

GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting
January 5, 2026

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, Candie Hovarter, Robin Hunt, Bill Reiber, Rick Soucy, Jodie Valenti, Todd Walker.

Also present was Township Manager Kelly VanMarter, Township Attorney Joe Seward, and 22 people in the audience.

Call to the Public

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

Mr. Jim Carpenter of 4715 Stillmeadow Drive was not aware that a new deputy clerk was hired. He would like to know more about her qualifications.

Mr. Jeff Dhaenens of 5494 Sharp Drive thanked the board for the opportunity to interview for the trustee position. He stated five people told him that they did not like the interview process. Three of the trustees and Ms. Hunt are professionals working to get things done. One other trustee read a letter from a resident and then during his interview, Mr. Reiber interrogated him about that letter. It was very odd. He applied for the position because people from other boards asked him to. This was not the time to bring up what he did 16 months ago. He is behind the board and will support the board, but he is disappointed how Mr. Reiber treated candidates. He should apologize.

Ms. Deb Beattie of 3109 Pineview Trail stated all of the trustees try hard to do the right thing. The intense questioning Mr. Dhaenens referred to what has been perceived to be a lack of transparency over the past few months. Referencing Ms. Hovarter reading the letter, she has a

right to do that. Mr. Reiber wanted to question everyone so he would be thorough. She asked the board not to take Mr. Dhaenen's comments personally. She wants transparency.

The call to the public was closed at 6:39 pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Mr. Reiber requested the approval of the minutes be moved to the regular agenda.

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

1. **Payment of Bills: January 5, 2026**
2. **~~Request to approve the December 15, 2025 regular meeting minutes.~~ (Moved to Regular Agenda).**

Approval of Regular Agenda:

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

2. **Request to approve the December 15, 2025 regular meeting minutes. (Moved from Consent Agenda)**

Mr. Reiber stated he sent an email to the trustees outlining the amendments he would like to make to the minutes. He added statements and changed the flow of the sentences in one paragraph. The board discussed the proposed changes. It was requested to have proposed changes provided as early as possible instead of right before the meeting starts. Mr. Walker requested to have "reelected" changed to "elected" as it referred to Mr. Dhaenens because he was never elected, he was appointed. He also asked to have it noted that Mr. Reiber submitted his trustee choices two days late, but they were still allowed to be taken into consideration for an interview.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Hovarter, to approve the December 15, 2025 regular meeting minutes as amended, adding Mr. Reiber's additional text, the changes suggested by Mr. Walker, and not changing the sentence order. **The motion carried unanimously.**

3. **Public Hearing on the proposed Round Lake Aquatic Weed Control Special Assessment Roll.**
 - a. **Call to the Property Owners**
 - b. **Call to the Public**

The call to the property owners was opened at 6:52 pm.

Mr. Frank Castle thanked the Board for all they do. He is in support of the aquatic weed control for Round Lake.

Ms. Doreen Walsh of 4443 Filbert thanked the board for their assistance and respectfully asked for approval to move forward with the SAD so they can treat their lake this spring.

Ms. Connie Zaske of 4090 Clifford has lived on Round Lake for 52 years and is in support of the treatment.

The call to the property owners was closed at 6:56 pm.

The call to the public was opened at 6:56 pm with no response.

4. Request for approval of Resolution #5 – Confirming the Special Assessment Roll for the Round Lake Aquatic Weed Control Special Assessment Project (summer tax 2026). (Roll Call)

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to approve Resolution #5 – Confirming the Special Assessment Roll for the Round Lake Aquatic Weed Control Special Assessment Project for summer tax 2026. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Reiber - yes; Hunt - yes; Valenti - yes; Hovarter - yes; Walker - yes; Soucy- yes; Spicher - yes).**

5. Request for approval to enter into agreements to collect 2026 Summer property taxes for the Brighton Area Schools, Hartland Consolidated Schools, Howell Public Schools, and the Livingston Educational Service Agency as submitted by the Township Treasurer. (Roll Call)

Ms. Valenti stated Brighton Area Schools is her employer; however, she does not believe there is a conflict of interest. Mr. Seward agreed.

Ms. Hunt stated this is reviewed and approved each year. All of the treasurers in the county agree to the amount. It has been \$3 for the last 20 years; however, it was agreed to increase it to \$4 in 2026.

Moved by Walker, supported by Soucy, to enter into agreements to collect 2026 Summer property taxes for the Brighton Area Schools, Hartland Consolidated Schools, Howell Public Schools, and the Livingston Educational Service Agency as submitted by the Township Treasurer. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Hunt - yes; Valenti - yes; Hovarter - yes; Walker - yes; Reiber - yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - yes)**

6. Consideration of a request to appoint Robin Hunt to replace Rick Soucy to the Election Commission with a term ending November 20, 2028 and Darrell Kenney to

replace Ron Matkin and Michael Hadijinian to replace Eric Graetzel (alternate) with terms ending on December 31, 2026.

