

PORTAGE TOWNSHIP BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2025 Approved Pat MacLachlan, Clerk

The regular meeting of the Portage Township Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Sicinski.

Board members present: Holbrook, McKeage, Sicinski, Abram and MacLachlan

Guests- John Barker, Germfask Twp. Supervisor & Marcie Barker, Germfask Twp. Trustee.

Pledge of Allegiance

Motion Sicinski; second Holbrook to approve the agenda as amended to include New #7- Building Zoning fee change proposal, #8-Appointment to Planning Commission- new member. All ayes

Motion McKeage second Holbrook to approve the minutes of the 12/10/24 regular meeting. All ayes

Motion Sicinski, second Holbrook to approve the bills as presented. EMS payroll \$19,497.00, Library payroll \$2,493.50, Township payroll \$10,978.44, General \$19,512.08 plus outstanding Cloverland bills, Fire \$4057.05, EMS \$24,297.02 plus outstanding Accumed and Airgas. Library \$3531.14. All ayes

Reports

Building/Zoning- Alberts accused Clerk of not allowing him to add items to the agenda regarding his proposed Building Permit fee increases. (See previously approved New business # 7 addition). One permit pulled in January.

Clerk- New County Commissioner Daryl Schroeder was unable to attend this meeting but, asked Clerk to share his plans to visit the township quarterly the second Tuesday of the month at 6:00, prior to the township board meeting to meet with residents. He is the Vice-Chair of the County Commissioners. They have rewritten the commission rules which will allow meetings to be held at various locations throughout the county. The Commission is scheduling public meetings for information and input on increasing the County Road Commission to 5 members from 3, dates and times to follow.

Clerk gave status of new grant available for development of a meadow/wildflower area at the recreation area. The Medicare Survey was completed and submitted on December 23rd. Noted that the 2023-28 contract with Three Lakes Academy needs the supervisor's signature.

Treasurer- Written report given to board.

Trustees – Abram & Holbrook continue planning for the “North Road” development. They secured support and engineering help from MCRC when they attended the recent MCRC meeting. We need to give dedicated surveyed access to MCRC for a 75” wide road that would include a pedestrian walking shoulder.

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Motion Sicinski; second McKeage, to approve the creation of a 75' roadway and to update the survey of the property for the North Road. MCRC to do the engineering for the project. All ayes

Note- Contract for MCRC services to follow.

Library- Blanchard has completed and submitted the State Aid report for library funding. The Friends Group has offered to help with the cost library programing and the front porch renovations. Programs continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

EMS- 21 calls in December, total of 205 runs in 2024. Wiegand expressed desperate need for a new ambulance. New "in stock" rig would cost \$320,000. To refurbish the 2009 with a new chassis would be \$220,000. Both rigs have heating issues, one in cab and one in patient box. Ambulance repair company to come this week to fix.

Supervisor suggested Wiegand bring ambulance quotes to the February board meeting.

Fire- 2 calls.

Action items

Old Business-

- 1. Update by Holbrook on library and museum renovations and roof. Ads for the work will be placed in the spring.**
- 2. MacLachlan shared additional information about streaming/recording Portage Township Board Meetings.
Motion Sicinski; second McKeage to stream and record township board meetings, beginning in March 2025.**
- 3. Update on Norm Burton's metal drop off site on H-33. Per Alberts, Burton has been removing some of the metal.**
- 4. Sicinski shared that he is waiting to hear from the Curtis Area Trails Association about the accepted proposal.
McKeage shared information received from Mike Homier, township attorney, about the need for a legal purchase agreement between the parties and proof of clear title. Homier also strongly recommended an Phase 1 baseline environmental assessment of the Groomer Barn property. A fully executed lease agreement on the Lilac Lane property the township is giving to the CATA for their new building, including hold harmless language is needed.**

New Business-

- 1. Motion Sicinski; second MacLachlan to approve the 2025 March BOR dates as presented. All ayes**
- 2. Motion Sicinski; second Holbrook, to appoint Bud Chamberlin, Frank Buckley and Rich Erdlitz to 2 year terms as 2025-2027 Board of Review members. All ayes**

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- 3. Motion MacLachlan, second Sicinski to approve 2025 Poverty Exemption Income Guidelines and Asset Test Resolution. Also to accept The six new PA66 Accessing policies as recommended by the assessor. All ayes**
- 4. Motion Sicinski, second Abram to approve the requested Night Magic fireworks permit for February 15, 2025 Fish Coop. Board also gave permission for the garbage from the event to be placed in the green township dumpster. All ayes**
- 5. Motion Holbrook, second McKeage to appoint Supervisor Sicinski to the Big Lake Dam Authority board. All ayes.**
- 6. Motion MacLachlan, second upon recommendation of Chief Burton, to hire America Temple as FFI. All ayes**
- 7. Motion MacLachlan; second Abram to increase building permit fees to:
House- .18/sq. ft.
Garage-.12/sq. ft.
Pole building- .12/sq. ft.
Plan review \$30.00
Zoning Review \$50.00
Inspection- \$25.00/ inspection
Accessory buildings need 3 inspections and houses need 7 inspections.
Inspection fees to be paid in advance as part of the permit.
Fees to be effective as of March 1, 2025. All ayes**
- 8. Motion MacLachlan, Support Abram to appoint Frank Buckley to the Portage Township Board of Review, term ending 12/31/25. All ayes**

Public Comment-

- Concerns about speed limit near school, fire signs should be at all township properties, would like a walking path from H-33 through town to the Erickson Center, driveway still needs repair from road paving project, Reed was going to get it corrected. Questions “illegal board quorum” meeting that took place after the December township board meeting.
- Big Manistique Lake level is currently +6” above legal limit. Who will pay for the Groomer Building purchase?
- Has an appraisal been done on the 5 acre parcel on Lilac Lane? Why didn’t the Township Board counter the offer made by the Curtis Area Trail Association?
- About time to do something about the ambulances. EMS and Fire departments need to work together

Motion Sicinski to adjourn 8:56 p.m.