

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board Meeting
November 13, 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, Deputy Clerk Anne Newcombe, and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink, and John Ollila. Guests: Roy Britz, Constable; Hurontown Fire Department Chief Marty Rafaelli.

Pledge Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda: Old Business per John Ollila, R-1 letter. New Business per Bruce Petersen, 2018 Budget. New Business per Peggy Anderson, MTA & Newspaper. New Business per Carol Little, Assessors Report, letter from State of Michigan. Move to approve agenda with additions John Ollila, seconded by Bruce Petersen. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: (The minutes from July and September 2017 have not yet been located.) John Ollila moved to accept minutes, seconded by Bill Bingham. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the Bills: Intervening election slowing progression of new bill process. Moving forward with what clerk/deputy clerk have in the wake of change of personnel. Some outstanding September receipts from Sharon Express Mart and a small Festival Foods missing receipt, as well as a question about City of Houghton Water invoice. Clerk/deputy clerk will attempt to run these down for the next meeting (in addition to straightening out the double payment to HW Water Supply now Core and Main, resulting from their company name change). Perhaps New Business, but Paul Strack has requested a \$5 increase/plow (bringing per plow fee to \$55) because of increase in gas prices. Bill F/Bill B motion and second rate increase approval, passes unanimously. Township doors left open previous Thursday. Discussion of process for getting receipts turned in to clerk's office and difference between Sharon Express Mart bills versus direct billing to Hurontown Fire Department (not the same as Mobil). There are missing receipts in the amount of \$240.74 for these two entities. Bruce states DPW guys are religious about submitting receipts. Might be the cemetery leaf blower gas. Discussion of \$7,000 City of Houghton water bill payment—may be as simple as viewing previously paid check redating itself, if closed incorrectly. Clerks will sort it out with City of Houghton. City of Houghton Water and Sewer bill/meter discussion. City of Houghton wants Charter Township of Portage to put in new meter. 22 days of "0" use per meter. Twp will not put in new meter. It is City of Houghton's responsibility to monitor incoming bills on this. Discussion of per diem (came up because of Otter Lake Fire Department members attending EMS conference, disparity in

requests for reimbursement). Bill Fink suggests following federal guidelines formula. A resolution was passed previously but it is not in the resolutions book. This issue will be moved to after next budget is approved, so it will go into effect for new budget and not affect this year's which is almost up. Scott Bussiere pension question, as he is no longer a temporary worker. Backdate pension to date he was no longer a temporary worker. Scott needs to fill out the paperwork, as does Tressa. Burnham and Flowers will need to be contacted to advise process. Carol Little questions \$2,000 bill for BS&A Software. Is it usual? Yearly? What are we paying the DEQ annually? Peggy Anderson moved we pay bills as presented w/ stipulation that next meeting questions try to be resolved once and for all; John Ollila seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

Clerk's Report: Tressa Alvarado at regional state clerk conference in Saint Ignace. No clerk report. First election went well. Gratitude to Peggy and Bruce for their assistance. Gratitude to all of the wonderful and experienced poll workers for their guidance and support.

Treasurer's Report: Assessor's and township's report out of sync by \$60.00 on taxable values of summer to winter assessment. Running this down, will report back next meeting. Question regarding Perpetual Care Revenue which is a catchup journal entry, for Edward Jones. Carol will call and transfer funds.

Zoning Admin Report: Report presented and attached

Fire Department's Report: 2(?) jaws, Marty Rafaelli (Huron town FD); did anyone get insurance company letter re: workman's comp question? May be getting DNR grant. Hopefully will know by December 1st. Ted Soldan (Otter Lake FD) reports 2 EMS runs. Proposing 6 policy changes for their department post conference: Leave Of Absence, Sexual Misconduct/Harassment Issues, Training, Driver Record Review and 2 more. Needs approval. Bill Bingham motions, John Ollila seconds, motion passes unanimously. Bruce P wondering about Karvako's Well Drilling Business building being proposed for the township to purchase for the OLF. Bill Bingham points out restrictions on purchasing buildings. For example, if abandoned, it goes back to school district, unless it is used expressly for EMS purposes. Might be better to get together with OLF and discuss the building. Agreement. Bill (which Bill?) motions approving FD reports, John O seconds, passed unanimously.

