

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

July 8, 2025

2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor
Melissa Creech, Clerk
Molly Phillips, Treasurer
Robert Long, Trustee
Rick Sovel, Trustee
George Weber, Trustee

Absent: Robert Berkheiser, Trustee (excused)

Also Present: Hans Rentrop, Township Attorney
Jason Mayer, Giffels Webster Engineers
David Campbell, Planning Director
Emily England, Parks and Rec/Senior Director
Jay James, Building Official
Katelyn Massey, Human Resources Director
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director
Jim Dundas, Fire Chief
Lt. Eric Hix, Oakland County Sheriff's Office

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Phillips, to approve the June 10, 2025 Regular Township Board Meeting, as submitted. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

PRESENTATIONS

A. Citizen Recognition by the Fire Department

Jim Dundas, Fire Chief, read into the record and presented a letter of appreciation to Jacob Bowers of Commerce Township for his heroric efforts during an emergency. On June 8, 2025, Jacob was driving home when he noticed a one story duplex on fire at 2667 Benstein Road. Jacob immediately called 911 to report the fire. He stopped his car and banged on the door to alert any occupants inside the house. He succesfully helped a woman out of the house just before fire fighters arrived. There was a working smoke detector in the house but it was the sound of banging on the door that woke her from a deep sleep.

PRESENTATIONS (continued)

B. UFS Water and Wastewater Rate Study

Dawn Lund, Vice President, Utility Financial Solutions, LLC, gave a presentation on:

Water Financial Projection –

- 5.7% increase for 2026 from GLWA for our wholesale water costs.
- Projected rate track through 2030 from GLWA for wholesale water is 7.5% per year through 2029 and 6.0% in 2030.
- Recommends setting a rate increase today at 4.9% for 2026.

Wastewater financial projection –

- 6.9% increase for 2026 (no rate adjustment) – This rate is already approved and included in our ordinances.
- Projected rate track through 2030 if we eliminate the increase that was already approved for 2026 (make it zero) we would do 3.0% in 2027.

C. Water Operator – F&V Operations

There was no one present from F&V Operations.

This will be moved to the July 24, 2025 Township Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting.

D. Plante Moran 12/31/2024 Audit Results

Keith Szymanski and Philip Femminino, Plante Moran, provided the Board with the Auditor's Financial Report related to the financial statements, with supplementary information, of the Charter Township of Commerce for the year ending December 31, 2024.

ITEM 1:7-8 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Creech, to approve the July 8, 2025 agenda with the addition of **ITEM 5:7-8 CONTRACT AWARDS AND AGREEMENTS B. Island Club Sanitary Rehabilitation Contract Award.** **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

ITEM 2:7-8 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Supervisor Gray opened Public Comments and advised the public that speaking time is limited to three (3) minutes. This is for public comments only and not for comments regarding the public hearings on the agenda.

There were no public comments.

Supervisor Gray closed Public Comments.

ITEM 3:7-8 PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Roll Resolution – Island Club Sanitary Sewer Repair & Improvement SAD

Supervisor Gray opened the Public Hearing

ITEM 3:7-8 PUBLIC HEARINGS (Roll Resolution – Island Club Sanitary Sewer Repair & Improvement SAD continued)

Terry Harshfield, President, Island Club Homeowners Association, said that at the last Township Board meeting there was a stipulation that we would attempt to get the lowest possible rate. Trustee Weber said the rate is 2.5%. He asked if anyone knew if this can be deducted on our federal tax return? (no answer was given). He then started to ask questions regarding the road SAD and Supervisor Gray advised him that this Public Hearing was for the sanitary sewer repair and improvement.

Supervisor Gray closed the Public Hearing

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Phillips, to approve the Resolution Confirming Special Assessment Roll for The Special Assessment District Designated Island Club Sanitary Sewer Repair & Improvement Special Assessment District, post and publish according to law.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Sovel, Phillips, Creech, Weber, Long, Gray

NAYS:

ABSENT: Berkheiser

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 4:7-8 BOARD APPOINTMENTS

A. Caitlin Bearer – Appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 3-Year Term Ending July 31, 2028

MOTION by Gray, supported by Sovel, to approve the Appointment of Caitlin Bearer to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 3-Year Term Ending July 31, 2028.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 5:7-8 CONTRACT AWARDS AND AGREEMENTS

A. LAYA 2025 Agreement

Treasurer Phillips said the Township is not allowed to donate to charities.

MOTION by Weber, supported by Creech, to approve the Contract for Services in the amount of \$4,200 by Lakes Area Youth Assistance for the Charter Township of Commerce from July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Weber, Creech, Gray

NAYS: Phillips, Long, Sovel

ABSENT: Berkheiser

MOTION FAILED

Treasurer Phillips – keep in mind every year we give Lakes Area Youth Assistance money from the opioid account. She also asked about the percentage of funds used for administrative costs. Supervisor Gray said he would investigate further.

