

Charter Township of Portage
Regular Board of Trustees Meeting

August 11, 2025

The Charter Township of Portage held a Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on Monday, August 11, 2025.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Brandon Scholie at 6:01 pm.

Roll Call:

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

Rukkila/Christina – Audit Report

- General fund amount increased during the year while the total township debt decreased.
- Issues found included; expenditures exceeding budget amount, timely reconciliations, deficit in Dakota and Woodland water funds
- Fire Department uniform purchases are approved, but no casual wear.

Additions or Changes to the Meeting Agenda:

- Add Green Acres Road Project
- Water Tower Insulating
- DPW Trailer
- Garage Door for Shipping Container

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, July 14, 2025. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.

Approval of the Bills:

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

Review Clerk's Report:

- Just had the August Election on 8/5– we had a total of 960 voters in our Township. The Elder Nutrition Millage and the Renewal for Canal View both passed.
- There will be another election in November, the Houghton Portage Township Schools filed for a millage renewal.

Review Treasurer's Report:

- Worked with Janelle on the election
- Transition into treasurer role going well
- Will "go live" with BS&A cloud tax and assessing on 9/29/2025

Review Zoning Administrator's Report for July 2025:**ZONING APPLICATIONS:**

7/01 – 44736 Superior Road, new deck, approved. 7/16 – 32565 Nasko Road, new garage, approved. 7/17 – Golf Drive, new storage building, approved. 7/17 – 34595 Conservation Drive, replace a deck and add an overhanging roof from the house, approved. 7/30 – 15175 Horoscope road, new summer camp, approved. 7/31 – Pile River Road, new home, approved.

##An odd, time consuming issue: I had approved an application for a new garage. Then the homeowner switched contractors, and the new contractor modified the plans. The County Bldg. Dept. caught the blueprint change, and I had to have the owner modify the original Zoning Application and attach the new plans – still approved after everything was straightened out! And on a positive note: This month I met three of the new, young contractors in the area whom I had never before encountered – very personable young men who were quite interested in zoning rules, and willing to comply.

INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

7/14 – Rental rules in Isle Royale Estates, 7/15 – Regulations for water and septic when building a camp in FF District, 7/16 – Is a permit needed for an Airbnb on Canal Road, 7/19 – Is a permit needed to fill a pool, 7/23 – Two complaints about quarry noise, 7/26 – how to get a permit for an outhouse at a hunting camp, 7/28 – Complaint about an illegal repair business on Woodland Road, 7/30 – Complaint about an Airbnb being advertised on Woodland Road, 7/31 – Are there regulations about grass height on lawns.

OTHER ZONING ACTIVITIES:

Continuing conversations with MTA for guidance about inconsistencies in the Zoning Ordinance and for questions about the Master Plan update. The narrative for the Master Plan update is nearly complete, and at the next PC meeting long term goals and objectives will likely be reviewed. Additionally, info from the 2020 Census is being incorporated into the appropriate township data tables, and false information & irrelevant information are being removed. Composed the warning letter about the illegal Airbnb on Woodland Road.

Review Assessor's Report:

Distributed

Planning Commission Report:

- WUPPDR Seminar upcoming – Ted will attend
- Continuing on the Master Plan – amendments passed by the Township will be updated
- Looking to make the ordinances more accessible online for the public to view.
- New developments in the works from Moyles Construction.

Review Fire Departments:

- Otter Lake Fire Department (OLFD)
 - 3 Medical Calls
 - Search of a New Fire Engine to replace a 1992 Fire Engine that was purchased 4 years ago from Chassell – would like to purchase a 2005 E-1 for \$85,000 and up to \$90,000.
 - A motion was made by Raffaelli and seconded by Lanctot to approve the purchase of the new Fire Engine for \$90,000. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.
 - Will need to replace a Tanker soon as well.
 - The front driveway of the Firehall needs to be fixed. Water flow needs to be redirected away from the building, will get quotes on the cost to fix.
- Hurontown Fire Department (HTFD)
 - None

Trustee Reports:

- Copper Shores Grant for Hurontown Park – 2 page Concept due by August 22nd.

DPW Report:

- New Employee starting on August 18th – Jesse Solden, DPW
- Water break on Sharon Ave – Hancock City came to help

Public Comments:

- Appreciates the TV in the office for viewing documents
- Bacco parked all their trucks in the Fire Department Parking lot. Equipment and supplies were left behind – Fire Department did not approve this.
- Signs that are showing up at intersections that are illegally advertising services – a solution for removing these signs will be discussed.

Correspondence:

- There is interest in renting out the Dodgeville Park for events – insurance and more information on the ability to rent is needed.

Old Business:

- Green Acres Road Sewer Project

- A motion was made by Skewes and seconded by Lanctot to approve the Change Order No. 7 for Danielson Construction. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.
- A motion was made by Skewes and seconded by Voght to approve the 25th Draw with payments totaling \$247,721.49 contingent upon the Change Order. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.

New Business:

- Water Tower Insulating
 - A motion was made by Voght and seconded by Skewes to approve the purchase of the insulation for the water tower in the amount of \$4,000. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.
- DPW Trailer – Quotes to trade in current equipment trailer for a smaller trailer.
 - A motion was made by Lanctot and seconded by Skewes to approve the purchase of the trailer for \$4,627.00. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.
- Garage Door for Shipping Container
 - A motion was made by Voght and seconded by Raffaelli to approve the purchase of a garage door. Motion was carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Belanger, Datto, Lanctot, Scholie, Skewes, Raffaelli, and Voght. Nay: None.

Public Comment:

- none

Meetings:

- **Trustees Meeting** (September 8th, 2025 - 6:00pm Township Office)

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Public Attendance:

- Christina Smigowski, Rukkila Negro & Associates
- Chris Holmes - UPEA
- Roy Britz
- Tony Laux
- Ted Soldan - OLFD
- Jason Colombe
- Anders Kallungi – OLFD
- Randy Malone – OLFD

X 

Brandon Scholie
Supervisor

X 

Janelle Datto
Clerk