

GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting
April 6, 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 14 people in the audience.

Call to the Public

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

Mr. Christopher Candela stated he is running for circuit court judge and is a resident of Genoa Township. His campaign is not about politics or to further his career, it is about his commitment to serve Livingston County. He provided his qualifications and experience. He is collecting signatures this evening.

Mr. Zack Esper of 3003 Jewell Road, representing himself and Tim and Cathy Esper, stated he currently farms the 50 acre Genoa Township property across the road. He was notified that he would no longer be able to farm this land because someone else offered a higher amount. They were supposed to be told by December 31, 2025 that they would no longer be doing it. They have already purchased their supplies for farming this property. They live locally and have farmed this property for over 20 years. The other company lives in Cohoctah Township. He stated that the other company knocked on the doors of farm property owners and solicited their business.

Ms. Deborah Beattie thanked the board for the classes that were provided. They were excellent. Regarding the environmental ordinance being discussed this evening, she recommends that there be oversight of the ordinances.

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

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Moved by Walker, supported by Hunt, to approve the Consent Agenda with the correction to the spelling of Ms. Valenti's name. **The motion carried unanimously.**

1. Payment of Bills: April 6, 2026

2. Request to approve the March 16, 2026 regular meeting minutes.

Approval of Regular Agenda:

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

3. Public Hearing on the proposed North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Roll.

A. Call to the Property Owners

B. Call to the Public

The call to the property owners was made at 6:40 pm.

Mr. Greg Walega of 4905 New Haven Drive thanked the board and Ms. ~~VanMater~~ VanMarter for her hard work and attention to detail in assisting with this road project.

The call to the property owners was closed at 6:42 pm.

The call to the public was opened at 6:42 pm with no response.

4. Request for approval of Resolution #5 – Confirming the Special Assessment Roll for North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Project (summer tax 2026). (Roll Call)

Ms. Hunt advised residents that if they would like to pay the special assessment in full to avoid paying interest, the payment is due no later than June 8, 2026.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to approve Resolution #5 – Confirming the Special Assessment Roll for the North Shore Commons Condominium Private Road Improvement Special Assessment Project for summer tax 2026). **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Reiber - yes; Hunt - yes; ~~Valentine~~ Valenti - yes; Hovarter - yes; Walker - yes; Soucy - yes; Spicher - yes)**

5. Consideration of a request for approval of a Cropland Agreement for crop year 2026 to maintain the historical agricultural use of 50.5 acres of fields located on parcel 4711-23-100- 005 with revenue to be placed in Parks and Recreation Fund line item #208-000-434-001.

Ms. Hunt requested that Mr. Seward address this item due to Mr. Esper's comments at the call to the public. She asked if the deadline of December 31 is correct. Mr. Seward stated this agreement was entered into prior to the new board taking office. The form was provided by the Espers and the language states that they were to approach the township to advise that they would like to continue farming the land. This is not an automatic renewal. This land was paid for with money from the state, so they have to approve it being farmed.

Ms. VanMarter stated she received the proposed renewal from the Espers in February, which is after the December 31, 2025 deadline. She stated that this current board renewed the agreement last year. The original agreement was done with a prior board.

Ms. Hovarter stated there is a history with the Espers and they have been good stewards to the township.

Ms. Valenti stated the difference between the two proposals is approximately \$400 per year.

Mr. Reiber reiterated Ms. Valenti's comment that this will only be an increase of \$400 per year and the Espers have farmed this land for over 20 years and they have invested money for next year.

Supervisor Spicher stated the township was approached by another farmer who offered \$100 per acre. The previous amount for the Espers was \$55 per acre. Mr. Esper stated in the original agreement with the previous board, the township wanted to keep the price the same as the previous owner.

Ms. Hunt stated that this change should have been addressed earlier.

Moved by Reiber, supported by Hovarter, to keep business with the Espers per the contract submitted for crop year 2026 to maintain the historical agricultural use of 50.5 acres of fields located on parcel 4711-23-100- 005 with revenue to be placed in Parks and Recreation Fund line item #208-000-434-001. **The motion carried unanimously.**

6. Request to introduce proposed ordinance number Z-26-01 regarding zoning ordinance text amendments to Article 13 entitled "Environmental Protection Regulation" related to Hazardous Materials and Fuel Storage and Wetland Protection Standards and to set the meeting date for considering the proposed ordinance for adoption before the Township Board on Monday, April 20, 2026.

Ms. VanMarter stated Township Attorney Seward has been reviewing the ordinance in tonight's meeting packet. Mr. Seward stated that he will be proposing changes to the sections regarding below ground fuel storage tanks and the wetlands buffer. The township ordinance limits cannot be stricter than the State's regulations.

