

GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting
March 2, 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, and Todd Walker.

Also present was Township Manager Kelly VanMarter, Township Attorney Joe Seward, and 20 people in the audience.

Call to the Public

The call to the public was opened at 6:31 pm.

Ms. Deborah McCormick of 2650 Springhill questioned whether the township pays the attorney to attend meetings. She asked what he is paid per hour. She stated that the Board of Review will not accept mortgage appraisal and similar houses for comparison. This is not fair to the people of the township. She assumes that the Board has already decided they need a raise. Within the first year, the township lost their clerk.

Ms. Susan Nickels of 4935 Fairways Drive has a hard time with the raises proposed this evening. This is a lot of money. She asked the township to be fiscally responsible.

Mr. Mark Parker of 4668 Summer Ridge Drive will be moving so he will no longer be attending meetings. He thanked the board for the education and interactions he has received.

Ms. Mary Post of 4923 New Haven Drive thanked the board for considering the Special Assessment District for the roads in the North Shore Commons neighborhood.

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Mr. Jeff Dhaenens of 5494 Sharp Drive spent two weeks in Australia, and he loves the amount of green space that they have. It is purposeful. He would like to see the township preserve green space.

Mr. Dan Wholihan of 8162 Majestic Boulevard stated his wife, Kristina Lyke, is running for 44th Circuit Court Judge. She is an attorney and has well rounded experience. He provided her experience and qualifications.

Mr. Greg Zimmer of 4820 New Haven Drive agrees with Mrs. Post regarding the road project. Ms. VanMarter was very helpful and provided all the information he needed.

Mr. Mark Gatesman of 720 N. Court is running for 44th Circuit Court Judge He was born and raised in Howell. He practiced law in Florida but is back in Livingston County. He provided his experience and qualifications.

Ms. Deb Beattie of 3109 Pineview Trail stated the fund balance listed in the minutes from the last meeting cannot be correct. Regarding the Merlo property that was approved in the previous meeting, all of the documents, discussions, and drawings show 250 gallons, not 300 gallons. She does not want the Planning Commission meetings to be skipped. There is a lot of work that needs to be done. She asked for an update on the internal investigation.

The call to the public was closed at 6:48 pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Mr. Soucy requested to have the February 16, 2026 meeting minutes moved to the Regular Agenda

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

- 1. Payment of Bills: March 2, 2026**
- 2. ~~Request to approve the February 16, 2026 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 February 16, 2026 regular meeting minutes (moved from Consent Agenda)**

Needed changes were noted.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Valenti, to approve the February 16, 2026 meeting minutes as amended. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- 3. Consideration of a recommendation of approval for the special use, site plan and environmental impact assessment for a proposed family day care home (up to 14 children) located 554 S. Hughes Road on the west side of Hughes Road, south of Golf Club Road. The request is petitioned by Jennifer Duncan.**

A. Disposition of Special Use Application

B. Disposition of Environmental Impact Assessment (1/16/26)

C. Disposition of Site Plan (1/21/26)

Ms. Jennifer Duncan and Ms. Elizabeth Stow were present. Ms. Duncan provided a review of her experience in early childhood development.

Ms. Valenti questioned why the application says 12 children, but the agenda item says 14 are allowed. Ms. Duncan stated the State previously approved 12 children, but it was increased in the last couple of years to 14. Ms. VanMarter agreed, noting the limit of 14 is in the ordinance.

Ms. Duncan addressed the issues noted by her neighbor who wrote a letter to the township.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to approve the Special Land Use for a proposed group daycare home for up to 14 children for property located at 554 S. Hughes Road. The requirements of Section 19.03 and 3.03.02 (k) of the Zoning Ordinance are generally met. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Moved by Hunt, supported by Reiber, to approve the Environmental Impact Assessment dated January 16, 2026 for a proposed group daycare home for up to 14 children for property located at 554 Hughes Road. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to approve the Site Plan dated January 21, 2026 for a proposed group daycare home for up to 14 children for property located at 554 S. Hughes Road with the following condition:

1. The applicant must obtain and supply the Township with the required State of Michigan licensing.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 4. Request for approval of Resolution #1 to Proceed with the Project and Direct Preparation of the Plans and Cost Estimates for the North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Project (summer tax 2026). (Roll Call)**

Ms. VanMarter stated out of the 49 residents in this neighborhood, 38 petitions in favor of the project were submitted, which is 77 percent. One change for this project than the others that have been approved recently, is this is a private road, so the HOA is contributing funds for the project. The remaining will be paid by the residents.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Valenti, to approve Resolution #1 to Proceed with the Project and Direct Preparation of the Plans and Cost Estimates for the North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Project. **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 of Resolution #2 to Approve the Project, Schedule the First Hearing for March 16, 2026, and Direct Issuance of Statutory Notices for the North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Project (summer tax 2026). (Roll Call)

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to approve Resolution #2 to Approve the Project, Schedule the First Hearing for March 16, 2026, and Direct Issuance of Statutory Notices for the North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Project. **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 approval for the general appropriation of funds for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027 for budget fund numbers: 101, 202, 212, 249, 250, 401, 402, 532 and 853.