ITEM 5:7-8 CONTRACT AWARDS AND AGREEMENTS (continued)

B. Island Club Sanitary Rehabilitation Contract Award

Jason Mayer, Giffels Webster, said four (4) bids were received for the construction project. He recommends the contract be awarded to the low bidder DVM Utilities, Inc. in the amount of \$366,496.50. The project budget will not exceed \$784,000 without prior authorization from the Township Board of Trustees.

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Weber, to award the Island Club Sanitary Rehabilitation Contract to DVM Utilities, Inc. in the amount of \$366,496.50. The project budget will not exceed \$784,000 without prior authorization from the Township Board of Trustees.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 6:7-8 PURCHASES

A. 2 Power Load Stretchers – Fire Department

Jim Dundas, Fire Chief, is requesting approval to purchase two (2) power load stretchers for Stations 1 and 3 from Stryker Medical Equipment at a cost of \$172,803.40.

MOTION by Gray, supported by Creech, to approve the purchase of two (2) power load stretchers for Stations 1 and 3 from Stryker Medical Equipment (quote 11138602 dated 6/24/2025) at a cost not to exceed \$173,000. Funds to come from the Fire Department Budget.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 7:7-8 OLD BUSINESS

A. Richardson Center Phase II – Restroom Building

Emily England, Parks and Rec/Senior Director, said a Motion was approved during the February 11, 2025 Township Board meeting to move forward on Phase 2 of the Richardson Center improvements, that included the restroom. After many discussions, the need for a storage area for Parks and Recreation, the size of the restroom facility increased to a 20'X30' building featuring two ADA restrooms and approximately 300 sq. ft. of storage. Prep work (temporary drive for the truck and crane) would be needed at the site for delivery of the precast building. Having the facility built on site would eliminate the cost associated with the delivery of the precast building and allow the building's finish to match that of the Richardson Center.

Trustee Long recommends postponing the east pathway extension and putting that money towards the restroom so we stay in budget.

MOTION by Weber, supported by Long, to approve up to \$501,000 to design and build a 20'X30' restroom and storage facility at the Richardson Center.

Discussion – Supervisor Gray said the east pathway extension will not be done at this time.

MOTION CARRIED

Supervisor Gray voted no

ITEM 8:7-8 NEW BUSINESS

A. Fireworks Permit – Long Lake Cake

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Creech, to approve the Long Lake Fireworks Permit for August 2, 2025.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

B. Water and Wastewater Rates

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Phillips, to approve the Water rate increase to 4.9% for 2026 and Wastewater rates reduced to 0% increase for 2026.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. Water Operator

No action taken

ITEM 9:7-8 ORDERS AND ADD ONS

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Creech, to approve the orders and the add ons.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 10:7-8 OTHER MATTERS

Clerk Creech –

New fencing will be installed on the east, west, and north sides of the cemetery on Commerce Road and a locking gate will be installed on the north side for maintenance purposes.

Trustee Weber –

- Thank you to Rob Long and others who covered part of his shift at the Bicentennial Event. Thank you to Jason Mayer for working a 10-hour shift at the beer tent checking IDs., as well as Emily England and Mark Schoder's teams for the effort they put into the event.
- He read that Jason Mayer has not yet received confirmation from Kroger on obtaining easements at Beck Rd. He asked Jason to let him know if there were any issues as Kroger would be before the Planning Commission next month asking for site plan approval. Jason said Kroger did not want their driveway blocked and Craig is moving forward with appraisals.
- He asked Trustee Long if there was any new information on the horse farm roof from his Amish contacts. Trustee Long advised they were waiting for the roof dimensions in order to provide a quote. Director England will get the dimensions.

Treasurer Phillips –

- Announced she will retire the end of June 2026. She recommends Katelyn Massey as her successor.

ITEM 10:7-8 OTHER MATTERS (continued)

Supervisor Gray-

- July 22, 2025 is the quarterly board meeting and the Ordinance Director, Mario Gibbons, will be present to give an update.
- He received information from SEMCOG on the attendance from Bicentennial. They picked up 3,300 cell phones in the area, average stay time for each cell phone was 112 minutes, furthest traveler traveled 250 miles.
- He will be on vacation from July 10th thru the 18th.

ITEM 11:7-8 CLOSED SESSION

A. To Discuss Attorney- Client Privileged Information Pursuant to MCL 15.268(1) (h)

MOTION by Creech, supported by Phillips, to enter into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Attorney-Client privileged information pursuant to MCL 15.268(1) (h).

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Creech, Phillips, Weber, Long, Sovel, Gray

NAYS:

ABSENT: Berkheiser

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Entered into Closed Session: 8:33 p.m.

Returned from Closed Session: 8:54 p.m.

MOTION by Creech, supported by Phillips, to adjourn from Closed Session and approve the Closed Session minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 12:7-8 ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other matters to come before the Board.

MOTION by Creech, supported by Sovel, to adjourn at 8:54 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce