

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

March 10, 2025

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, March 10, 2025.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Brandon Scholie at 6:00 pm.

Roll Call:

In attendance were Supervisor Brandon Scholie, Clerk Amy Skewes, Treasurer Betsy Smith, and Trustees Dale Belanger, Janelle Datto, Nick Lanctot, and Amber Voght as stated by roll call.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

None.

A motion was made by Voght and seconded by Lanctot to approve the meeting agenda. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Smith, and Voght. Nay: None.

Approval of the Board of Trustees Previous Minutes:

A motion was made by Lanctot and seconded by Voght to approve the meeting minutes from last month's Regular Board of Trustees Meeting, held February 10, 2025. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Smith, and Voght. Nay: None.

Approval of the Bills:

A motion was made by Datto and seconded by Lanctot to approve the bills as audited. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Smith, and Voght. Nay: None.

Review Clerk's Report:

- Working on end of year stuff/adjustments
- There will not be an election in May
- Will pay telephone reimbursement quarterly

Review Treasurer's Report:

- Working on year-end balancing/reconciliations
- Property Tax: We have turned tax collection for past due 2024 property taxes to the county. We are working on final year end disbursements.
- Marijuana Revenue Sharing: \$58K received end of February
- Regular Revenue Sharing: Received end of February
- 425 Monies: Received from Houghton County
- Treasurer out of office/town: March 24 - 28

- Audit: Working on end of year wrap up in preparation for our audit; we have our meetings in April, and the final audit is due at the latest by June 30, 2025. The audit will be more challenging this year due to the new software we implemented after the first quarter.
- Rural development final numbers for 2024 are included; the account balances are in the positive, but the income/expense is negative. We may have to submit additional reports to the state for these after the audit.
- Rural Development 2025 chart with new minimum balances.
- Four payments (interest only) have gone through; more will go through on payment due dates listed on the right of the chart.
- Estimated payments for the rest of the year are like those in the 2024 chart.
- Income *should* help, the January payments are the first with the new fees included so we need to watch these balances and do another rate increase by mid-year (approve at the May meeting) if they are not gaining enough to be in the positive this year.

Review Zoning Administrator's Report for February 2025:

ZONING APPLICATIONS:

- A rare February Zoning Application: Two new signs for Ferrellgas on US 41, approved 02/12.

INQUIRIES & COMPLAINTS:

- 02/05 & 02/07 – Initial inquiries about permit requirements and fees for signs for Ferrellgas
- 02/12 – Fee and permit questions for future storage building on South River Road
- 02/18 – Follow up questions from Industrial Graphics about details of Ferrellgas signs
- 02/25 – Complaint from resident about next door renters repeatedly driving snowmobiles through his yard; referred to the County Sheriff
- 02/27 – Inquiry from developer about possible residential development adjacent to Dodgeville (on east uphill behind Abe Supply). Will meet with the potential developer later in March to discuss plans, options, zoning rules, etc. Will include a report when I know more.

OTHER ZONING ACTIVITIES:

- Continuing conversations with MTA for guidance about inconsistencies in the Zoning Ordinance and for questions about the Master Plan update.
- The Master Plan update is going well: the narrative is nearly complete, info from the 2020 Census is being incorporated into the appropriate township data tables, false information is being removed, and work has begun on the survey which will be available to township residents. I anticipate one or two more work sessions before the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission.
- I am continuing to compile a list of current information to assist the PC in both the Master Plan update and Zoning Ordinance rewrite.

Review Fire Departments:

- Otter Lake Fire Department (OLFD)
 - 3 EMS, 1 fire
 - Very happy with DPW staff plowing
 - Received new pagers for the department
- Hurontown Fire Department (HTFD)

- No representative present; no report

Review Assessor's Report:

Distributed

Trustee Reports:

Voght: Planning Commission working on revisions the Master Plan

DPW Report:

Kody Maki updated the board:

- Fixed a water line on Woodland Road, Woodland Road in under a boil notice

Public Comments:

- Resident asking who he should ask about getting Sharon Ave fixed
- A resident asked why the board stopped Zoom meetings

Correspondence:

Habitat for Humanity – Letter of Support for a grant.

Old Business:

- Appoint WUPPDR Representative – A motion was made by Skewes to appoint Ted Soldan as the representative, seconded by Smith. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Smith, and Voght. Nay: None.

New Business:

- Baraga Telephone/UP.net representative Koray updated the board on plans for expanding fiber internet. Will give a letter of support from the board.
- Kubota Skidsteer Purchase – A motion was made by Skewes to approve the purchase of a Kubota Skid Steer in the amount of \$58,699.00, seconded by Belanger. Motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Smith, and Voght Nay: None.
- Denton Road Update – Bids open 03/17/25

Public Comment:

- A resident asked about road repair on Hildebrandt Rd. She also asked about potential cuts to Medicaid.
- A resident asked why last month's meeting minutes aren't on the website. The board posts minutes after approved.

Meetings:

- Board of Review: March 11, 2025 from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm at Doelle Senior Center
- Board of Review: March 13, 2025 from 3:00 pm – 9:00 pm at Doelle Senior Center
- Planning commission meeting: April 10, 2025 at 6:00 pm at the Township office

- Trustees Meeting: April 14, 2025 at 6:00 pm at the Township office

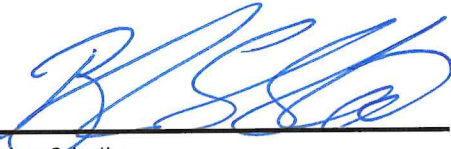
Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Public Attendance:

- Jason Colombe
- Ted Soldan
- Alice Soldan
- Tony Laux
- Kody Maki
- Randy Malone
- Lincoln Singer
- Amy Hjerstedt
- Karen Timonen
- Emily Timonen
- Koray Inal – Baraga Telephone

X



Brandon Scholie
Supervisor

X



Amy Skewes
Clerk