

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

November 10, 2021

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 via Zoom meeting.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 6:05 PM

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:

New Business – Insurance recommendation, Office Holiday Hours

A motion was made by Ollila, seconded by Bingham 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 Fink to approve the October 18, 2021 regular meeting minutes and the October 26, 2021 special meeting minutes. Motion carried by a voice vote.

Approval of the Bills:

Anderson and Bingham would like to go into closed session regarding the assessor travel reimbursement bill at the end of the meeting

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

Review Clerk's Report:

- Board must approve to have Rukkila – Negro complete our W-2's and 1099's

A motion was made by Ollila to have Rukkila Negro complete the W-2's and the 1099's for 2021, seconded by Fink. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- There is an app for time tracking for employees. There are several available, including one through Quickbooks. They track time as well as GPS location.

Review Treasurer's Report:

Smith made a hand out poster to inform the public on the increase of their tax bills due to the millages that were passed in our Township in March 2020. 2 mills for roads and an additional .5 mills for the Fire Departments.

- Out of the office the week of Thanksgiving
- Collecting and processing late summer payments through Feb. 28, 2022 before payments are sent to Houghton County.
- Met with Superior Tax and Accounting, no other firms replied back
- Cemetery fund now operating at a deficit, we'll need confirmation of numbers from Bruce by 12/1/21 for amounts allocated to transfer from perpetual care to cemetery
 - o Perpetual Care interest is up to date and amounts in Perp Care savings
 - o After checking with the lawyer, we withdrew interest for cemetery expenses at 55% last year
 - o Can have numbers of sales and total interest earned this year by budget meeting

Review Zoning Administrators' Report (John) for (Oct. 2021)

One of the lightest months in four years: Only 1 approved zoning application -- 10/6 new storage building by Moyle behind the mall. Another application and payment were submitted for a pole barn along Paradise Road, but the owner cancelled our scheduled visit and has not returned my calls since then.

Zoning Correspondence:

10/7 -- inquiry about lot frontage requirements for duplexes in R-3; 10/12 -- inquiry about needing a zoning application to change floor in a storage building from gravel to concrete; 10/18 -- inquiry about R-1 rental guidelines.

Correspondence:

MTA – Supervisor's Retreat. Upper Michigan Energy Resources – Natural Gas & Pipeline Safety, CCCS Soccer – Thank You Card to Twp.

Review Fire Departments:

OLFD: No Report

HTFD: No report

Review Assessor's Report:

The Board of Review will have its next meeting on the 13th of December. The meeting is planned, in person, at the Doelle Senior Center to begin at 10am.

Address changes received through November 1st will be reflected on the December tax bills.

Betsy and I balanced the tax to assessing values for the winter warrant, when Betsy has the millages entered I will review the warrant again to authorize collection of winter taxes.

Permit reviews along with requests from homeowners to review their property are going well.

Trustees Reports/Updates: Ollila received a phone call from a company in Madison regarding installation of additional equipment on the tower on Paradise Rd. It was determined that this is between the tower owner and the Company.

Public Comments: Mike Bach commented that he hopes the meetings can go back in person, Fink replied that he expects that the board will begin to meet in person in January while the public will continue to attend via zoom.

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – USDA – RD 2022 Year Funding Response & Flo-Dar Meter Calibration – Crane Engineering.

Chris Holmes updated the board that he sent a letter of recommendation of the Danielson bid for the project.

A motion was made by Ollila to approve and sign the resolution to move ahead with the Danielson bid and approve the money for the sewer project, seconded by Bingham. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

A motion was made by Bingham to sign the award for the Danielson bid, seconded by Ollila. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

A meeting is scheduled via zoom to approve the Bond Resolution on November 23, 2021 at 9:30AM

- B. B-3 Quiet Business Zone – WUPPDR Map Completed. Ollila would like to review the map and suggested we get it to the people before the next Planning Commission meeting in December.
- C. Bay Electric – Blinking Intersection Light Tapiola. Waiting on follow-up
- D. Meyers and Abramson Water Service Proj. Completed – Supply Chain Problems. Meyers is completed, still working on Abramson
- E. (2) Sewer Lift Station Roof Repairs – UPPCO Service Line - Chassell Carpentry.
- F. Church Property – 425 Agreement – 9 yr. Longevity – Bill Fink Report. Met with the new County Administrator, they have not yet taken title of the property. They had their lawyer review the 425, he has issues and isn't quite sure what a 425 is.
- G. Stalker Radar Unit – Shared with City of Houghton – Activated in Hurontown.

New Business:

- A. MTU Cemetery Assistance – Comm. Days – 50/75 Students helped rake all Day.
- B. Sign for City of Houghton - Patrick Greeley – “Waiver of Conflict of Interest”. Fink strongly disagrees because it allows Greeley to represent the City of Houghton and ignore the interest of our Township. Ollila and Anderson agree. Bruce will look into it more and not sign

Insurance Recommendation – Reviewed the insurance information from Brian Miller. For 2022 there is a 12.9% increase. Ollila and Bingham recommend keeping the same coverage and reviewing early next year to re-evaluate changing or eliminating coverage in the future. A motion was made by Ollila to keep insurance coverage the same for 2022, seconded by Bingham. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

- C. Office Holiday Hours – Due to not having someone available to cover for a vacation for Vanessa, we think we should post to close the office in advance when there is no one available to cover.

Meetings:

- A. October 19, 2021 – Webinar – Fahey/Schultz – Twp. Lake Improvements.
- B. October 21, 2021 – WUPPDR – B-3 Quiet Business Zone Map.
- C. October 25, Legal Counsel – Closed Session Zoom Meeting.
- D. October 28, 2021 - Kew. Land Trust Annual Meeting Via Zoom.

Other Business: 2022 Budget hearing scheduled for December 13, 2021 at 5:30PM via zoom, regular board meeting to follow after conclusion of Budget Hearing.

The meeting went into closed session to discuss the assessor travel reimbursement bill at 7:25
The meeting returned to open session at 7:45

The board unanimously agreed that travel requests must be approved in advance by the board. A motion was made by Ollila to pay 1/6th of the travel reimbursement bill submitted by the assessor and mandates that we get the request from her and not her LLC, seconded by Bingham. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

A motion was made by Ollila to correct the typo in the Assessor job description to say "Salaried Exempt employee", seconded by Fink. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Bingham, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith. Nay: none.

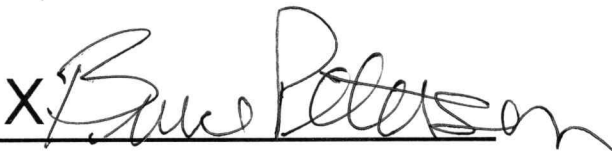
Public Comment: None

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

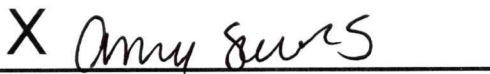
Public Attendance:

Chris Holmes - UPEA

Mike Bach

X 

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes
Clerk