

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE  
TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
February 14, 2023  
2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Supervisor Larry Gray called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and introduced the members of the Board.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor  
Melissa Creech, Clerk  
Molly Phillips, Treasurer  
Robert Berkheiser, Trustee  
Vanessa Wagner, Trustee  
Rick Sovel, Trustee

Absent: George Weber, Trustee (excused)

Also Present: Hans Rentrop, Township Attorney  
Dave Campbell, Planning Director  
Jim Dundas, Fire Chief  
Emily England, Senior/Parks and Recreation Director  
Jay James, Building Official  
Alyson Lobert, Library Director  
Jason Mayer, Giffels Webster Engineers  
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director  
Ben Sebrowski, IT Director

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Phillips, supported by Creech, to approve the January 10, 2023 Regular Township Board Meeting minutes and the January 24, 2023 Quarterly Township Board Meeting minutes, as submitted. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 1:2-14 APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Sovel, supported by Wagner, to approve the February 14, 2023 agenda. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 2:2-14 PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Supervisor Gray opened Public Comments and advised the public that this is for public comments only and will be limited to 2 minutes for each person.

Jennifer Saylor, 2068 Alsup Ave., Commerce Township, in support of Windmill Farms. As of today, there are over 4,000 signatures on the petition to keep Carrie Hancock operating Windmill Farms. She has a proposal she would like to present to the Township Board and stated, if approved, she would be the Communications Director for Windmill Farms.

Newly elected County Commissioner for District 14, Dr. Ajay Raman (representing Commerce Township, Walled Lake, Novi and Wixom), introduced himself and offered to assist Commerce Township, if needed, in his role as County Commissioner.

Supervisor Gray closed Public Comments.

**ITEM 3:2-14 BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

**A. Maria Coffin – Resignation from the Board of Review**

**MOTION** by Sovel, supported by Berkheiser, to accept the resignation letter of Maria Coffin from the Board of Review effective 2-15-2023.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**B. Jamie Lieberman – Appointment to the Board of Review for a Partial Term Ending December 31, 2024.**

Jamie Lieberman was present and answered questions from the Board.

**MOTION** by Magner, supported by Phillips, to approve the appointment of Jamie Lieberman to the Board of Review for a Partial Term ending December 31, 2024.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 4:2-14 ADOPTIONS**

**A. Zoning Map Amendment from B-1 to R-1D at Farrant St. and Union Lake Road.**

David Campbell, Planning Director, explained the Amendment. The Planning Commission recommends approval.

Robert Cobb, Annalison Company President, 1073 Audubon, Waterford, and Jim Butler, PEA Group, Engineer for the project, 1849 Pond Run, Auburn Hills, were present to answer questions from Board members.

**MOTION** by Sovel, supported by Magner, to Adopt an Amendment to Amend the Zoning Map of the Charter Township of Commerce, Oakland County, Michigan as Adopted by Zoning Ordinance 3.000, to be known as Zoning Amendment Ordinance No. 3.059, post and publish according to law. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 5:2-14 OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Oakland County Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Distribution Agreement and Resolution**

Emily England, Senior Director, discussed the \$250,000 reimbursement grant from the American Rescue Plan funds awarded by Oakland County to be used toward construction costs of the Richardson Center pickle ball courts and parking improvements.

Hans Rentrop, Township Attorney, advised the Board that Oakland County requires the Township to execute the agreement.

**MOTION** by Berkheiser, supported by Sovel, to approve the Resolution of the Township Board of The Charter Township of Commerce Authorizing Interlocal Agreement for Reimbursement Grant – Richardson Senior Center.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**B. IT Department Staffing**

Ben Sebrowski, Director of Technology, explained the need to hire a full time Technology Specialist for the Technology Department and he submitted a job description for the Board's review. This position was included in the 2023 budget at a yearly salary of \$55,000 plus benefits.

**MOTION** by Sovel, supported by Phillips, to approve the job description and post a notice to hire someone to fill the position of a full time Technology Specialist for the Technology Department.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**C. Pathways Survey Overview**

Supervisor Gray said 1,151 surveys were returned to the Township. Residents would like to see pathways placed along the Union Lake corridor (Union Lake Road from Wise Road to Cooley Lake Road), Benstein Road from Sleeth Road to Maple Road, Commerce Road/Cooley Lake Road intersection, and Commerce Road from Union Lake Road up to Huron Valley Hospital. If the Board is in agreement, he would like to form a committee that will review and recommend potential pathways to the Township Board.

Supervisor Gray will put something together for discussion next month.

**ITEM 6:2-14 NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Application to Use Township Hall – Outrun Hunger**

Kari Cotter is requesting use of the south side of the patio and the West Wing of the Township Hall for the Outrun Hunger charity event to be held on November 10th (4:00 pm – 8:00 pm) and 11th (7:00 am – 1:00 pm), 2023. Proceeds from the event will go directly to local food pantries

**ITEM 6:2-14 NEW BUSINESS (Application to Use Township Hall – Outrun Hunger continued)**

Supervisor Gray asked the Board to consider approving Outrun Hunger applications for 2023 and 2024.

