GENOA CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
Regular Meeting
October 19, 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, Jodi Valenti, and Todd Walker.

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

Call to the Public

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

Mr. Jim Carpenter of 4517 Stillmeadow Drive stated that the team that develops the budget also approves the budget. He recommended having an advisory committee to give the community more transparency. He has issues that there is a cost of living increase and a longevity bonuses for employees. He would like to see one item, and it should be based on the Headlee increase. He hopes that flock cameras are not in the budget. He appreciates the housing town hall; noting that the representative from the school said that affordable housing is needed in order to hire teachers, but there are no openings for teachers right now.

Ms. Debbie McCormick of 2656 Springhill asked if there is a study being done for the raises being proposed. She does not understand why raises are given every year. Elected officials should be paid based on a contractual agreement and not receive annual raises. The cluster housing being developed will cause traffic problems. Dorr Road floods and it should be fixed. She asked why it is necessary to have the attorney at the meeting.

Ms. Deb Beatty of 3179 Pineview Trail had questions from Susan Nichols regarding the wage study, who was unable to attend tonight. She agrees with having a town hall regarding the budget. She stated that Bill Reiber was very respectful when he was talking about not being invited to the meeting. She asked why this is in the packet.

The call to the public was closed at 6:43 pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Mr. Reiber had questions regarding the Payment of Bills.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Reiber, to approve the consent agenda with Item #2. **The motion carried unanimously**.

1. ~~**Payment of Bills: October 19, 2026**~~ **(moved to regular agenda)**

2. **Request to approve the October 5, 2026 regular meeting minutes.**

Approval of Regular Agenda

Mr. Reiber requested to have Agenda Item #4 moved to the "Items for Discussion" section of the agenda. He was expecting an analysis of how the township staff's salaries compare to surrounding communities. The report that was received is beyond that original scope. After a brief discussion, it was decided to leave Item #4 where it was originally on the agenda.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Valenti, to approve the regular agenda with Items #1 and #3-#6. **The motion carried unanimously.**

1. **Payment of Bills: October 19, 2026 (moved from Consent Agenda)**

Mr. Reiber questioned the money being spent for T-shirts for the clerk's department staff. A peel and stick tag with the name is a better way to spend township money. This is not necessary. Mr. Soucy stated this is in the budget.

Moved by Hunt, supposed by Walker, to approve the Payment of Bills as presented. **The motion carried with Mr. Reiber and Ms. Hovarter voting no.**

3. **Consideration of a recommendation for approval of an environmental impact assessment related to the site plan for a proposed parking lot expansion for Schultz Outfitters. The property is located at 5776 East Grand River Avenue, south side of Grand River Avenue west of Dorr Road. The request is petitioned by MITTS LLC.**

Mr. Chris Grzenkowicz, the design engineer, provided a review of the property and the proposed project. Schultz Outfitters is a fly fishing supply company. There are currently 9 parking spaces, but the ordinance requires 23. They are proposing to bank eight parking spaces so they can expand the parking if needed in the future.

Mr. Reiber stated this is an unoccupied building and in the perfect location for this business. This is responsible development. Mr. Grzenkowicz addressed Mr. Reiber's concern from the Planning Commission regarding the visibility because of the stop signs. He stated their proposed signage meets the ordinance.

Moved by Soucy, supported by Hunt, to approve the Environmental Impact Assessment dated August 19, 2026 for proposed parking lot expansion and site improvements for Schultz Outfitters located at 5776 E. Grand River Avenue, with the following conditions:

1. Outdoor storage, sales, or displays is prohibited.
2. The entrance and exit signs shall comply with the township's sign ordinance.

The motion carried unanimously.

4. **Presentation from Rahmberg, Stover and Associates regarding the findings and recommendations of the Township Compensation Study; to approve a motion to receive and file the final report; and to authorize the adoption of the proposed salary ranges, including a framework for annual cost-of-living or market adjustments to be made utilizing ongoing guidance and input from the consulting vendor.**

Mr. Jeffrey Rahmberg reviewed and provided details of the wage study process, market analysis results, a proposed salary structure, elected officials market analysis, benefits analysis, implementation, and ongoing pay administration.

