

Charter Township of Portage  
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting  
July 8, 2019

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, July 8, 2019 at the Portage Township Hall.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 7:00 PM

**Pledge Allegiance:** Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bruce Petersen

In attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Clerk Amy Skewes, Treasurer Betsy Smith and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink, and John Ollila.

**Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:**

Vanessa Dietz submitted a letter for a pay raise. New water sampling parameters, letter from Cindy Perkins, letter from Grace Wetton. Bingham and Anderson have a comment.

Ollila made a motion to accept the agenda with additions, seconded by Fink. All in favor

**Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes:** A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Fink to approve the June 10<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup> 2019 meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried by a voice vote.

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

**Review Clerk's Report:**

Audit is complete. Working with Betsy on balancing 2019. Received an e-mail from the County Clerk, effective immediately there will be a \$100.00 charge per precinct for election programming.

Smith requested that deputies or hourly staff be authorized to work after normal office hours to input cemetery data, or as needed. There is no statute against anyone working beyond 24 hours or later than our normal office hours. This helps retain quality trained staff by offering more hours and keeps processes current. Separately, Bingham expressed that with the limited posted hours for the deputy treasurer and treasurer that this may cause problems for residents paying their taxes. Betsy explained that her posted hours are only her minimum hours for the public. Her deputy is collecting taxes in the evening as well which seems accommodating to the township. Ollila made a motion to allow office employees to work beyond normal business hours, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Ollila, Fink, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: Bingham

**Review Treasurer's Report:**

Audit is complete. Summer taxes were committed and we were ready to collect on July 1. Summer tax bills have been mailed out.

**Review Zoning Administrator's Report (John/Bill) for (June 2019):**

Ollila spoke to building Dept. about Laitila Home, issue is going to end up with the prosecutor.

**Review Fire Departments:**

**OLFD:** Fires, 1 EMS. 1

Ted Soldan commented that the July 4<sup>th</sup> Tapiola parade was a huge success.

**HTFD:** Fires, 1

**Review Assessor's Report:** none.

**Public Comments: Bob Laux - Concerning Archambeau water line repair.** Received a compliment about Chuck Saari from Bob Laux regarding his work on the water line

Derrick Verran from Boundary Rd brought up concerns regarding the conditions of Boundary Rd. Petersen said he will contact Chassell Twp. as well as the County and see what can be done.

**Correspondence:** Letters sent to water customers – New meter replacement, Huron Creek water shed study. Received a letter from Cindy Perkins, During Tunnel Vision study some sewer problems arose during this study. The township received many phone calls due to sewage backups. Smith suggested the township would benefit from having a Facebook page to update residents in the future with issues like this as well as regular township business updates. Betsy volunteered to set up a Facebook page.

**Old Business:**

- A. 2018 Audit Summary – Debbie Bradford addressed the board regarding the 2018 audit. She has an unmodified opinion. The Township was over budget on two accounts, \$77.00 on Constable and \$30.00 on Elections. The Township has a healthy general fund, the sewer accounts are losing money. Otter Lake Fire Department building purchase, which closed on 12/31/2018, caused minor problems with Audit.
- B. Green Acres Rd. Sewer/Infiltration Joint Project – Eng. Design & Bid Let Progress. Tunnel Vision is finished. Chris Holmes opinion from UPEA is not to bid the project right away, wait for a better bidding environment.
- C. 2016 DNR Grant – DPW/Twp Match – On-Going Construction. The restrooms are largely complete. Awaiting TREX for benches/seating. DPW will hook-up sewer so plumbing can be tested..
- D. (3) High water bills Finalization – Decision. John Ollila inspected the Sanchez home and concluded that the water from the leak on the outside faucet did not drain into the sewer system. The property has 2 sump pumps which are draining into the yard. Ollila motioned to forgive the sewer portion of the water bill as well as all late fees, seconded by Bingham. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None  
After discussing the Rodney & Debra Guilbault frozen water line under Main street in Hurontown the Board decided that it was the Township's responsibility to cover the cost. Bingham motioned to reimburse Rod and Deb Guilbault for the cost of \$600.00 for thawing the water line, seconded by Skewes. Motion carried by Roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None



After discussing the Hix property, 20062 Henry Street the board was presented with concerns from the property owners regarding meter readings. Smith moved to wait until the board can investigate further, seconded by Fink. All in Favor.

- E. City of Houghton – Revised April & May water treatment amount Bill/Terms.  
Petersen updated the board, we have not yet received a forbearance agreement. We will be receiving an updated bill with the new rates from April/May.
- F. Manderfield Water Line Easement Progress. Matt Manderfield has signed an easement and it's recorded at the courthouse for a new water line construction.
- G. Perpetual Care – Ed Jones – Last 12 Months earned 2.8%
- H. 2018 DEQ Consumer Confidence Report for Community Water Supply – published on webpage.
- I. New water sampling parameters. The township received new testing requirements for 2019, working with White Water to implement.

14. New Business:

- A. I-Pearl Water Meter Installation – ½ diameter on Woodland Rd. & Peepsock Circle.  
Bingham asked if the township will be getting new garden meters also, asked if we should eliminate them all together. After discussing Bingham motioned that garden meters need to be brought to the township office by November 30<sup>th</sup> for bill credit by the resident, seconded by Ollila. All in favor. Motion carried.
- B. Letter concerning Debris – Fire on Sheridan Place.  
The property with the garage that burned is cleaned up, Portage Lake Construction has cleaned up the property and a new garage is going to be built.
- C. Core & Main – BS&A Water Billing Using New i-Pearl Meters. They are coming to the office for training on 7/9/2019 at 9 A.M.
- D. BS&A Software Upgrade Purchase – Cemetery & On-Line Access. The installation will be 8/22/2019 and remote training will be on 8/26/2019.
- E. Vanessa Dietz submitted a letter for a pay raise. She has been employed for a year and is the front line of communication for the Township. After discussion Fink motioned to give a pay raise to The front desk and the Deputies pay in two step increments (to \$15.00 per hour) 1<sup>st</sup> step effective immediately, second step effective 2020, seconded by Smith. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None

15. Meetings:

- A. WUPPDR – Full Comm. Meeting – Twin Lakes – 6/25/2019
- B. Pre-Installation Meeting – MTM – iPearl Meters – 6/12/2019
- C. Twp. Special Meeting – City Water Treatment Costs – 6/19/2019
- D. MTA Assessor Training – Franklin Square – 6/11/2019
- E. P.C. – Pilgrim River Development LLC & Master Plan – 6/26/2019

16. Other Business:

Anderson commented that in the last issue of the MTA newsletter there was a nice article regarding Chassell.

17. Public Comment: None

18. Adjourn: A motion was made by Smith and seconded by Skewes to adjourn at 9:15 PM. All in favor, motion carried by voice vote.

Public Attendance:

Deb Bradford

Ted Soldan

Austin Kucharski

Derrick Verran

Chris Holmes

Gail Sanchez

John Sanches

Colleen Hix

John Hix

X 

Bruce Petersen  
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes  
Clerk