

GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting
October 6, 2025

MINUTES

Call to Order

Supervisor Spicher called the regular meeting of the Genoa Charter Township Board to order at 6:30 pm at the Township Hall.

Invocation

Supervisor Spicher led the invocation for the Board and the members of the public.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

The following members were present constituting a quorum for the transaction of business: Kevin Spicher, Janene Deaton, Candie Hovarter, Robin Hunt, Bill Reiber, Rick Soucy, and Todd Walker.

Also present was Township Manager Kelly VanMarter, Township Attorney Joe Seward, and 11 people in the audience.

Call to the Public

The call to the public was opened at 6:32 pm.

Ms. Deb Beattie of 3109 Pineview Trail spoke about the sign that will be placed when someone has a permit. The phone number should be large. The ordinances that were presented to the township were done by a group and not just one person. She clarified some of the items in there. She asked the board to take a long look at them.

The call to the public was closed at 6:36 pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Ms. Hunt requested to have Agenda Item #2 moved to the Regular Agenda.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Walker, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. **The motion carried unanimously.**

1. Payment of Bills: October 6, 2025

2. ~~Request to approve the September 15, 2025 regular meeting minutes. (Moved to Regular Agenda)~~

Approval of Regular Agenda:

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to approve the Regular Agenda as amended. **The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Request to approve the September 15, 2025 regular meeting minutes. (moved from Consent Agenda)

Needed changes were noted.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Reiber, to approve the September 15, 2025 regular meeting minutes as amended. **The motion carried unanimously.**

3. Presentation by Livingston County Sheriff, Mike Murphy.

Sheriff Mike Murphy provided information regarding contracted policing in Livingston County. He noted that police service is not a statutory requirement in Livingston County, but the county funds the sheriff's office. He indicated that Genoa has a high call volume but is also a large contributor of funds. He would not recommend that the township start their own police department. It would not be cost effective. Contracting with the sheriff's office, or another law enforcement agency in the county, would be much less expensive. He explained how the contract costs from his department are determined. He also explained how sheriff's deputies are dispatched from 911 calls throughout the county, noting that the Michigan State officers will also respond.

The board and Sheriff Murphy discussed how the process of officers are allotted to the township when they were contracted, how many officers for how many hours per day and how many days per week would be appropriate for Genoa, what is the estimated cost, and how officers are currently assigned to Genoa. The county's website has real time data from the sheriff's office that is updated every 24 hours.

4. Consideration of a request from the Brighton Area Fire Authority for the approval of Resolution 251006A related to the Repair, Maintenance and Upgrade of the Livingston County Emergency Communications Systems. (Roll Call)

Chief Michael O'Brien of the Brighton Area Fire Authority (BAFA) explained that there are two communication systems that are used for first responders and Livingston County Central Dispatch. In recent months, there have been many instances with the paging system where it has experienced failures and alerts were not communicated to BAFA fire fighters and first responders could not communicate with Central Dispatch. This issue impacts all fire service and

paramedics in Livingston County using the shared VHF system. This in no way reflects poorly on the dispatchers. The dispatchers do a fantastic job. The technology of the current system is unreliable and outdated and a significant safety concern. It must be upgraded. They have been working with the county for three or more years on a strategic plan. The resolution that was developed requests the Livingston County Commissioners provide the funding to repair the existing primary VHF paging system and conduct a comprehensive diagnostic and maintenance program for all of the public communication systems and fund the 800 MHz tower and radio system upgrade. The interoperable communication needs to be repaired. He stated there was a meeting held last Thursday with members of the Genoa Township Board, himself, Hartland Area Fire Authority Chief Carroll, and members of the Livingston County Board of Commissioners. It was a positive meeting, and he is optimistic that the VHF system will be improved and maintained, and towers will be installed, which could take two years. The county has set aside approximately \$13 million from ARPA Funds and the General Fund, which is very positive. The computer aided dispatch (CAD) is seeing outages which effects everyone and needs to be fixed with a long term strategic plan. Over time, central dispatch has pulled back on the provision of CAD to the emergency service providers. Brighton Fire has spent around \$780,000 to provide these devices to their employees. The right people need to meet and talk about a long term communication system that works.

