

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board Meeting
October 9, 2017
Portage Township Office
42740 Green Acres Rd.
Houghton, MI 49931
(906) 482-4310

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Those in attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Treasurer Carol Little, Clerk Tressa Alvarado, and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink, and John Ollila.

Pledge Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda: Bruce Petersen added civil infractions ordinance 144 modified under Old Business and under New Business DEQ Scrap Tire grant. Bill Bingham added to discuss July 10th closed meeting minutes that need to be approved. Also add discussion regarding fire department Tapiola and water. Peggy A. added notice going into the paper and Sick/Vacation time under new business. Bill Bingham suggested to we move the library discussion earlier in the agenda. Bill Fink added discussion of the draft of the letter to Michigan Tech regarding street. John added discussion about wood burners to Zoning Admin Report and other business first draft of R-1 letter. Move to approve agenda with additions Bill Bingham, seconded John Ollila. Motion passed.

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: 9/11, 9/20, 9/26, and 10/2, 2017 minutes have not been put together yet. Bill Bingham move to approve closed Session, July 10th along with comments by Sherri, John O seconded.

Approval of the Bills: Peggy A. to approve Exxonmobil account total bill \$623.47 for month of September, no receipt for the account, but had to be approved to be paid. DPW staff have been bringing in receipts with their time cards. Has to be approved to be paid. Peggy has receipts for this coming month. \$106 Ferro Gas bill paid, but no statement/receipt. 7 accounts with UPPCO that had past due amounts on them, looking on the check stubs included past due plus the total which would be \$739.17 overpayment, previous month was never paid so we do not have an overpayment just the late amount was paid. Do not have water usage bill from City of Houghton \$1857.60 itemized listing. Northern Hardwoods do not have a purchase order approved to be paid \$600, which was for woodchips in the playground. Regarding Rukkila bill was paid, but was not given to Peggy A., is for the audit, \$5000 was for partial pmt of audit and \$3015.50 is residual, Carol will print a copy of the bill and give to Peggy. Bills are paid, but no receipts/statements. Peggy is approving what could be seen today, but cannot for previous pmts that don't have bills. Core & Main \$1956.42 for 16 new water meters. Bill B moves to accept the bills for what Peg could see, John O seconds, all in favor, motion passed.

Clerk's Report: Budget for next year needs to be set/approved asap

Treasurer's Report: Taxes have come in and out. Getting ready for the millage tables all in for this year, just waiting for Otter Lake special assessment. \$830 sewage expenses.

Zoning Admin Report:

- Gentleman on Paradise Road claims neighbor's wood burner caused asthma attack. Ordinance is 300 ft, neighbor's wood burner is over 300ft. Distance may not be practical due to the geography of the location.
- Planning Commission spoke with assessor if we allow 1200 sq feet on a 10+ acre site or bigger building on a 40+ acre site, if property is divided in the future there would have to be minimum of 10 acre site or 40 acre site is legal, land divisions take place within structure of zoning regulations. Advocated for changes to the zoning ordinances 10 acres+ gives right to build a 1200 sq ft or less building, 40 acre+ allows to build a larger building. Planning Commission is having a public hearing Nov 30th on changes proposed. Can vote to adopt and then send to county and the county will need to sign off on it during their December meeting Houghton County Planning Commission to approve/do nothing/waive, then twp board in Jan can adopt that change in zoning ordinance, 30 days after, which is Mid-Feb, to take effect. To change zoning ordinance to permit the construction of a storage building on vacant property.

Fire Department's Report: 1 jaws, Marty states received the Fasinol bill, Carol states this bill has been paid, but will check to make sure it has cleared. Fireman from Chassell got injured and they billed insurance company instead of the Chassell twp and are now in a court battle. There is a letter coming to all townships about it from Hunttila. Ted - one EMS run, chimney cleaning was last Saturday and was very successful. Working with Steve on the building and he is going to do some work on it before he tells us what he is going to do and get something in writing. Concrete fractured on the floor, going to pour 4 in on top and cut out the bad area and raise the door. Talked with Deb Bradford regarding how things are supposed to work with submitted bills, she is concerned that Otter Lake Fire Dept outside of budget parameters. Requesting a regular report from twp of what is spent and what budget is. Can be adjusted monthly as needed. Septic issue at fire hall was outside and backed up inside and carpet cleaned, when check got to Carol didn't get charged to Otter Lake fire hall in the system. The intent for the Otter Lake Fire Department building, still working on whether they will purchase/lease, possibly rent to own or land contract. 3 more policies and approved them, will be emailed to Bruce. Tapiola shuffle board is very popular. Shuffle board bill came in \$163.70.

