

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

May 13, 2024

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, May 13, 2024.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Bruce Petersen at 6:00 PM.

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

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

Old Business – Wayne Goudge, Incredible bank loan

New Business – Camera Surveillance

Minutes – add 5/10/24 minutes to approve

Remove 14 B and 15 A. Scheduled a special meeting to discuss on Friday, May 17, 2024, at 2PM

A motion was made by Ollila, seconded by Anderson to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Approval of the Bd. of Trustees Previous Minutes: A motion was made by Ollila and seconded by Fink to approve April 8, Reg. & 11, 25 & 5/10 Special meeting minutes. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none.

Anderson commented that she contacted the DPW regarding the habitat home not being charged water. The owner is now being billed.

Approval of the Bills:

Anderson commented that the Township was over for sewer usage one day in March with a penalty of \$236.58 and over six days in April with penalties of \$209.70.

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

Review Clerk's Report:

- Working on Audit
- Working on switch to BS&A. Trained 9 days
- Ordered a document scanner for \$369.00 to be able to easily scan invoices and documents into BS&A
- Trustee/committee work (not meetings). Should trustees be paid for work for the township that is not a meeting? How should we pay for it? Extra work is included in the

monthly rate for Trustees. Both Fink and Ollila said non-meeting duties are covered by the monthly stipend.

- Unemployment will now be taken out of the correct funds based on wages earned in that fund
- Received a quote from Up and Running for a laptop for trustees to write letters, update manuals, email and print documents. The quote is for \$1448.99, includes 1 training session.

A motion was made by Skewes to approve the purchase of a laptop in the amount of \$1448.99, seconded by Smith. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none

Review Treasurer's Report:

- **Audit:** is mostly finished - **ARPA:** follow up from last month inquiry, see below
- **Taxes:** prepping for summer
- **Rural development:** see chart below
- **Monthly Technology Report (Up and Running/UaR)** – created by UaR, our IT provider; when received it will be shared with the board.
 - We pay a fee annually so they are our IT Provider, we can ask questions and put in help tickets at any time as part of our contract.
 - There is no fee/hassle with help calls/assistance. Any employee/trustee can call them at any time with any question.
 - Proactive communication w/Up and Running and our township team helps to make sure all IT issues are anticipated and solved.
 - No one in our office is set up to administer our IT except Up and Running.
- **Township floor repair** – updates? (follow up from prior meetings)
- **BSA transition** – reports will look different; BSA help desk can be used as we transition; more training dates scheduled later this month and in July
 - **Balance sheet:** we will now see each fund separately with totals, ex: Fire includes HTFTD & OLFD, including Hurontown Savings balances.
 - **Reports needed by trustees/committees:** ask questions or book time w/clerk or treasurer in advance for committee meeting reports needed; these may take us longer as we learn the new system.
 - **Data Clean Up:** there is a lot of data integrity work between us and BSA to ensure everything transitioned correctly, this is still in process (ex: cemetery fund due to on its own page should be lumped in with other funds due to board's vote to merge cemetery into general fund rather than its own sub account, completed 9.22.23)
 - **Project totals (hours):** training, implementation, coordination for auditor, etc. totals to come for treasurer
- **Email for Keith** – Keep his personal due to login constraints; if his technology changes, we can reassess. Are there any other trustees that should NOT have a township email? (Zoning is appropriate for the role, Planning Commission too) Moving forward, we will let new trustees decide if they want township email and have the right technology for it

Review Zoning Administrator's Report for (April 2024)

ZONING APPLICATIONS:

4/10 – 47023 Superior Road, new garage attached to existing home, approved. 4/13 – 47023 Superior Road, sauna and small storage shed, approved. 4/19 – 45302 U.S. 41, new garage, approved.

INQUIRIES & COMPLAINTS:

4/5 – Questions about procedure for site plan review, 4/8 – Complaint about rooster(s), Huron & Horatio corner in Hurontown, 4/12 – Inquiry about permits required for saunas and small storage sheds, 4/12 – Complaints about late evening noise behind the mall, 4/17 – Is a permit required for a fenced in dog pen, 4/17 – Can pickleball court lines be painted on the tennis court(s) in Hurontown, 4/22 – Illegal sign complaints, 4/24 – Question about lawn mowing regulations, specifically whether we encourage leaving some areas tall and not mowed, 4/24 – Inquiry about zoning regulations for the former Fox Farm property, 4/25 – Can a garage be built on the vacant lots north of the Hurontown ball fields, 4/27 – Procedure to merge small lots in Hurontown, 4/30 – Inquiry about the rules for building in Pilgrim Hills.

