

Charter Township of Portage  
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting  
August 12, 2019

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, August 12, 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:**

2018 corrective action, Computer Network upgrades, township signs, Marijuana opt out letter, Budget meeting, Abramson water easement, letter about Dodgeville resident living in car.

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

**Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes:** A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Fink to approve the July 8, 2019 meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried by a voice vote.

**Approval of the Bills:** Anderson asked if Sleemans was finished with their work at the Otter Lake Fire Hall, Ted Soldan wasn't quite sure, said there might be some work left to do.

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

**Clerk & Treasurer's Technology Report, Needs, Recommendations**

- Computer and printer needs – as per Jennifer's email for Clerk
  - (1) Windows 10 upgrade needed for running of elections software
  - (2) 3 laptops used for elections are not worth updating according to up and running and new ones are recommended for limited use for elections
  - (3) a new printer is needed in the Clerk's office for printing voter cards, master cards, etc.
  - (4) dual monitors are recommended due to needs for seeing all information while using multiple software platforms
- Computer needs – water clerk
  - (1) Windows 10 upgrade needed for running new versions of BS&A
  - (2) dual monitors are recommended due to needs for seeing all information while using multiple software platforms
- Computer needs – treasurer
  - (1) Windows 10 upgrade needed for running new versions of BS&A
  - (2) dual monitors are recommended due to needs for seeing all information while using multiple software platforms
- Computer needs – network

- Our computers are minimally networked at this time, each computer acts on its own
- We want to network them to share Quickbooks and be able to eliminate double entry on the part of the Treasurer and Clerk and eliminate the need for antiquated balancing techniques that stem from the two offices not cooperating in the past; we want to move forward working in collaboration and eliminating unneeded steps of work
- Networked offices are common place
- General fund is healthy showing that we have appropriate funds for securing the resources that will sustain our technology needs for the next few years – current technologies have limited use due to lack of upgrade capability
- Working with Up and Running for quotes and to coordinate this; (motion to approve these changes within parameters Up and Running recommends).
- What was the quote from Bruce from up and running for expanding our bandwidth?

#### **Treasurer's Report**

- Facebook page has been created and posts are being made and we are using it; 47 likes which means people that are following it
- Went through annual bank review and recommend purchasing a product for fraud monitoring; for individuals

#### **Clerk & Treasurer's Report**

Budget notes (brief points to think about before budget meeting)

1. End of July should be roughly 59% of budget used
2. USDA account requirements are not being met for Portage Sewer Fund
3. Due to/Due from are expanding for Portage Water and Portage Sewer – Largely due to iPearl meter installation.
4. Tax collection reconciliation is being done by clerk and treasurer, in process; using a new process this year and working together well.

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

There were 12 permits approved and 2 permits denied.

#### **Review Fire Departments:**

**OLFD:** Fires, 0 EMS. 4

The Fire Department has two new fire fighters.

**HTFD:** Fires, 2 Jaws. 2

Austin from the Hurontown Fire Department presented the board with a proposal to purchase a new rescue truck for \$198,500. The fire department will apply for a \$50,000 grant from USDA- Rural Development, borrow \$100,000 from the Township to be paid back over 10 years and the Fire Dept. would pay 48,500 to residual.



A motion was made by Bingham and seconded by Fink to loan \$100,000 to the Hurontown Fire department dependent upon their receiving the \$50,000 grant from Rural Development. Motion passed by roll call vote

Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None

**Review Assessor's Report:** Distributed. Attached.

**Public Comments:**

Ollila updated on the resident in Dodgeville who is living in her car. He contacted Dept. of Health and Human services, he received a letter back stating the case was not assigned. He tried calling to see what was the reason, person is on vacation and he will try next week.

**Correspondence:**

Kevin Harju – Rd. Comm. Minutes, OPUS Web – Make existing web page Mobile friendly, WUUPDR – Support, Rec. Marijuana Update, Dept. of Treasury – AMAR Review, KEDA Thank You.