Dillon Director of Portage Lake District Library gave a presentation regarding millage renewal. Reviewed mission statement and resources and programs available at the library. 7 year dedicated property tax expires this year. Portage Township \$64.12 avg annual tax per household. Chassell revenue lost projected \$93,480 loss. Nov 7 Renewal of millage allows the library to continue to do some of the work, but will need to make some cuts. Does not increase, just maintains.

Assessor's Report: Laura received her new computer a couple of weeks ago. She has been working with BS&A to transfer the databases. She is working with Bruce to back up the Assessing Database to the server. Received another letter from the State's relative to the AMAR review. Data issues raised by AMAR such as land adjustments without reason and flat values, first appeared in 2011 appraisal. Working with Bruce to form a response. The State will follow up again in 2018.

Public Comments: Bill B. asked if we get flyers when MTA chapter meets. Yes, by email. Bill B needs to be put on the email list Carol will contact Debbie to add Bill B to the e-list. Questioned if the audit is settled or is there any issues with the audit being filed late, Bruce states that should be all settled there are no fines or anything. Woopers have mapping for water/sewer lines including the connections with water lines with new system, infrastructure mapping, need to attend meeting to make sure we have rep at every meeting so we can get in line, we are already signed up to get the trial.

Correspondence: AMAR review and communication from Department of Treasury, an outside party has been contacted to correct deficiencies in the 2017 AMAR review, the parcels with the land adjustments without reason have been identified and corrected, the databases have been uploaded for verification. Received DEQ Landfill Letter stated we have erosion issue around the cap and had to block some of the ATV trails and remove some vegetation across the cap, all taken care of and Bruce will be emailing photos and describe actions taken. Letter from Little Brothers. UPPCO tree trimming generic letter. SBA towers, new corporation that controls the cell towers sent a short letter.

Old Business

- Green Acres Rd: Another ad in the paper, advertised couple of projects, zero bids on one and only a couple bids on the other with the prices being higher. Making some adjustments on front end, adjusting the unit prices. \$2.7 million project, we will be trying to get a grant to cover some of the cost. Rural Development would like to see automatic renewal for rates. Need water/sewer reports for Aug onward to make a sound decision on rate increases. Vacant lots do not pay base fee, they pay connection fee.
- Water Meter Trials: Letters have been sent to 10 people identified to inform them and ask their availability for Department of Public Works staff to get in and install meters. 2 meters installed currently. Removed old meter and installed the new one, discussed whether it would be possible to install old and new meter side by side.
- Reviewed Amended Ordinance 111, made no changes. Ordinance 144 corrections were made. Cannot vote to adopt, because of corrections. Will review both in November.
- Passport grant for the Huron soccer field, scored 140. Last year needed 170 points to be successful. Bill Olson at UP Engineers offered some assistance rewrote and included a digitized map and resubmitted. Waiting to see how it increased the score
- Tapiola Pavilion proposal from MTM for lights. 10 lights that are there are from MTU. 4 out of 10 ballast have gone out, expensive to repair/replace ballast, MTM estimates \$700. Install 10 LED fixture, 150W units, that would use 1/3 voltage. Would cost \$1984

to replace all 10 and would ultimately pay for itself with the new shuffle board and rink being illuminated, should save money in the long term. Could be covered by the rec fund. Bruce to get additional bids and go with bidder and inform boards informally.

- Rental ordinance: Version 3. Reviewed for corrections.


New Business:

- Tressa Alvarado hired to Clerk position, sworn in Oct 2, first full day Oct 16, 2017. Anne Newcombe to be Deputy Clerk
- Bill Miller - Health insurance hard caps for 2018. Health insurance rates going up about 3.4%. Need to have a meeting on it.
- Reviewed letter drafted to Glen Mroz regarding stretch of road University is responsible, South East end of Cemetery Rd. to junction with Mill Rd., has deteriorated badly and has created traffic hazard. Requested University's plans regarding this street.
- We need to get a notice in the paper regarding removing floral arrangements in cemetery.
- Employee of the township came in is -4 days of sick pay, needs 2 more sick pay and 2 more vacation days, he's used up more than he should. Personnel committee will meet at 3pm Thurs.

Other Business: Review draft of letter going to R-1 Zoning District Residents, change occupations to businesses. Add that rental ordinance changes coming soon. Add that there are parking issues/snow removal. Change from owners to owners and residents.

Committee/ Meetings and Updates: Election worker training was 8:30am-Noon, 10/03/17 which is longer than usual. Usually training \$40, but discussed that since the training was longer paying more. John O move to pay \$60 for this one time, Bill B. seconded. Passed.

Adjourn: Bill B. motion to adjourn, Peggy A. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:05PM.


Bruce Petersen, Supervisor


Clerk, Tressa Alvarado