

**GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD**  
**Special Meeting**  
**November 17, 2025**  
**MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

Supervisor Spicher called the special meeting of the Genoa Charter Township Board to order at 5:00 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, Candie Hovarter, Robin Hunt, Bill Reiber, Rick Soucy, and Todd Walker.

Also present was Township Manager Kelly VanMarter, Township Attorney Joe Seward, and 35 people in the audience.

**Call to the Public**

The call to the public was opened at 5:02 pm.

Ms. Colleen Quinn of 4042 Brookstone Court spoke regarding how Ms. Deaton was asked to leave in the middle of one meeting. She is concerned that both Janene and Tabitha resigned. She spoke regarding how the new clerk was chosen at the previous meeting. This situation should have been handled differently.

Mr. Roger Deaton of 699 Sunrise Park stated that he and his family worked on each of the board members' campaigns. Clerk Deaton brought items before the board, and they were not acted on.

Ms. Stephanie Booth of 516 Maple Street, City of Howell, stated that the jury selection for Ms. Skolarus' trial was done in private. She was disappointed in the outcome of that trial. She spoke regarding the way the new clerk was chosen. At the previous meeting the two gentlemen at the end of the dais passed a note to each other.

Ms. Debbie McCormick of 2650 Springhill Drive stated Genoa Township had the same clerk for 38 years and now in the last year, the clerk and the whole department are gone. She listed the rules that were violated by the board.

Mr. Jim Carpenter of 4715 Stillmeadow wants an investigation to determine why two employees left. He would like to see what the investigation shows and what is being done to remedy it. Appointing the new clerk was done in a rush. There is a discussion regarding the qualifications for the trustee on tonight's meeting agenda, but this was not done for the new clerk.

Ms. Deb Beattie of 3109 Pineview Trail is disappointed Janene resigned. She knows the good things she has done. Janene was a realtor in the same office for over 20 years, so it can't be that Janene was 100 percent wrong. She would like the full accounting of what happened.

Ms. Kristen Sapienza read a letter from all of the Genoa Township Staff regarding the accusations that the township office is a toxic work environment. This is not their experience. The average tenure in the office is over 17 years, which would not be possible in a toxic work environment. She spoke about how they feel respected and work together. The accusations of a toxic work environment are being repeated by those who have never spent time in the office. She complimented the current township leadership, and stated the employees work together. They requested their perspective be considered by the board and that they stand with them.

The call to the public was closed at 5:19 pm.

#### **Approval of Regular Agenda:**

Mr. Reiber wants to amend the agenda to what agenda he presented when he requested this meeting. Clerk Soucy has the right to set dates and times for special meetings, but he does not have the right to amend the agenda that he put together. Supervisor Spicher stated that the Township Supervisor sets the agenda.

Mr. Reiber would like an investigation. Mr. Soucy stated when the allegations were made, he spoke with the staff and there was nothing to investigate.

Mr. Reiber stated the agenda lists a discussion item and no action can be taken on a discussion item.

Mr. Seward clarified that the statute says two members of the board, other than the supervisor, can ask for a special meeting, then the obligation falls on the clerk to publish a notice of the time and place of the meeting. The Township's policy and procedure states that the supervisor sets the agenda.

**Moved** by Reiber, supported by Hovarter, to amend Agenda Item #1 to "Investigation Into Events Leading up to Former Clerk Janene Deaton's Departure". **The motion carried (Hovarter - yes; Walker - yes; Reiber - yes; Hunt - yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - no).**

1. ~~Discussion of the recent resignation of the former Clerk.~~ Investigation Into Events Leading up to Former Clerk Janene Deaton's Departure.

Mr. Reiber began handing out the results of his investigation to the board and members of the public. Supervisor Spicher advised that it is not allowed.

Mr. Reiber reviewed the document he presented, which contained emails and texts that prove there is cause to terminate Ms. VanMarter. There was a discussion regarding the items in the document.