Ms. Hovarter asked Mr. Seward to address the comment at the call to the public regarding the oversight. He stated the Code Enforcement Officer does the oversight and she does an outstanding job.

Mr. Soucy questioned whether this item should be tabled until the next meeting or returned to the Planning Commission because of the proposed changes. Mr. Seward stated there may be some tweaks to the language, but he is comfortable with introducing the ordinance and setting the meeting date tonight. He will have the changes to the board prior to their next meeting.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to introduce proposed Ordinance Number Z-26-01 and to set the meeting date to consider adoption before the Township Board on Monday, April 20, 2026 for the purpose of considering the proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendment to Article 13 Environmental Protection Standards with revisions from the township attorney.

The motion carried unanimously.

7. Consideration of a request to approve the renewal of the contract with KP Elite Cleaning with a 4.5% increase for cleaning services at the Township Hall building, park pavilion restrooms and park grounds for a term beginning May 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027.

There was a brief discussion regarding the quality of KP's work and what services they provide.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Hunt, to approve the renewal of the contract with KP Elite Cleaning with a 4.5 percent increase for cleaning services at the Township Hall building, park pavilion restrooms and park grounds for a term beginning May 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027.

The motion carried unanimously.

8. Consideration of a request to approve the renewal of the ground maintenance services contract with Cooper's Turf Management for the 2026 season, at the same terms and pricing as the 2025 contract (no increase in cost).

Mr. Seward noted that Page 2 states "*Customer agrees to defend and hold Cooper's Turf Management harmless from any and all liability*". He advised the board that they should not sign the agreement containing that language.

Ms. Valenti asked about the language "*A fuel surcharge may be assessed if significant changes in market pricing occurs.*" Supervisor Spicher stated that fuel surcharges are common in this

industry. She would like more detail as to when the surcharge will be assessed because it says “significant”.

Ms. Hunt recommended voting on this item this evening, with the removal of the sentence noted by Mr. Seward. Mr. Walker agrees. Ms. VanMarter does not believe that Cooper’s will contest the removal of the sentence.

Mr. Reiber questioned when the last time pricing was sought for this work. Ms. Hunt stated it had been a while. The trustees discussed the quality of Cooper’s work and noted that the increases have not been significant enough to warrant seeking additional pricing, and this year there is no increase.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to approve the renewal of the ground maintenance services contract with Cooper’s Turf Management for the 2026 season, at the same terms and pricing as the 2025 contract with no increase in cost and subject to their agreement to remove “*Customer agrees to defend and hold Cooper’s Turf Management harmless from any and all liability*” from the agreement. **The motion carried unanimously.**

9. Consideration of an appeal related to the denial of records for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request 2026-14.

Ms. VanMarter provided the reasons that she denied the FOIA request and stated Mr. Edmund has appealed the denial.

Supervisor Spicher stated this person has also used the name Michael Bambas when contacting the township and addressing the board at meetings.

Ms. Hunt, Mr. Soucy and Mr. Walker stated they agree with Ms. VanMarter’s decision. Mr. Seward stated there are no documents for the first and the third requests and the second one he agrees it is subject to attorney client privilege.

Mr. Soucy stated that if a resident would like information from the township, they can contact the township staff.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to deny the appeal on the FOIA request by Michael Edmund 2026-14. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Correspondence

Ms. VanMarter stated tonight’s packet contains a copy of the certificate Mr. Soucy received for completing Year 1 of the Michigan Municipal Clerk’s Institute.

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Approved Minutes

Board Comments

Ms. Hovarter attended a HAPRA meeting. The bathrooms behind the parks and rec building will be opening soon. The outdoor pickleball courts will open on June 1. The fees will be raised for residents who do not live within the Howell School District.

Mr. Soucy stated the ZBA approved the variances for the three cases on the March agenda.

The yard waste drop off days are on Saturdays, May 9 and June 6 from 8am-11am at the township hall.

The final CPR and AED training will be held on Monday April 27. In June there will be a suicide awareness event. Supervisor Spicher suggested that residents provide recommendations for other classes they would like to see offered.

Ms. Deb Beattie spoke about the discussion regarding the underground tanks and wetland buffers. She and township staff did a lot of research and the Planning Commission held discussions regarding both of these items. There are specific site conditions that allow the township to make the limitations stricter than the State. There are other municipalities in Michigan that do it.

Adjournment

Moved by Walker, supported by Soucy, to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas
Recording Secretary

Approved: Rick Soucy, Clerk
Genoa Charter Township

Kevin Spicher, Supervisor
Genoa Charter Township