Overall, Genoa Township is at 100 percent in the salary range midpoints. He noted that the township currently has a pay structure, but he is proposing a revised structure that includes salary ranges and progression steps based on the data collected. This new structure will put Genoa Township at 102 percent of salary range midpoints.

The elected officials analysis showed that Genoa Township's pay levels are reasonable, but recommended monitoring the market.

The Township's type of health insurance and employee contributions are competitive with the market.

The study was completed with 2025/2026 data. If this new structure is adopted, he recommends that it be increased by 2.5 percent for 2026/2027. He provided details of how to implement the new structure with the current positions and employees at the township, including what should be done on an annual basis. He noted that increases to the structure are not based on cost of living; they are based on what has changed in the market.

Ms. Hovarter questioned the other benefits that township employees receive, such as dental and vision insurance, paid time off, longevity bonuses, etc. Mr. Rahmberg stated he was not asked to analyze that, but those are common benefits provided to municipal employees. Ms. Hunt noted that the dental and vision insurance is included in the health benefit costs.

Ms. Hunt is pleased with these results. It shows that the township is competitive.

Mr. Rahmberg stated he did the same data analysis for MHOG and recommend the same type of structure.

Mr. Soucy stated that if this structure is adopted and the 2.5 percent increase is implemented, a review of the market does not need to be done again for a few years.

Ms. Henderson stated that the step increases provide less discretion for any employee disputes. The salaries are set for them.

Mr. Reiber appreciates the level of detail and the logic of the report. He wanted to know how Genoa Township compares to other municipalities and would like to have seen a comparison of all of the benefits that employees receive, such as vacation, 401K contribution, longevity bonuses, healthcare, etc. Mr. Soucy agreed those items were not put in the analysis, but all municipalities have those benefits.

There was a discussion regarding what was being requested to be approved tonight. Should the board accept the new structure and how will that structure be implemented? It is not tied to any township employee or job. Mr. Reiber would like to table this until there is a town hall held where the public can give their opinions and Mr. Rahmberg's company can compare more information regarding additional employee benefits.

Ms. VanMarter stated that the township did not do a wage study until the Compease one was first done in 2022 and it has been updated yearly, except last year. The results of that study showed that employees were below the midpoint so significant raises were given to get the staff to mid-point. Compease no longer does analyses for municipalities, so that is why Mr. Rahmberg's company was hired.

Moved by Reiber, supported by Hovarter, to table voting on Agenda Item #4 until such time we have held a town hall meeting with public input on whether or not we adopt a structured step salary increase.

Ms. Hunt stated a town hall can be held, opinions can be obtained, and the salaries are set through the budget process. Accepting the table does not affect that. Supervisor Spicher stated there is already a structure, this is just a better structure. Mr. Reiber would prefer to have the town hall done and let the residents have a say in the decision making.

The motion failed with a roll call vote (Walker – no; Reiber – yes; Hunt – no; Valenti – no; Hovarter – yes; Soucy – no; Spicher – no).

Moved by Soucy, supported by Walker, to receive and file the final report and to authorize the adoption of the proposed salary ranges, including a framework for annual cost-of-living or market adjustments to be made utilizing ongoing guidance and input from the consulting vendor. **The motion carried with a roll call vote (Valenti – yes; Hovarter – yes; Walker – yes; Reiber – no; Hunt – yes; Soucy – yes; Spicher – yes).**

Ms. VanMarter stated that Jeff has been incredible to work with so she does not believe an email to him asking for the market adjustment would cost the Township. She will confirm with him.

5. **Consideration of a request to create a part-time Human Resources Specialist position, including backup support for payroll and shared HR services, and transition planning for human resources coverage.**

Ms. VanMarter reviewed the justification for creating a part time Human Resources Specialist position. The position would be between a Grade 5 and Grade 6, with a median salary range of $31.36 per hour. Mr. Soucy noted that the Clerk's office has been assisting HR with payroll and other tasks.

