

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

April 12, 2021

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, April 12, 2021 via Zoom meeting.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 10:30 AM

In attendance were Supervisor Bruce Petersen, Clerk Amy Skewes, Treasurer Betsy Smith and Trustees Peggy Anderson, Bill Bingham, Bill Fink, and John Ollila as stated by roll call

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

Under New Business – Chassell/Houghton trail and a new proposed 425 with the City of Houghton.
Under correspondence -EGLE Violation, email from MTA regarding water shut offs, PAAR plan news.
Meeting resolution

A motion was made by Ollila, seconded by Fink to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried by a voice vote.

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Anderson to approve the March 8, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion carried by a voice vote.

Approval of the Bills: Anderson commented that the board might want to look at the cost of the heat and plowing at the Otter Lake Fire Dept. for next year.

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

Review Clerk's Report:

- Quiet Month, working on balancing for Audit
- Starting audit meetings with Auditor on 4/19/21

Review Treasurer's Report:

- Prepping for audit

Review Zoning Administrators' Report (John/Bill) for (March 2021):

John updated the board on the old Van Straten building being approved for a marihuana location. He and Bingham both agreed this is an ideal location.

Zoning Report for March 2021

Approved Permits:

Adam Wickley Hwy 41 addition to home

Kyle Ollanketo #2 Location storage building

Pending Permits

Terry Todd Tapiola New Home
Dave Kangas Dodgeville Addition to home
Correspondence
Letter from Evan Dixon (Darrell & Cyndi Perkins) Zoning &
Tax classification
Property along Hwy M-26 between Somero & Superior Service
Person interested in new electrical shop & storage buildings
Check received from PROGRO LLL Depere Wisc. \$50.00
No zoning permit attached ?????
Zoning question regarding building a garage in Peepsock Circle
Zoning setbacks in RUR Denton Rd area.
Bill & John

Review Fire Departments:

OLFD: No report

Ted Soldan has resigned as Fire Chief at Otter Lake Fire Department, Anders Kallungi is the new Chief

HTFD: No report

Review Assessor's Report: Attached

Trustees Reports/Updates: Anderson updated the board that if the township wanted to get anything on the August Ballot the deadline is May 11, 2021.

Anderson asked when Green Acres Road will get road striping.

Ollila made a motion to take \$500.00 of the \$5000.00 fee from the Marihuana retail application for the site plan review on the old Van Straten Building, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote.

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

Public Comments: Mike Bach asked about the status of Meijer store. Petersen said they still have plans with no time frame.

Correspondence: Correspondence: Portage Lake District Library Millage, EGLE Wind and Solar Report & Scrap Tire Recycling Grant, Evan Dixon – Rezone Letter, EGLE Violation

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – UPEA Report Concerning OJC & Bid Let.

A motion was made by Bingham to have Petersen and Skewes sign off on the USDA Rural Development loan, seconded by Anderson. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- B. 425 City Agreement – Item Number 21 – Legal Review Done.
- C. EGLE – Cross Connection Control Program Model.
- D. Houghton Co. Recreation Authority Draft & Mtgs. – 2nd Monday of Each Month. Dan Dalquist will attend

- E. Installation of iPearl Meters for the Commercial/Business. Cost to replace commercial/business water meters will cost \$ 20,705. A motion was made by Bingham to use part of the American Recovery Act money to pay for the meters, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.
- F. Vote to Ok the New Fire Department Volunteers and the Respective Chiefs. A motion was made by Bingham to OK Jared Ruotsala (chief), Anders Kallungi (chief), Randy Malone, Brandon Scholie, Chad Dunstan, Jason Legault and Justin Ruotsala as new Fire Department members, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.
- G. USDA – RD Fire Dept. Rescue Truck \$50,000.00 – De-Obligation.
- H. Maple Street Blight – Possible Sale/Teardown - What Steps Next.

14. New Business:

- A. Road Oiling/Treatment this Spring – Road Commission.

Copper Ridge Road – Children Warning Sign – Road Comm. Will Place. A motion was made by Bingham to have Bruce write a letter to get two “caution children playing” signs for Copper Ridge Road, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- B. American Rescue Plan Act - COVID Relief Bill – Receive Approx. \$308,360.