**Old Business:**

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer & Infiltration Joint Project – Eng. Design & Bid Let Progress. U.P. Engineering has had bids go out and has noticed the bids come back 40/50% higher than normal. They recommend waiting until fall before putting out on bid.
- B. 2016 DNR Grant – DPW/TWP Match – On-Going Construction. Nearing completion, waiting for TREX material & final sewer hook-up by DPW staff.
- C. iPearl Meter Upgrade. 378 meters are installed out of 525.
- D. High Water bill Finalization – John Hix Decision. Ollila studied bills, did a flush test in his home, Takes 2 gallons to fill a toilet, 30 seconds to fill – 4 gallons per minute. 5760 gallons per day. If a toilet was running during the month there were no students in the home, this could explain the high water usage. It was determined by the board that the meter was in working order, without anyone living in the home there is no way to know if anything was running for a month while the residents were away between December and January. They are responsible for the bill and the initial penalty. A motion was made by Fink and seconded by Smith to keep the initial penalty and waive the additional penalties while the board was making their decision on the original bill. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- E. Land Swap Documents – KRB Properties. All documents are signed and filed.
- F. Water Outage in Dodgeville/Hurontown – on 7/21/2019 due to faulty sewer in basement.
- G. Fraud Protection for Banking Accts. Smith had a meeting with River Valley Bank and they recommend purchasing fraud protection. Betsy will clarify a few questions and get back with the board to discuss further.
- H. 2018 Corrective plan. After the audit report Petersen sent a letter to the Dept. Of Treasury explaining our corrective plan. He followed up with a call and they accepted our plan.
- I. Computer Network Upgrades. Due to the elections and BS&A the Township needs to upgrade the computers to Windows 10. We received quotes for laptops, computers, a server and network equipment. Further supplier quotes will be solicited and we will look further into the need and cost.

- J. Signs – Ollila made a list of all of the roads leaving and entering the Township that need signs.

14. New Business:

- A. City Of Houghton – Forbearance Agreement signed – Awaiting new water contract. Based on 1.1 times rate for anything above 100,000 gallons treated per day.
- B. The City of Houghton has applied for a technology grant to upgrade the Huron Creek water shed study Houghton is paying 25% match and would like the township to contribute a couple thousand dollars towards this tech upgrade that will be used for flood protection measures. A motion was made by Fink and seconded by Smith to offer \$2000.00 to offset the costs for the upgrade. Motion passed by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: None
- C. OPUS Web – Mobile update of our web page.  
Our web page is not mobile ready. Township will look further into it at the budget meeting.
- D. Baraga Telephone Co. Contract Agreement. Baraga Telephone new franchise agreement needs signature. Board agree to keep terms the same and signed agreement.
- E. MISS DIG Changes for 2020 – New Charges. MISS DIG is changing their billing process. Will be getting billed \$950.00 per year based on prior years usage.
- F. Boundary & Denton Rd. Repair. Petersen spoke to the County, it took 9 months to get funding from FEMA. FEMA has tentatively approved 46 county road repairs of the 52 packets submitted for 2020. Portage Township roads included in tentative approval for road repair not directly attributed to flood water damage are: Denton, Boundary, Pilgrim, Lahti, Broemer, Mill Rd, Parts of Superior Location and a 40 foot stretch of the Dodgeville/Hurontown Rd.

15. Meetings:

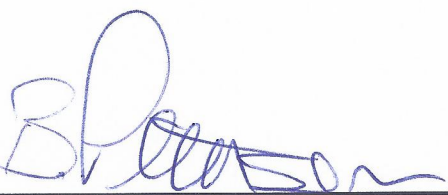
- A. P.C. Meeting – Pilgrim River Hills South – 8/8/2019
- B. B.O.R. – July Meeting 7/15/2019
- C. Huron Creek Watershed – Technical Upgrade Funding Grant – 7/22/2019
- D. Core & Main – Meter Activation & New Meter Reading – 7/9 & 7/23/2019
- E. County Jail Committee – Dodge Street Group – 7/29/2019

17. Public Comment: None

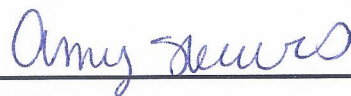
18. Adjourn: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Smith to adjourn at 9:15 PM. All in favor, motion carried by voice vote.

Public Attendance:

Tom Heider - Otterlake FD  
Roy Britz County Commissioner  
John Hix  
Petra Huentenmeyer  
Austin Kucharski – Hurontown FD  
Emily Shaw  
Colleen Hix

X 

Bruce Petersen  
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes  
Clerk