**MOTION** by Berkheiser, supported by Sovel, to approve the use of the south side of the patio and the West Wing of the Township Hall for the Outrun Hunger charity event to be held on November 10th (4:00 pm – 8:00 pm) and 11th (7:00 am – 1:00 pm), 2023. The application to use the Township Hall for this event shall also be approved for the year 2024 and the rental and deposit fees shall be waived for 2023 and 2024.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**B. Tri-Party Fund Construction Cost Participation Agreement – Loop Road**

**MOTION** by Gray, supported by Phillips, to approve the Cost Participation Agreement Construction Loop Road, 14 Mile Road to Maple Road, Board Project No. 56892 between The Board of County Road Commissioners of the County of Oakland, Michigan and The Charter Township of Commerce.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**C. Tri-Party Funds Discussion**

Supervisor Gray said the annual Tri-Party Program involves one-third funding from Oakland County general government, one third from The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) and one third from the community. Right now there is \$1,715,000 available in Tri-Party funds for Commerce Township.

Supervisor Gray said the following roads may need work done: Welch Road from 14 Mile Road to Oakley Park Road, Commerce Road from Carroll Lake Road to Union Lake Road, and Newton Road from Oakley Park Road to Commerce Road. These projects would cost approximately \$1,650,000. The cost for Commerce Township would be approximately \$550,000.

Trustee Berkheiser – He is not sure he would want to use Tri-Party funding for Welch and Commerce Roads because these are county roads and the county repaves them. Wise Road also gets paved every so often. He said Richardson Road, M5 and Union Lake Roads are a mess. Union Lake and Cooley Lake Roads need improvements. Sleeth/Duck Lake/Wixom Roads are also a mess; maybe we could partner with Milford on these roads.

Supervisor Gray talked with the Maintenance Department from RCOC about making turn lanes longer. New traffic lights will be installed at Union Lake Road and Cooley Lake Road. Sleeth Road and Duck Lake Road roundabout was pushed back to 2026.

**ITEM 6:2-14 NEW BUSINESS (Tri-Party Funds Discussion continued)**

Treasurer Phillips said in the last 4 years a significant portion of Wise Road and Willow Road were paved along with bits and pieces of county roads. She feels if county roads are bad then RCOC should repair and pay for the roads.

Trustee Sovel questioned if the County can increase the Tri-Party funds from the American Rescue Plan funds for road improvements within Commerce Township. County Commissioner Dr. Ajay Raman said he did not think this was an option, although he will check and get an answer on Trustee Sovel's question.

Trustee Magner said the passing lanes heading east needs to be extended at the intersection of Commerce and Sleeth Roads along with an extension of the right turn lane. Is it possible to make the left turn lane dedicated to turn left only? Richardson Road turning left onto Martin Parkway, you should have to turn left.

Supervisor Gray said actual paving of roads will not happen in the next 3-5 years. He will put something together incorporating suggestions of Board members and present it for their review.

**D. Proposed Federal Award Procurement Policy and Guidelines**

Hans Rentrop, Township Attorney, recommends the Board adopt the policy.

**MOTION** by Sovel supported by Phillips, to approve the Charter Township of Commerce Federal Award Procurement Policy.

**Trustee Berkheiser voted no**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ITEM 7:2-14 ORDERS**

**MOTION** by Sovel, supported by Magner, to approve the Orders and Add Ons.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 8:2-14 OTHER MATTERS**

Clerk Creech –

- Residents wanted to know if the Township holds a "paper/document shredding day". The Township has not held this event before, although she said they will hold a paper/document shredding day on June 17, 2023 at the Township hall and see how well it is received.

Trustee Berkheiser –

- In Trustee Weber's absence he asked Berkheiser to mention there are a lot of items on the Township's calendar that expire shortly. Clerk Creech said her department handles this and she will check into it.

**ITEM 8:2-14 OTHER MATTERS (continued)**

- The Parks and Recreation Committee have asked the leagues what their policies or rules are with CPR/AED training. The Parks and Recreation Committee is working with the Fire Chief to see if there is any training they can offer the league/teams.


Supervisor Gray –

- Gave an update on the \$2 Million funding due from Haley Stevens for the Lystek system that he is working on with Jason Mayer, Giffels Webster Engineers.
- CPR classes will be held at the Township Hall on March 6 and 8, 2023 from 10:00 am – noon; and at the library March 28, 2023 from 9:30 am – 11:30 am and then from 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm.
- Work will begin on the roof at 2019 Township Drive.
- February 16, 2023 opening bids on the OCSD office at 2019 Township Drive.
- Aquatic Weed Control presentations for Lower Straits Lake will be on February 23, 2023.
- The paid 5 days off work for employees exposed to or who contracted COVID will end. Employees must use PTO.

**ITEM 9:2-14 ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Creech, supported by Magner, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

  
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Melissa Creech, Clerk  
Charter Township of Commerce