Mr. Soucy stated The Election Commission previously consisted of himself, Ms. Hovarter, and Ms. Deaton. Since he is now the clerk, another trustee will need to be appointed. Ms. Hunt has agreed to serve on the commission..

Mr. Reiber questioned why none of the other trustees were asked to serve on the Election Commission. Mr. Soucy stated he asked Ms. Hunt because the meetings are held during working hours at the township hall and she is here and would be available.

Moved by Walker, supported by Hunt, to appoint Robin Hunt to replace Rick Soucy to the Election Commission with a term ending November 20, 2028 and Darrell Kenney to replace Ron Matkin and Michael Hadijinian to replace Eric Graetzel as an alternate to the Board of Review with terms ending on December 31, 2026.

Mr. Reiber requested that the appointments for each person be done separately. Supervisor Spicher noted there was a motion on the table and requested a vote. **The motion carried with Mr. Reiber voting “no”.**

7. Request for approval of Resolution 260105 establishing the 2026 instructions for poverty exemption, guidelines for poverty exemption, poverty exemption application, poverty exemption worksheet and to establish the beginning date for the Board of Review as submitted by Assessor Debra Rojewski. (Roll Call)

Ms. Hunt stated this must be reviewed and approved each year. The criteria is set by the State of Michigan.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to approval of Resolution 260105 establishing the 2026 instructions for poverty exemption, guidelines for poverty exemption, poverty exemption application, poverty exemption worksheet and to establish the beginning date for the Board of Review as submitted by Assessor Debra Rojewski. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Hovarter - yes; Valenti - yes; Hunt - yes; Reiber - yes; Walker - yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - yes).**

Items for Discussion:

8. Discussion regarding attendance at the 2026 Michigan Township Association Annual Conference.

Mr. Soucy stated that last year he and Mr. Walker went for a week and Ms. Hovarter went for a day. It was very informative and he recommends that anyone that is able to should go. Mr. Walker agreed.

Board Comments

Mr. Soucy stated he has reached out to several local attorneys regarding the independent investigation and is still waiting for responses.

There are two trustees' birthdays this week; Mr. Walker's is Wednesday and Ms. Hovarter's is Thursday

Supervisor Spicher stated WM will pick up Christmas trees at the curb through Friday, January 16 on your regular trash pick-up. They will only pick up live trees. If it is taller than six feet, it must be cut in half, all decorations. He stated that on Wednesday, January 7 at 6:30 pm, there will be a town hall meeting regarding the former DNR property at Chilson and Brighton Road. The consultant will be present and provide his findings. They would like to seek public input to begin formalizing a grant application.

Mr. Walker stated that on December 25, 2025, the US Postal Service began a policy that mail will not be postmarked until it is processed and not on the day it is dropped off. If a postmark is needed when it is dropped off, residents can bring it to the counter, and they will postmark it at that time. He stated that the Michigan Department of Treasury has an unclaimed property section on their website where you can search for funds that may be due to you.

Ms. Hovarter stated that the Howell American Legion delivered 480 meals to people in Livingston County on Christmas Day.

Mr. Reiber received an email regarding a recent FOIA request. They stated that recently their requests have received more pushback, the fees were more excessive, and the response was delayed. He also asked if the board can receive copies of the requests and what is provided. Ms. VanMarter stated she received 15 FOIA requests within two weeks in December. It was not possible to respond to all of them within the required five days, so she requested a 10 day extension for each of them, which is permissible. She has never shared responses with the board; however, she can provide that information if needed. Mr. Seward stated the statute has very specific requirements for a FOIA to be a valid request. There are certain limitations and provisions. Ms. VanMarter stated the board received information on one FOIA recently because that person had engaged the full board with the back and forth emails. Mr. Reiber requested that the board receive the requests and results. Supervisor Spicher and Ms. Hunt declined being provided information on FOIA requests. Ms. Hunt stated that the information is public information so if someone is seeking information, they can come to the township and ask for it, and it will be provided.

Mr. Jim Carpenter was allowed to speak. He had suggestions for the process of appointing a new clerk or trustee if it is ever needed to be done again.

Mr. Soucy stated that the new deputy clerk has over 20 years of clerk experience in Royal Oak, Southfield, and Milford. The new clerk assistant and election specialist also have many years of clerk experience.

Ms. Valenti thanked the board for entrusting her with the opportunity to serve the community.

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Approved Minutes

Adjournment

Moved by Walker, supported by Hunt, to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas
Recording Secretary

Approved: Rick Soucy, Clerk
Genoa Charter Township

Kevin Spicher, Supervisor
Genoa Charter Township