OTHER ZONING ACTIVITIES:

Continuing conversations with MTA for guidance in correcting shortcomings in the Zoning Ordinance. Early prep with Atlantic Overhead Door for upcoming site plan review. Early discussion with Traverse Engineering about two upcoming site plan requests for PC.

Correspondence: Rukkila/Negro Letter, EGLE – CDSMI due Oct. 16, 2024, PAR Plan News, Comm. Shores Comm. Health Foundation – Gala, MTA – The ABCs of ZBAs, Katie Carlson-Lynch – Ontonagon Assessor Work in Twp., Tokio Marine HCC – Thorrez V. Portage Charter Twp. Closeout Letter, Copper Country Informative Recycling Mailer, P. Bayne – Can't Afford Sewer Hookup.

Review Fire Departments: HTFD – Tanker truck purchase. The new tanker is ready for delivery and has increased by \$21,952.00 to \$240,552. They would like to borrow from the general fund \$55,702.00

A motion was made by Ollila to loan \$55,702.00 to the fire department for the purchase to repay over 8 years, seconded by Anderson. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Anderson, Fink, Ollila, Petersen, Skewes, Smith, Wanhaaho. Nay: none

Review Assessor's Report: Distributed

Trustees Reports/Updates:

Anderson commented that the governor signed bill 4012 regarding local input for speed limits. She also asked about an annexation that was listed in the newspaper in Naumkeg

Public Comments: none

Old Business:

- A. Green Acres Rd. Sewer Project – What Has been Completed This Fall & If There is Start-Up & Hurontown Center Ditch. – no report
- B. Job Duty Description – DPW Supervisor Position Proposal. – Will take up Friday the 17th.
- C. (3) Letters Concerning Sump Pumps, items that must not be flushed, and Mandatory Hookup Mailed.
- D. Cemetery opening – April 15 (Monday) 3 Full-time and 2 Part-time there – Flag Placing Paul and Jen Sanders – Saturday – May 11th.
- E. Bear Creek Road – Rd. Commission Abandonment – Signed and Returned.
- F. Wayne Goudge – part time cemetery employee. Bruce stated he had an explanation on why he was absent for a couple months.

- G. Incredible bank loan for Denton Road – learned It is illegal for a Township to borrow money from a bank. The board will go over the numbers in the ARPA funds and road millage fund at our May 17, 2024 meeting.

New Business:

- A. Personnel Manual – Max. Annual Leave Carryover & Matriculate Under Manual When Hired? Will take up Friday.
- B. 3 or 4 hours/Wk. Consulting for Marty to assist Nathan.
- C. Sermon Road Sewer Video Recording. Bruce updated the board on where the clear water is flowing into the sewer system, video showed which home is draining water into the sewer system. Bruce recommends a cease/desist letter to correct problem. Bruce will draft the letter to send to the homeowner and the contractor.
- D. Hurontown Vol. Fire Dept. 2022 Pumper Truck Purchase Cost-Share Breakdown.
- E. Dust Palliative - Road Commission – Oil Application Scheduled for June 10, 2024.
- F. ARPA money - State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Report done
- G. Camera surveillance at Township office. Smith showed the board video of someone lurking around the building who disappeared between the doors for a long time before wandering off as an employee was in her vehicle with the car running.

Public Comment: Ollila handed out the draft of the personnel manual regarding the new vacation/sick hours.

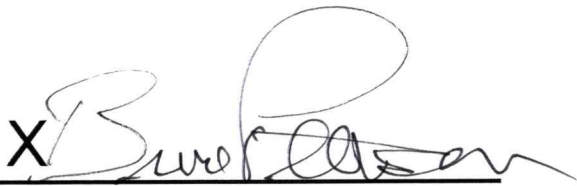
Meetings:

- A. John Paul Pietila, Traverse Eng. First Apostolic Church EGLE Water System App.
- B. Brian Miller Health Insurance Meeting – Lessoned CO-Pay - May 10, 2024.

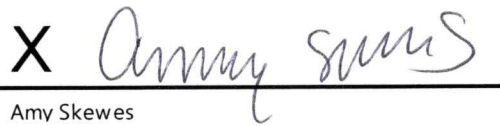
Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM

Public Attendance:

Brandon Scholie
Jared Ruotsala – HTFD
Dale Belanger - HTFD
Scott Kovala – HTFD
Tony Laux
Jason Colombe
Roy Duquette

X 

Bruce Petersen
Supervisor

X 

Amy Skewes
Clerk