

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, MI 48390
Tuesday, October 21, 2025, 5:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Gray called the Township Board of Trustees Special Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor
Molly Phillips, Treasurer
Rick Sovel, Trustee
Bob Berkheiser, Trustee
Robert Long, Trustee
George Weber, Trustee

Absent Melissa Creech, Clerk (excused)

Also Present: Katelyn Massey, Finance/HR Director
Natalie Hiney, Finance/HR Assistant
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director
Emily England, Senior/Parks and Recreation Director
Jim Dundas, Fire Chief
Lt. Hix, Oakland County Sheriff's Office
Sgt. Leggat, Oakland County Sheriff's Office

ITEM 1: Public Comments

Supervisor Gray opened Public Comments.

Seeing none, Supervisor Gray closed Public Comments.

ITEM 2: 2026 Township Budget Discussion

The Board of Trustees asked Maintenance Director Mark Shoder to present the proposed 2026 Maintenance Department budget.

Supervisor Gray asked Director Shoder if he has a summary of what he's looking for in 2026.

Director Shoder responded that he has quotes for the equipment purchases included in his budget.

Trustee Weber said the Board is looking for a memo with a story regarding what Director Shoder wants and why he wants it.

Special Meeting

ITEM 2: 2026 Township Budget Discussion continued

Supervisor Gray said the proposed 2026 Maintenance Department budget review will be moved to the November 4, 2025 Special Meeting.

Senior/Parks and Recreation Director Emily England presented the proposed 2026 Parks and Recreation budget.

Director England presented the breakdown of the proposed 2026 budget: supplies, \$10,000; contracted services, \$81,100; building and grounds maintenance, \$161,700; program and event funding, \$148,000; education, \$1,000; and capital outlay, \$90,000.

The trustees discussed bathroom cleaning schedules, community events, medical insurance costs, and security camera installation.

Director England presented the proposed 2026 Open Space budget. She reviewed the Parks and Recreation Committee's top six priorities for 2025:

1. Victory Park – came in under budget
2. Union Lake Kayak Launch – came in under budget
3. Richardson Center Parking Lot and Pathway – not yet complete
4. Mill Race/Byers- north side bridge, forestry and tree management plans
5. Hickory Glen- signage, pavilion, picnic tables
6. Maple Glen – signage and pavilion

The 2026 Open Space priorities are as follows:

1. Victory Park- install well at dog park, future restroom, \$100,000
2. Mill Race/Byers – replace footbridge near shopping plaza, tree management plan, \$125,000
3. Long Park – develop a vegetation management plan and treat Berry Lake, \$50,000
4. Hickory Glen Park – install a pavilion, benches, picnic tables, \$100,000
5. Maple Glen Park – install a pavilion, benches, picnic tables, \$100,000
6. Union Lake Kayak Launch – fishing dock, picnic table, pavilion, \$250,000

If time and funds allow, the items below are also key projects the Parks and Recreation committee would like to complete:

7. Richardson Community Center – pathway to Reed Lake, kayak/fishing dock, \$400,000
8. Wise Woods – way finding signage, \$10,000
9. Snowy Ridge – install lighting and signage on the hill, \$10,000
10. Bicentennial Park – baseball field, \$ 25,000
11. Dodge Park – miscellaneous needs of the park, \$25,000

In addition to the capital purchases, \$40,000 has been budgeted for consulting fees.

Special Meeting

ITEM 2: 2026 Township Budget Discussion continued

The trustees discussed the vegetation at Berry Lake, the use of the Union Lake Kayak Launch, and the constant need for picnic table purchases.

Chief Dundas presented the proposed 2026 Fire Department budget. The budget projects revenues of \$9,226,400 with total expenditures of \$7,897,852.

The trustees discussed the transition to ALS and the issues with the accounting practices of EMS MC. The trustees discussed the need to maintain a fund balance for the purchase of vehicle replacement and what that balance should be and how much should be contributed to the fund yearly. The SAD rate was debated as part of the discussion. Supervisor Gray said the Fire Fund will transfer \$400,000 to the fund in 2025 and \$800,000 in 2026.

In addition, the trustees discussed staffing of POC firefighters and full-time paramedics.

Lt. Hix of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office presented the proposed 2026 Oakland County Sheriff's Office budget for the Commerce Township substation. The budget projects revenues of \$9,261,011 with total expenditures of \$8,405,809. In addition, Lt. Hix is requesting minimal changes with no additional personnel requested. The budget was increased only to reflect the 9.1% rate increase imposed by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners' contract with Commerce Township.

The trustees discussed the frustrations of dealing with the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, holiday and overtime pay, and the responsible party for maintaining the 2019 building where the OCSO occupies just over 50% of the space.

Adjournment

MOTION by Phillips, supported by Gray, to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce