

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, MI 48390
Tuesday, August 23, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Larry Gray called the Township Board of Trustees meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor
Melissa Creech, Clerk
Molly Phillips, Treasurer
Rick Sovel, Trustee
Bob Berkheiser, Trustee

Absent: George Weber, Trustee
Vanessa Magner, Trustee

ITEM 1: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Supervisor Gray opened public comments.

Seeing none, Supervisor Gray closed Public Comments.

ITEM 2: OAKLAND COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MILLAGE

Supervisor Gray reviewed the Oakland County Board of Commissioners' vote to add a mass transportation millage proposal to the November 8, 2022 General Election Ballot. The millage is for .95 mills which equals a \$2.3 million contribution from Commerce Township residents. Many of the surrounding communities are opposed to the millage and want to file an injunction against the proposed millage. Ideally, they would all work together to keep the proposal off the ballot but it may be too late for that. Commerce Township will receive none of the collected millage money back and no increase in transportation services. He asks the Board of Trustees to authorize the Supervisor to work with surrounding communities to begin litigation to prevent the proposed .95 mill increase from being placed on the November 8, 2022 ballot.

MOTION by Berkheiser, supported by Sovel, to authorize the Township Supervisor to work with other Oakland County communities to take a position in opposition to the proposed Oakland County Public Transportation Millage, including, if appropriate in the Supervisor's discretion, participation with other communities in litigation seeking to prevent the proposed .95 mill tax from being placed on the November 2022 ballot for voter approval, the costs to participate in legal action are not to exceed \$5,000.00 from the General Fund.

Discussion:

Trustee Berkheiser asked who decides on the criteria of which transportation services are funded and which are not?

Supervisor Gray answered that the Township would be forced to join WOTA or NOTA.

ITEM 2: OAKLAND COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MILLAGE continued

Treasurer Phillips indicated that it sounds like there's no business plan in place at the county to deal with the influx of cash.

Trustee Sovel asked how much People's Express costs the Township?

Trustee Berkheiser answered \$150,000.00.

Trustee Sovel said the voters of Commerce Township need to understand that the Township is providing transportation services for \$150,000.00 with no increase in taxes. The County's proposed millage will raise taxes costing the residents \$2.4 million with no increase in transportation services for Commerce Township residents.

Trustee Berkheiser asked if the Township can opt into the SMART busing system.

Supervisor Gray answered that SMART will not pick up any communities who previously opted out. Supervisor Gray attended the Oakland County Board of Commissioners' meeting and said the Commissioners did not know that WOTA existed.

Treasurer Phillips said the County Board of Commissioners is clueless about the west side of the County.

Supervisor Gray said Commissioner Long asked for People's Express to be included as a vendor and was denied by the Board of County Commissioners.

Clerk Creech said she is concerned that voters would not educate themselves and would not realize what the proposal is and how much it will cost residents for a service they may never be able to use.

Supervisor Gray said that mass transit does not work in western Oakland County. Supervisor Gray also indicated the .95 millage proposal would not increase WOTA's days and hours of service while costing the residents \$2.3 million.

Clerk Creech asked what the vote was on the Board of County Commissioners?

Supervisor Gray answered it was 13 to 7.

Trustee Sovel asked how many communities want to join in legal action?

Supervisor Gray answered 6 at this time but more could join.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Creech, supported by Phillips, to adjourn the meeting at 4:48 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce