

Charter Township of Portage  
Regular Board Meeting  
September 14, 2015  
Township Office  
47240 Green Acres Rd  
Houghton, MI 49931  
(906) 482-4310

The meeting was called to Order at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Treasurer Carol Little, Clerk Sherry Rivard, Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, and John Ollila. Trustee Andrew Kemper was absent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion Made by John Ollila to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Peggy Anderson, all voted in favor, motion carried.

Motion made by John Ollila, seconded by Peggy Anderson to approve the Regular August Board meeting minutes as submitted, all voted in favor, motion carried.

Motion made by Bill Bingham, seconded by John Ollila to approve the bills as audited by Peggy Anderson prior to the meeting. Discussion regarding inactive account which did not have water shut-off. Township will have to absorb the cost of water used but not billed.

**Clerk's Report:** Year-to-date Budget to Actual reports distributed. Separate reports reflecting activity through the end of the previous month and current month activity will be prepared for future meetings. Clerk Sherry Rivard reported on the Accreditation Classes for New Election Officials and Qualified Voter File Hands training attended September 9-11, 2015 in Marquette.

**Treasurer's Report:** Preliminary August report handed out to all board members. Final report may differ due to a discrepancy. Duane Reid has questioned whether we have established a rate increase on enterprise funds. The Michigan Rural Water Association has excellent resources on this topic. Automatic annual increases are often written directly into the ordinance. John Ollila proposed that the water and sewer committee develop the language for the ordinance change to be presented to the Board. Carol Little suggested using the Michigan Rural Water Association resources to determine proposed annual rate increases. Bill Bingham questioned why disbursements on Portage water were above normal. The loan payment was made during the month and an unpaid June bill to the City of Houghton accounted for the increase.

**Zoning Administrator's report:** July and August 2015 reports read aloud by Supervisor Bruce Petersen. Noise complaint on Peepsock Circle investigated on three different days with no evidence of the noise detected. Zoning Board of Appeals scheduled for September 30, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. to address set back for a garage. Investigation regarding a complaint about a trailer is still in progress.

**Fire Departments Report:**

OLFD – Karen Michaelson, Assistant Fire Chief, reported that the Fire Department responded to two fire calls, and made four EMS runs.

HTFD – Fire Chief Marty Raffaelli reported one fire call and one Jaws of Life call. New member, Erica Asti, joined the department.

Bruce Petersen reported that three *'On Call Fire Departments: the Township Board's Responsibility'* books were purchased. Each fire department will receive one and one will be kept at the Township office.

**Assessor's Report:** Report handed out to all board members.

**Public Comments:**

John Hanner requested to have the opportunity to ask questions following the report to be presented by Chris Holmes from UPEA.

**Correspondence:**

Supervisor Bruce Petersen discussed correspondence regarding the Houghton County Chapter of the Michigan Townships Association meeting, Michigan Rural Water Association training sessions, Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce, UPPCO Public Hearing Announcement, DNR Commercial Forest Act program public hearing, water quality initiatives fund, and WUPPDR SEDS report. Supervisor Petersen responded to a Department of Treasury request to provide a synopsis of all state properties protected by the Township Fire Departments.

**Old Business:**

A) Chris Holmes/UPEA – Distributed last two pages of draft report showing that the majority of the inflow and infiltration is occurring in Hurontown and distributed a funding review summary. Mr. Holmes recommends combining the Green Acres Road and Dodgeville/Hurontown projects to maximize the benefit of Rural Development funding. Bill Bingham motioned that the Township proceed with the Green Acres and Dodgeville/Hurontown combination funding proposal and hold a public hearing, to be advertised in the newspaper, at 6:30 p.m. before the October regular meeting, Carol Little seconded, all voted in favor, motion passed. Mr. Holmes answered questions from residents.

B) Dodgeville Ice Rink Cement Pour Progress – Action postponed until more information regarding donations and volunteers is gathered.

C) Code/Ordinance Enforcer – Discussion regarding turning over liquor law inspection to the county and making a resolution to eliminate one or both Constable position(s) to free up funds to hire a Code Enforcement Officer. A Personnel Committee meeting will be scheduled to continue the discussion.

**New Business:**

A) External Generator Hookup – Two bids were received. Decision made to forgo the purchase.

B) Web Page – Picture of Isle Royale Estates sign will go on website. Bill Bingham suggested changing the outdated photo of the Copper Country Mall sign as well.

C) Alley Abandonment – Additional information will be gathered regarding potential need to access utilities.

D) Rental Code Enforcement – Planning Commission will meet to discuss revisions to the rental code.

E) Budget workshop – Meeting set for Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. to revise current budget and begin formulation the budget for the upcoming year.

F) Nominations – John Ollila moved to appoint Mark Jalkanen to the Zoning Board of Appeals, Bill Bingham seconded, all voted in favor, motion passed. Bruce Petersen moved to remove the current

Planning Commission Chairperson from the Planning Commission, John Ollila seconded, five yes votes, one no vote from Bill Bingham. John Ollila moved to appoint Constance Sherry to the Planning Commission to fill the vacancy. Carol Little seconded, five yes votes, one no vote from Bill Bingham. G) Total Energy Systems – Bill Bingham motioned to approve the annual maintenance contract for the two lift stations, John Ollila seconded, all voted in favor, motion passed.

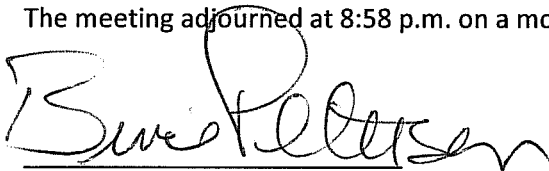
**Committee Meetings:**

- A) Planning Commission – met on August 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Commission voted to accept the new Zoning Manual. Houghton County has 30 days to comment and then it will be presented at the October Regular Township Board meeting.
- B) Valley View – An onsite review was held on August 11<sup>th</sup>.
- C) Houghton County Recycling Committee – Plan was made to move toward introducing cardboard recycling at the Transfer Station.
- D) Zoning Board of Appeals – Side yard offset issue meeting scheduled for September 30<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m.
- E) M-26/US-41 MDOT Corridor Advisory Team – Meeting held on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Other Business:**

- A) Cemetery flower removal scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- B) Bill Bingham posed questions about the new car dealership and the progress of research into whether Houghton County provides financial support to Mercy Ambulance.
- C) Personnel Committee meeting set for September 22 at 3:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m. on a motion by John Ollila.



Supervisor, Bruce Petersen



Clerk, Sherry Rivard