Moved by Hunt, supported by Soucy, to approve the creation of a part time Human Resources Specialist position, including backup support for payroll and shared HR services and transition planning for human resources coverage. **The motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Hovarter -yes; Walker – yes; Reiber – yes; Valenti – yes; Hunt – yes; Soucy – yes; Spicher – yes)**

Items for Discussion

6. Discussion regarding future road projects.

Supervisor Spicher contacted the Livingston County Road Commission asking if any of the township roads require any reconstruction in the 2027/2028 fiscal year. There are no reconstruction needed, just maintenance. He is recommending beginning to "bank" funding toward future major improvement projects. He noted that the following intersections were noted as priority by township residents during the Master Plan Survey and the transportation town hall.

- Brighton and Chilson Road improvement - This is a large and expensive project.
- Crooked Lake and Dorr Road - There is a lot of concern with the safety of this intersection - The Road Commission recommends a roundabout be put there.
- Crooked Lake and Latson Road - This is scheduled for a traffic light improvements.
- Bauer and Brighton Road - There are no plans for this intersection.
- Chilson and Latson Road - The Road Commission is aware of this but they do not have a plan.

Additionally, the Road Commission is proposing a traffic circle at Hacker and Hyne. This would be funded by Brighton Township, The Road Commission, and Genoa Township.

There were also dirt roads that were requested to be paved.

Supervisor Spicher stated that the initial 2027/2028 budget will be presented to the board on December 1, 2026. It will return several times and must be adopted by April 1, 2027. There will be a town hall after more definite numbers are in the budget. It may be in January or February.

Correspondence

There was no discussion on the correspondence.

Member Updates

Mr. Soucy stated the Clerk's office mailed 6,400 absentee ballots and 2,300 have been returned. The state of Michigan has instructed the post office to not directly deliver ballots to local jurisdictions without first going to the Detroit sorting center. He recommends that voters drop off their absentee ballots, instead of mailing them.

Mr. Soucy stated a community cemetery clean up is scheduled for Chilson Hills on Saturday, November 7 from 9 am to 12 pm. He asked residents to contact the township to sign up.

Mr. Soucy stated new larger name plates for board members will be installed before the next meeting.

Mr. Walker provided details of grants received from BAFA, which include smoke alarms, and SCUBA gear. They will be hiring nine new full-time firefighters. Current employees will be receiving a 15 percent raise, but the board will not get a raise.

The BAFA 150th birthday celebration and open house was held on October 10 on Main Street in Brighton. This is usually done at the fire hall, but the construction is not complete. They may hold future events on Main Street.

Supervisor Spicher stated the raise for the firefighters was portrayed inaccurately on social media. A comparison was done with Howell's firefighter salaries so it needed to be increased to attract and keep firefighters.

Mr. Reiber stated the Planning Commission received a proposal for the buildout of one of the out lots of Meijer. The intersection of Grand River and Latson Road has service levels of F's. He would like to ask MDOT to do a traffic light study here. The petitioner's traffic engineer said the F's could be fixed with a change to the timing of the lights.

Board Comments

Ms. VanMarter stated the next meeting is November 16. The November 2 meeting was cancelled due to the election.

She stated she has been working with the residents in the Northshore Village subdivision off Crooked Lake Road for a possible SAD road project. They are currently at 70 percent residents who are in favor of it. This will be before the board at their November 16 meeting.

A call to the public was made at 9:26 pm.

Mr. Carpenter stated that the plan for the parking lot discussed this evening was almost 30 pages. He had to go before the Planning Commission and other boards. There are a lot of hoops for him to jump through for an existing parking lot.

The taxpayer viewpoint of the wage table that was approved this evening is that every employee gets a raise. Then they get a step and COLA raise, which could be 8 – 10 percent each year. Supervisor Spicher stated that is completely not true. He absolutely disagrees with that statement. There is no guarantee of a step raise and there will not be a COLA rate on top of the step increase.

The call to the public was closed at 9:34 pm.

Adjournment

Moved by Walker, supported by Hunt, to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 pm. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Thomas
Recording Secretary

Approved:	Rick Soucy, Clerk Genoa Charter Township	Kevin Spicher, Supervisor Genoa Charter Township