A motion was made by Bingham to purchase a Kabota mini excavator for the DPW and Cemetery, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- C. MI Dept. of Treasury – Unclaimed Property – Checks – Form Sent.
- D. Financially Distressed – Township May Apply for a Treasury Department grant, Decided against
- E. Old Badger Water Meter Brass – Stripped Meters – About \$2.10/lb. - \$3,392.00.
- F. Co-Zoning Administrators – (1) on-site investigations & (2) Twp./Co. Paperwork.
Bingham will resign as of April 30, 2021 as co-zoning administrator due to rehab. Petersen thanked him for his service.

Skewes made a motion to pay Ollila the full amount of \$300.00 per month for zoning effective May 1, 2021, seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- G. Perkin’s Rezoning Steps – Gundlach Road Area. Ollila proposes the board having a meeting to make a list of property owners, decide on potential business size and types before our May meeting. Meeting scheduled for April 26, 2021 at 3 P.M. Via Zoom
- H. Chassell/Houghton trail. All washouts will be repaired this summer
- I. Church on Sharon Avenue is being proposed for new Jail. Possible 425 with City
Roy Britz commented that the Jail does not have to be in the County seat but the County Offices do. Proposing to move Sherriff offices to the Sharon Ave location.

A motion was made Fink by to conceptually pursue the 425 with the County for a new Jail, seconded by Ollila. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

15. Meetings:

- A. March 8, 11, & 22, 2021 – B.O.R. – Zoom & In-Person Finalization Meetings.
- B. March 16, 2021 - Cemetery Committee Meeting – Staffing and Costs. Ollila stated that they should meet again. After reading cemetery ordinance, he said we need some clarification on annual fees.
- C. March 19, 2021 - Sewer and Water Comm. Mtg. – Remote Meters Installation. Bingham asked if we should send out letters to people who have had sump pumps. Bingham wants an inspection on these properties.
- D. March 25, 2021 - WUPPDR - Broad Band Webinar.

16. Other Business:

The board discussed meeting in person, Bingham wants to resume in-person meetings. Fink stated that we voted last October and declared a local state of emergency.

Ollila made a motion to continue with the motion from the October 12, 2021 meeting declaring the local state of emergency and keeping the office closed through the end of December and until the CDC declares herd immunity, seconded by Smith. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: Anderson, Bingham

17. Public Comment: none

18. Adjourn: A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Bingham to adjourn at 12:30 PM. All in favor, motion carried by voice vote.

Public Attendance:

Chris Holmes - UPEA
Scott Perkins
Vanessa Dietz
Roy Britz
Mike Bach
Shannon Perkins
Cyndi Perkins

X 

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes
Clerk

May 2021 – Portage Assessor Report

- Board of Review saw 44 petitions – of these
 - 11 Disabled Veterans Exemptions – completes granting all the disabled veterans exemptions that we are aware of
 - 9 Assessment appeals
 - 2 reversals of uncappings that occurred due to incorrect completion of the Property Transfer Affidavit (PTA) or failure to file a PTA requesting exemption from uncapping
 - 1 late filings of personal property / amended personal property statements
 - 7 late filings of request for property tax exemption (Habitat for Humanity) (not received before the Assessment Roll was set for 2021)
 - 4 late requests to combine parcels
 - 2 requests to change property classification
 - 4 other

The Township's 2021	2020
Assessed Value \$166,293,002	\$155,661,778
Taxable Value \$114,187,785	\$108,289,805

- It is important to bear in mind that an increase in revenue cannot be calculated by simply subtracting last year's taxable value from this year's value. On June 1st the 2021 Millage Reduction Fraction (MRF) Formula as required by MCL 211.34d will be given to us by the County. The MRF is multiplied against the Township's millages. The multiplier is never greater than a 1.0000; in other words the MRF can only have the impact of holding the millage values as they were last year, or reducing the millages. The MRF is applied to the millages on the L-4029.
- April is County Equalization Month. The County Board meets on the 13th.
- Once the County has equalized for the 2021 year, I will be able to create the next year's (2022's) database.
- This year (for assessing 'this' year is 2022) brings an added layer of data conversion to comply with the changes in the State's CAMA (computer software) Standards. The process will take up a significant amount of time over April and May.