Ms. Hunt is concerned that the full implementation of upgrades will take two years. She is glad the meeting went well, but that is a long time to wait for the full upgrade. The ARPA money has been available for a long time. Chief O'Brian responded that they have done presentations to select commissioners on this topic to show the work that the strategic planning did. This is approximately a \$50 million upgrade. The tower upgrade is one part of it. The radio technology needs to be able to communicate with the towers. They have maxed out the system doing training in the County and a long term dialogue is needed.

Mr. Soucy stated there are immediate issues that need to be addressed and asked what the township can do to help with this. Chief O'Brien stated the VHF system has been relatively reliable throughout the county for the last two weeks, and Motorola is anticipated to come out on October 20 to address the repairs needed to their system. Chief O'Brien stated that Commissioner Fiani has contacted Motorola to try to have this service call sooner.

Ms. Deaton stated that she understands the County Commissioners have been working on this issue for two years and the immediate need that occurred from the recent outages was addressed and Motorola will be out the week of October 20. The commissioners have been working on this and she does not believe Genoa should get involved. She asked Chief O'Brien how the funds from their recent millage was spent. Chief O'Brien responded that the millage is for capital improvements and can be spent on buildings and apparatus and turn out gear. County-wide infrastructure cannot be paid for with millage funds. He is using these funds to purchase radios. He added that he just learned at the meeting last Thursday that the funding has been set aside for the towers. Ms. Deaton stated that it is her understanding that they had a contract with Motorola and they let it lapse. Chief O'Brien responded that it was central dispatch

had the contract with Motorola, and they were the ones that allowed it to lapse. He explained that Livingston County Central Dispatch is responsible for maintaining the radios, towers and the equipment and they have not done that. They used to do maintenance of all the radios and equipment. This falls on the budget process of central dispatch. Ms. Deaton stated that the Commissioners have done their job, but it was a lack of communications from 911 dispatch to Brighton Fire. Chief O'Brian doesn't know that is true. He responded that there is a technical group that is overseeing the tower project, and he is trusting this group. Up until last week there was no assurance that the County was going to fund the towers.

Board Member Deaton **moved** to terminate the resolution request on the agenda and have BAFA and the County Commissioners to work on. **The motion failed for a lack of support.**

Mr. Walker stated that in the meeting, Commissioner Fiani asked him to communicate with him directly because there was some disconnect between departments in the county. The commissioners are working on this so there is no need for a resolution at this time. Mr. Soucy stated the commissioners were not aware of the complexity of what was needed for the paging system, and they are addressing it now.

Ms. Hunt stated that Supervisor Spicher sent out a memo today regarding the outcome of last week's meeting. She suggested postponing this item, not deleting it, so that the option for the resolution is still active.

Mr. Reiber stated there is no resolution in the packet. Supervisor Spicher stated that the meeting on Thursday had a very positive outcome so one was not developed. He does not think a resolution is needed at this time. Mr. Reiber didn't second Janene's motion because the resolution didn't exist. Ms. Deaton stated that the agenda should have been amended to remove it because we didn't have the Resolution. Ms. Hunt was thankful that it was left on the agenda because it allowed for discussion with Chief O'Brian.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to postpone the consideration of a resolution regarding the repair, maintenance and upgrade of the Livingston County Emergency Communications Systems, with the addition of the memo from Supervisor Spicher dated October 6, 2025 be placed on the record. **The motion carried with a roll call vote (Hunt yes; Reiber - yes; Walker - yes; Hovarter - yes; Deaton - No; Spicher - yes).**

5. Consideration of a request for approval of the proposed 2026 Employee Benefit Plan as presented by Human Resources Manager, Kim Lane.

Ms. Lane stated there has been a large increase in healthcare rates and prescription costs throughout the country, including Michigan. She provided a review of the township's current healthcare program and steps the township has taken to assist with funding it. This year's renewal came in at 29.7% from the current provider. Part of this large increase is caused by

MHOG employees separating from the township. The plan is age rated and many of those employees are of a young age.

