fink to approve the resolution, seconded by Ollila. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None

New Business:

- A. Otter Lake FEMA Fire Truck Grant With Jason Mittlestat – EMW-2022-FG-02590.
- B. Need a Five-Year Rd. Improvement Plan for the Co. Rd. Comm.
- C. Incredible Bank Loan for Gaffney and Denton Road Repair in 2025. Ollila updated the board on findings from the Houghton County Rd Commission. Bruce updated the board on the possible loan terms. A motion was made by Ollila to pursue a loan for \$500,000 for two years to resurface Denton Road this year, seconded by Bingham. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.
- E: PAAR Plan Security Camera Application – Need Resolution Signed. A motion was made by Ollila to approve the resolution for the grant, seconded by Fink. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- D. Resignation letter – Bingham will resign as Trustee as of 5/31/2024

Public Comment: None

Meetings:

- A. Anders Hill – School Expansion – March 7, 2024
- B. B.O.R. – Organizational Meeting – At Township Office – March 5, 2024.
- C. Local MTA – Meet with Kevin Haarju – Road Projects Discussed – Feb. 21, 2024.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:22PM

Public Attendance:

Ted Soldan

Roy Britz

Chris Holmes - UPEA

Several Denton Road resident

X Bruce Petersen

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X Amy Skewes

Amy Skewes
Clerk