Mr. Reiber stated one line item on this budget is payroll; however, later in this meeting, there are items requesting approval for salaries for the elected and appointed officials and the numbers don't match. Ms. VanMarter stated in the resolution regarding the elected officials, there is a footnote that they are base wage salaries, and do not include longevity, cell phone reimbursement, etc. so the amounts will be different than what is shown in the budget.

Mr. Reiber questioned comparing last year's and this year's proposed budget would be comparing 2024-25 Amended Budget to the 2026-27 Recommended Budget. Supervisor Spicher stated the 2025-26 Proposed Amendments Column should be compared to the 2026-27 Recommended Budget.

Mr. Reiber asked who the part-time employees are listed in the budget. Mr. Soucy stated these are workers that work in the office for elections.

Mr. Reiber questioned why some employees received more than a five percent increase. Supervisor Spicher stated the 2025-26 Proposed Amendments column should be compared to

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the 2026-27 Recommended Budget. Ms. Hunt noted that these are amounts that are proposed and performance reviews will be done to determine each employee's raise. They will also receive the wage study. They will be between three and five percent.

Mr. Reiber asked the difference between wages and salaries. Supervisor Spicher explained the difference.

Mr. Reiber questioned the EHIM line item. Supervisor Spicher stated the \$50,000 is the reserve fund and the \$60,000 is the expected amount that will be paid throughout the year. Ms. VanMarter explained the funding for the EHIM in detail. She explained what the wellness program includes.

Mr. Reiber stated some employees receive a car allowance, but there is also a mileage line item. Ms. VanMarter stated that only employees who do not have a car allowance are entitled to mileage reimbursement and the line item includes more than just mileage.

Mr. Reiber questioned why there is a need to have an election coordinator full time. Mr. Soucy stated she is also the clerk assistant and this was approved by the Board earlier this year.

Mr. Reiber questioned the assessor's budget. There was an employee who retired so why does it show only a decrease of \$8,000. Supervisor Spicher stated she does not retire until June, which will require her to be paid in the 26-27 budget and this position will need to be replaced.

Mr. Reiber questioned the EDCLC Reorganization item. Supervisor Spicher stated it is the Economic Development Council of Livingston County. This previously involved SPARK. It is possible the township may join the EDCLC so money was budgeted for that.

Mr. Reiber questioned the wages and salaries for the Planning and Zoning Department. Ms. VanMarter noted the footnote states there is a reduction for the current fiscal year due to a new hire at a lower wage and a period of time that the position was vacant.

Mr. Reiber questioned what the Master Plan funds will be used for. Supervisor Spicher stated part of that is Giffels-Webster, but there could be other costs that will be associated with the Master Plan update or Zoning Ordinance updates.

Mr. Reiber stated that the township contributes ten percent to employees' 401K funds and this is not shown in the salaries and wages line items. He also noted that the 10 percent includes other benefits that they receive, such as car allowance or medical insurance opt out bonus. Supervisor Spicher stated how the salaries and wages line item is determined. There was a discussion regarding the medical insurance opt out bonus.

Ms. Valenti asked if the three percent cost of living is given every year. Ms. Hunt stated it is reviewed every year. Ms. VanMarter stated a wage analysis was done previously and the township's wages were way below the average. Due to that, the board agreed two years of large wage increases, so now she recommends budgeting each employee to receive a cost of living wage so this does not happen again. The discussion continued regarding township employee salaries, benefits, and raises.

Mr. Reiber questioned the negative numbers on Page 12 of the budget. Ms. VanMarter stated this is the expenses for the SAD projects. The fund will be replenished. The board discussed the township's assistance for the road projects. All agree it is a benefit for the residents.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Hunt, to approve the general appropriation of funds for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027 for budget fund numbers: 101, 202, 212, 249, 250, 401, 402, 532 and 853. **The motion carried with Trustee Reiber voting "no".**

7. Consideration of approval for the general appropriation of funds for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027 for budget fund number 208.

Ms. Valenti stated that she works for the Brighton Senior Center so she would like to be recused from discussing and voting on this item.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Hovarter, to recuse Trustee Valenti from discussion and voting on the general appropriation of funds for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027 for budget fund number 208. **The motion carried with Trustee Valenti abstaining.**

Ms. Valenti left the meeting room at 8:07 pm.