Assessor's Report: none. Carol asked how many board members aware of State of Michigan letter re: need for outside party and whether it is acceptable to have our assessor's husband (also an assessor) be that contractor to fix deficiencies, and how much we're paying him. Assessor (Level 2 certified) has supplied them with the details and that they are not deficiencies—addressed in two separate letters. Bruce needs to investigate further. John O states: "We, the board, should be hiring the outside contractor, not the assessor. Agreement. Summer letter regarding ECF studies. County looking for new Equalization Director. There is a piece of property in Otter Lake, that did not sell at auction. Are we buying it? General agreement to decline to buy. Bill Bingham motions to decline buying it, seconded by Carol Little. Motion passes unanimously.

Public Comments: Roy Britz, Constable, wants to make sure the website phone number is corrected. Should be 281-1031.

Correspondence: Bruce P to Glen Mroz re: the road. No response yet, but some hot patching was done. Otter Lake Dam Assessment (Pekkola) - \$23,072.00, county pays 20% and township pays 10% (\$2,300.00). Marcie Erikson (new purchase resident in Dakota Heights) questioning details of upgrade assessment for Dakota Heights. Feels cost should be spread through whole township, versus assessed to Dakota Heights specifically, as required by Rural Development. Bruce gathered project specific details for her and let her know only people in the service area are charged the cost of the upgrades, as is the practice for any other projects elsewhere. John O brought up general water bill comparisons (he used to live in Ewen), usage/sales/collections, versus what Charter Township of Portage pays.

Old Business:

- A. Bill Bingham, Water/Sewer Committee—project coming up. Bill would like Amber to do the monthly report like they used to get. He is concerned about the numbers—expressing concern that if the metering is correct, we need to address them. He will be doing a Green Acres Joint Road Sewer Report, Dodgeville/Hurontown Application and Adams Twp/City of Houghton summary with Amber for January 1st, and needs the numbers however we can get them. Is Woodland included? Verify City of Houghton and Adams Twp numbers. Want to have some way of monitoring rates and Woodland is not doing well on water. Audit for outstanding billings. Carol gave explanation of bill payments, outstanding balance, aged receivables not matching outstanding balance. Carol trying to phase out/eliminate manual adjustment line that auditor said was not an option. Green Acres. (Website)? Chris cannot be here tonight. This segues to discussion of 2018 budget requirements from the state. All gov't units w/ more than \$1,000.00 of assets must have an asset management document for DEQ. It outlines sewer, water, facilities assets. Needed for January. If we are not in compliance, fines will ensue. Must outline age, size, condition, regular pressure testing/compliance (30-95 psi). UP Engineers has offered an open contract Excel Spreadsheet we can use that satisfies the 2018 bare minimum. Chris was going to supply this to us but could not be here tonight. Bill Bingham: Set a timetable with Chris for MTA webpage for getting all this done. Bruce Petersen: We have to have a contract w/ them to do it. Peggy Anderson: what cost? Bruce P: they use tally sheets, keep track of hours, open contract technical assistance, 42 hours (to start?). Carol: estimate what is needed for the budget. Bill B: Get with Chris and Water/Sewer Committees for the 2018 budget.
- B. Election Activities – Tressa had her first successful election. Peggy ensured that the public accuracy test went well. First election with new equipment—only bug was the chip reader was defective, but did not affect outcome of election. Backup reader available. A big thank you to Marty and the Hurontown Firefighters for prepping the hall for the election. (actual vote tally by precinct available) Total vote: 1,071 yes, 131 no, 1,202 total votes, 29.12% voter turnout. Prompts discussion of likely upcoming 2018

elections: general in November, primary in August, jail (spring?), ballot proposals (marijuana and redistricting). Carol brings up cemetery maintenance, and that Adams Twp generated a millage for same. City of Houghton pays higher rates for burials in Charter Twp of Portage.