Staff received quotes from other insurance companies, and she recommended moving the healthcare provider to a Point of Service Plan with Blue Care Network, which is an increase of 12.1% from the current rates. Employees have the option to keep the current plan and pay the difference in the premiums.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to approve the 2026 Employee Benefit Plan as presented by the Human Resources Manager. **The motion carried unanimously.**

6. Consideration of a recommendation for approval of Ordinance Number Z-25-06 related to Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments to Article 21 entitled “Administration and Enforcement”. (Roll Call-majority)

Ms. VanMarter provided a review of the proposed changes. The board discussed specific proposed revisions and additions. Mr. Seward suggested changing “final approval” to “final decision” in Section 21.05.05, (e) “The sign shall be removed within 7 days after final approval is received from the Township Board of Trustees.

Moved by Hovarter, supported by Walker, to approve and adopt Ordinance Number Z-25-06 related to zoning and amending Article 21 Administration and Enforcement as amended. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote. (Soucy - yes; Hovarter - yes; Walker - yes; Reiber - yes; Hunt - yes; Spicher - yes; Deaton - yes).**

7. Consideration of Resolution 251006B to establish a twelve (12) month Moratorium on the review and approval of rezoning applications in order to allow for updates to the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map. (Roll Call)

Ms. VanMarter stated this item is in reference to the ordinance text amendments discussed during Agenda Item #6. She explained the need for this moratorium is due to the township updating the Master Plan and the Future Land Use Map. She noted that the moratorium can be extended one time for six months. It can also be rescinded if the Master Plan is completed sooner than 12 months.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to approve Resolution 251006B to establish a twelve month moratorium on the review and approval of rezoning applications in order to allow for updates to the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote. (Hunt - yes; Reiber - yes; Walker - yes; Hovarter - yes; Soucy - yes; Deaton - yes; Spicher - yes).**

8. Consideration of a request for approval of a Citizen Enrichment Training program to be offered in partnership with the Livingston County Sheriff's Department as presented by Trustee Bill Reiber.

Mr. Reiber showed the proposed calendar and reviewed the training programs that will be offered. It will be free of charge for all residents; however, there is a \$5 cost per person for the CPR/AED classes, and he is proposing the township pay this for each resident.

The township's budget for this program was discussed, and it was recommended to have a "not to exceed" amount added to the motion.

Moved by Reiber, supported by Hovarter, to approve a Citizen Enrichment Training program to be offered in partnership with the Livingston County Sheriff's Department as presented by Trustee Bill Reiber, per the schedule presented, with a cost not to exceed \$1,000. **The motion carried unanimously.**

9. Review of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 First Quarter (April-June) budget to actual report.

Ms. VanMarter provided a review of the report.

Correspondence

Supervisor Spicher received a letter from Juanita Jones, a township resident, who was disappointed because the township's paying for the senior center membership were not done retroactive to July 1 when the memberships were obtained. Ms. Deaton stated that the vouchers can be issued to residents June 1 to June 30 to cover the 2026-2027 year. Her department has created the voucher and have already issued 35 of them with dates for the specific year.

Ms. VanMarter stated that Page 20 of the packet includes a public statement from Sheriff Mike Murphy thanking the township for the support for the cameras.

Member Updates

Ms. Deaton showed photographs of voting booths that were donated to the township from Hamburg Township. They received a grant for new ones, so they have given their old ones to Genoa Township. She added that she reduced the number of voting precincts and was able to return seven tabulators, which saves the township \$3,000 per year on maintenance fees.

Ms. Hovarter stated that Oceola township is installing outdoor pickleball courts.

Board Comments

Mr. Soucy stated that Commissioner Fiani is present this evening and thanked him for his support and commitment to solving the problem.

Commissioner Fiani stated that the board of commissioners and himself were made aware of the communication tower issue in November 2023. The issue in mid-August concerns the VHF

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system. They have secured three locations to place the towers and have published an RFP. They have received bids, and they are under review by the county's public safety committee. The project cost is approximately \$15 million. They are waiting for one more tower location in the county. They were not aware of the VHF issue until they attended the meeting last Thursday held by Supervisor Spicher. There was a disconnect between central dispatch and sharing the issue with the Board of Commissioners. He has spoken to Motorola, and they are working on expediting their service date.

Adjournment

Moved by Deaton, supported by Hunt, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas
Recording Secretary

Approved: Janene Deaton, Clerk
Genoa Charter Township

Kevin Spicher, Supervisor
Genoa Charter Township