Mr. Soucy stated the township has budgeted \$10,000 for the Senior Center. The school board is looking at different funding options for the Center, which could cause the need for a budget amendment at the township. He stated that the township has paid membership fees for 170 Genoa Township residents, but there are 220 residents who attend the center so that could also increase the budget when more residents take advantage of the township's assistance.

There was a discussion regarding the budget for the vacant 77 acres that the township recently purchased. Staff is pursuing a grant for this project.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Hunt, to approve the general appropriation of funds for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027 for budget fund number 208. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Valenti returned to the meeting room at 8:17 pm.

8. Request for approval of Resolution 260302A - 2026-2027 General Appropriations Act Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027. (Roll Call)

Ms. VanMarter provided a review of the resolution.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to approve Resolution 260302A - 2026-2027 General Appropriations Act Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2027. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Walker - yes; Reiber - yes; Hunt - yes; Valenti - yes; Hovarter - yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - yes)**

9. Request for approval of Resolution 260302B - Wages and Salaries for Appointed Officials. (Roll Call)

Moved by Hunt, supported by Hovarter, to approve Resolution 260302B - Wages and Salaries for Appointed Officials. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Reiber- yes; Hunt- yes; Valenti- yes; Hovarter- yes; Walker- yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - yes)**

10. Request for approval of Resolution 260302C - Salaries for Elected Officials. (Roll Call)

Moved by Hunt, supported by Walker, to approve Resolution 260302C - Salaries for Elected Officials. **The motion carried with a roll call vote (Valenti - yes; Hovarter - yes; Walker - yes; Reiber - no; Hunt - yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - yes)**

11. Request for approval of a renewal of the Uniform Video Service Local Franchise Agreement with DIRECTV, LLC (formerly AT&T) with an annual video service provider franchise fee of 5% and a public, education and government (PEG) access fee of 2% for an additional ten year term.

Ms. VanMarter provided a review of the agreement. She stated that the township's telecommunications attorney and staff negotiated the five percent increase as well as the PEG fees. Staff is working with counsel to determine how best to spend this money.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Hovarter, to approve renewal of the Uniform Video Service Local Franchise Agreement with DIRECTV, LLC (formerly AT&T) with an annual video service provider franchise fee of five percent and a public, education and government (PEG) access fee of two percent for a ten-year term. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Board Comments

Mr. Walker stated he, Ms. Valenti and Ms. VanMarter joined SEMCOG and other associations

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at a press conference where there was bi-partisan objection to statewide zoning preemption legislation introduced in the Michigan House of Representatives. Bills 5529-5532 would strip locally elected officials of their voting authority and remove years of work in community planning. He encouraged the residents to reach out to the township's representative, Jennifer Conlin, and provided her contact information. Supervisor Spicher stated Representative Conlin visited the township and stated she is in opposition to this legislation. She encouraged the letters from the residents.

Ms. Hunt stated today was the last day to pay winter taxes. Residents can still pay online until midnight tonight. Any taxes not paid will be sent to Livingston County. Ms. VanMarter stated the township was very busy today with residents paying their taxes. She is always impressed as to how the Treasurer's office handles very busy days like today.

Mr. Reiber stated nine people attended the training session for Stop the Bleed. He stated there will be a Planning Commission meeting next week to discuss master plan survey results, potential data center and food truck ordinances, and agritourism.

Supervisor Spicher stated the master plan data presented last week was difficult to follow. Giffels-Webster will be providing a new presentation that will be available for the Planning Commission meeting and will be put on the website.

Ms. Hovarter attended a HAPRA Board meeting. Their summer programs are almost sold out and they continue to work on the fire and ice arena.

Mr. Walker encouraged residents to download the MyGenoa app.

Ms. VanMarter provided an explanation to Ms. Beattie's concern regarding the Merlo property approval of the fuel tanks.

Mr. Jim Carpenter suggested the budget be presented with charts to be easier to understand. He also requested to see an organizational chart. He asked if there were pensions and he does not agree with the longevity bonus or the 10 percent 401K contribution. He would like to see more transparency.

Mr. Walker stated the budget was presented and discussions began in December 2025.

Ms. VanMarter encouraged folks to contact staff to ask any questions. She will provide any information that is being requested.

Ms. McCormick stated that the benefits package for employees is excessive. These are funded by the residents. She compared the benefits to private sector benefits. She does not agree with the attorney attending meetings. Supervisor Spicher stated the township determined it was best to have the attorney present.

Adjournment

Moved by Hunt, supported by Walker, to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

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Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas
Recording Secretary

Approved: Rick Soucy, Clerk
Genoa Charter Township

Kevin Spicher, Supervisor
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