- C. Passport 2018 Grant – Final Score, sounds like we are tied with Calumet Twp 160 and it looks 50/50 chance that they will get the grant, but that we are encouraged to apply again next year for a larger amount (\$150,000). Could fill ditch and build 2 fields (Huron Soccer and Ballfield). The Consortium of Ministers has offered to match a percentage if we reapply. Bill Fink suggests also paying attention to Peepsock where a request for making a tennis court into a pickleball court is lodged.
- D. Ordinance 111 & Ordinance 144 Acceptance (Junk and Municipal Civil Infractions Ordinances) John Ollila makes motion to adopt, seconded by Bill Fink. Passes unanimously. Discussion ensues regarding hazardous materials, abatement, proposal to get bid(s) from Waste Management to address specific infractions, with fines (fee schedules in the ordinances) for each day not cleared. Roy Britz needs a copy of these ordinances to begin using. Also asks who enforces the ordinances. John Ollila: Zoning Admins, Twp Supervisor, Clerk, Constables. This discussion segues to New Business, covering Zoning Violations, Fee Schedules, and thence to Rental Ordinance/Rental Inspector which is being formulated by the Planning Commission. Ordinance Book, ads in paper as proof we did have 2 public meetings asking for input, and the ordinance. Copies of agenda/minutes/ads will be placed in the Ordinance Book as proof of public comment opportunities. (Koski and Henderson currently affected properties.)

New Business:

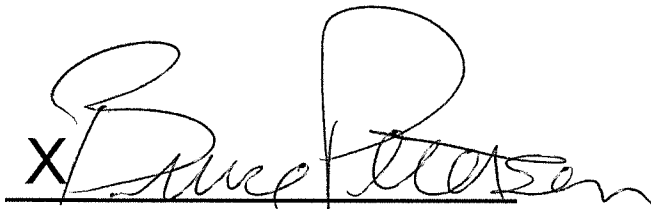
- Michigan DEQ Environmental Engineer James Stahle (here this past summer) regarding closed landfill due to well testing water quality issues. Nearby residential wells affected, downgraded residential parcels – groundwater onsite monitoring shows NAT, NREP and other indicators in excess of acceptable benchmarks (Could be the DEQ bill we get annually--\$1,200 in tests conducted). WUPHD involved, or should be? October 12th letter of actionable items rife with issues needing to be addressed.
- Brian Miller – 2018 Health Insurance Hard Cap Rates & Health Insurance Quotes: Offered alternatives to our health insurance plans. John Ollila suggests asking our maintenance people (most affected) whether they want to maintain their insurance plan, or to take a raise.
- Total Energy Systems – 2018 Maintenance Agreement – Lift Stations Monitoring/Maintenance (\$830). They wish to renew contract, and professionals are needed to do it. Bill Bingham motions to renew, seconded by Bill Fink. Unanimously passed.
- Planning Commission working on Rental Ordinance. November 30, 2017 Public Hearing for storage buildings on non-occupied sites in RR & RF. R1 Zoning District letter going out within a week, per John Ollila, announcing proposed change and hearing. Bruce brings up a review of R1; points out this is just Woodland Road and Canal Road should be taken out.

- Payroll Law – 01/16/2018 Training – Marquette, MI. Tressa has requested permission to attend this workshop, highly relevant to her position (Clerk). Carol motions authorization for her to go, seconded by Peggy. Unanimously passed.
- MIOSHA Training – DPW Staff – Behavioral Based Safety – December 6th, 2017. Want our DPW staff (and cemetery staff? maybe Marty) to attend at Lakeshore Center. The focus of the training is geared to overcome people's bias to cutting corners regarding safety.

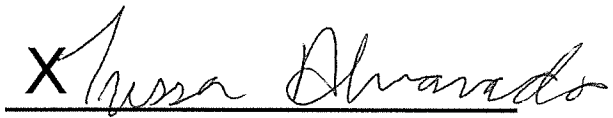
Other Business: Peggy Anderson brings up Winter Parking enforcement. Ad needs to go in paper if it has not already been done and put signs up. Michigan Township Association meetings are usually the first week of the month and exact date varies. Discussion regarding having food and rotating location to encourage new people to attend.

Committee/ Meetings and Updates: Planning Commission, Personal Finance(?), Health Insurance. Set dates for budget meeting, November 28th and December 5th, 3pm. Next Twp Board Mtg on December 11th. Budget meeting before the Board Mtg? Bill Bingham: we need to address the deputies' hours. Next meeting.

Adjourn: John Ollila, motion to adjourn; Carol Little seconded.

X 

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X 

Tressa Alvarado
Clerk