**Moved** by Reiber, supported by Hovarter, to terminate the contract and employment agreement of Township Manager, Kelly VanMarter, with cause effective immediately. **The motion failed (Reiber - yes; Hovarter -yes; Hunt - no; Walker - no; Soucy - no; Spicher - no).**

Ms. VanMarter addressed the items that were alleged by Ms. Deaton. She and the staff did all they could do to help Janene and all of the new trustees be successful. The computer that was given to Ms. Deaton had server links to where staff believed all the necessary clerk records were stored. None of the files were touched. Any items that were missing were delivered as soon as we discovered it. She looked at many options to address the ballot storage requests of Ms. Deaton which took time since it included getting quotes to construct rooms. She made one misstep regarding the computer and does not deserve to be chastised and lose her job because of it.

The board continued the discussion regarding Ms. Deaton's allegations.

The call to the public was opened at 6:02 pm

Ms. Amy Ruthig, the Township Planning Director, who lives at 2957 Botsford Road, Howell has worked at the township for 30 years and there has never been a turnover of six new board members. Ms. VanMarter took her time to welcome and educate the new board members before they were even elected. This is not how someone would set someone up to fail. None of the staff know the Clerk's duties. She advised the trustees to speak to staff about the truth. Janene's deputy quit and her assistant decided to leave her department, and she still works in the building. It was wrong to speak about Kelly without speaking to staff.

Mr. Jim Carpenter stated nothing was accomplished this evening. He reiterated that an internal investigation should have been done.

Colleen Quinn agrees with Mr. Carpenter.

Ms. Denise Policella of 4200 Sweet Road stated Supervisor Spicher is not a leader and she is sorry she voted for him. This should be investigated from an outside group. She does not like the way Mr. Soucy was appointed as clerk. He should not be the clerk.

Ms. Kim Lane, the Township HR Manager, stated that just because the clerk resigned, does not mean that it is one person's fault. She stated people resign from their jobs for numerous reasons. She stated that Kelly took on the responsibility of the board turnover with integrity and joy and met with each trustee. There was an underlying feeling of a lack of trust between the board and staff. Staff had the feeling that what was being done was thought to be wrong or with deliberate malfeasance. Staff was caught in the crossfire of the political turnover. Human Resources does not have authority over elected officials. She has not had a report of a hostile work environment prior to the clerk's resignation. Janene was overwhelmed by the amount of work that came with a position that had many years of neglect.

Ms. Stephanie Booth stated there was bullying by the board this evening, and if the employees have been here so long, they just have not noticed it.

Mark Sural, who lives at 333 Pineridge, suggested a transition plan be put in place. He also recommended having two people trained on the same tasks.

Dr. Greg Tatara, MHOG Utility Director, is disappointed. He has worked here for 20 years and dedicated more than half of his life to the township; he loves it and takes pride in his job. To hear someone say they are public servants and should take abuse, is not fair. Investigations and trying to determine who is at fault is not productive. This place runs wonderful. We need to be respectful one another. The board should come back together. They ran as a group. Kelly does a great job. She is dedicated. He agrees with his coworkers. It is a wonderful place to work.

Ms. Deb Beattie of 3109 Pineview Trail stated this cannot be one person's fault. The board still has to determine what happened. Nothing has been settled tonight.

Mr. Mike Wilbanks, who lives on Russell, stated Janene has been his neighbor and friend for 15 years and he gets along with her. He stated that Supervisor Spicher ran on firing Ms. VanMarter and the township attorney.

The call to the public closed at 6:26 pm.

Supervisor Spicher stated he did not run on firing Ms. VanMarter. He questioned her salary and after working at the office, he admits that he was incorrect.

### **Board Comments**

None

### **Adjournment**

Genoa Charter Township Special Board Meeting  
November 17, 2025  
Approved Minutes

**Moved** by Reiber, supported by Walker, to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas  
Recording Secretary

Approved: Rick Soucy, Clerk  
Genoa Charter Township

Kevin Spicher, Supervisor  
Genoa Charter Township