



**Agenda for the Meeting of the
Township Board of Portage Township, St. Joseph County, Indiana**

January 16, 2024

5:00 pm

Office of Portage Township Trustee
340 Columbia Ave., South Bend, IN 46601

- I. Call Meeting to Order
The meeting was called to order at 5:04 pm by acting Board Chair, Ryan Hill. Mr. Shabazz presided over the meeting after his arrival.
- II. Roll Call
Present: Township Counsel Alex Bowman, Trustee Jason Critchlow, Deputy Trustee Lana Cleary, and Board Members Cheryl Ashe and Ryan Hill. Board Chair Muhammad Shabazz arrived at 5:10 pm.
- III. Approval of Agenda
Ms. Ashe motion to approve the agenda, Mr. Hill seconded, and passed unanimously.
- IV. Approval of Minutes from January 2nd, 2024 Meeting
Ms. Ashe motion to approve, Mr. Hill seconded and passed unanimously.
- V. Public Comment
No one present in person or online requested public comment.
- VI. New Business
 - a. Board of Finance Meeting
 - Elect President and Secretary
Ms. Ashe nominated Mr. Shabazz for president and Mr. Hill for Secretary. Muhammad seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
 - Investment Report
Trustee reviewed the township investments for 2023 which included one investment account at Indiana Trust.
 - b. Board Meeting Public Comment Policy
The board discussed the public comment policy and noted that they would allow public comment on any agenda items requiring a vote before the vote is taken in addition to the public comment portion of the meeting. Mr. Shabazz motion to adopt the policy, Ms. Ashe seconded, and unanimously approved.
 - c. Resolution 02-2024 Township Board Remote Attendance Policy
Mr. Bowman explained that this policy mimics the guidance that was issued by the state for all public boards post-COVID. The most notable requirement is quorum requires 2 of the 3 Board Members to be physically present at the



meeting. Also, there are some items that cannot be voted on by a member online which includes budget and bond votes.

Beginning in July 2025, it will be required for all public bodies to record meetings, offer an online option, and make them available for public inspection. The Township began this practice in January of 2024, well ahead of this deadline. All public meetings will be archived on the Township's YouTube page for public viewing.

Mr. Hill motion to approve, Ms. Ashe seconded, and passed unanimously.

d. Resolution 03-2024 Designating Township Official Website

Trustee Jason Critchlow explained that this resolution will allow the Township Board to utilize the Township Website as a second source for any notices requiring printing in two different media sources. Mr. Shabazz motioned to approve, Ms. Ashe seconded, and unanimously approved.

e. La Casa de Amistad Community Services Agreement

Trustee Jason Critchlow reviewed this community services agreement and its intention to assist the Township with providing outreach, resources, and assistance to the local Hispanic community. La Casa Caseworkers will train with Portage Township staff to understand requirements and process. La Casa will provide quarterly reports to Portage Township. It is anticipated that this is the beginning of a long-term relationship and the shared processes may need to be tweaked over time. Mr. Shabazz motion to approve, Ms. Ashe seconded, and passed unanimously.

VII. Old Business

There was no old business

VIII. Trustee's Report

a. Budget/Assistance Update

Trustee Jason Critchlow reviewed the budget and assistance numbers through December 2023. Mr. Hill inquired if the Township assists with mortgages and Trustee Critchlow confirmed that it does and these numbers are included under shelter.

b. Facilities Update

The Township has completed its move into temporary offices at 340 Columbia while renovations at 133 N. William take place. Construction and design decision on Fire Station #41 continue along as planned.

c. SWCFT Update

The Township Board will need to take action over the coming months to form the new Fire Territory as planned. Centre Township has stated that they will not join the new St. Joseph County Fire Territory. Therefore, the Fire Territory will



consist of Warren and Portage Township for 2025, with future growth into other entities being the goal in future years.

d. 2024 Office Holiday Schedule

Trustee Critchlow distributed and reviewed the 2024 Holiday Schedule.

IX. Other Discussion Items

a. Next Township Board Meeting

The next Township Board meeting will be scheduled to pass the annual report.

This is due by February 20th

b. SWCFT Annual Meeting

This meeting will be January 30th at 5 pm at Station 41. All Township Board Members are required to attend.

X. Adjournment

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Ashe and seconded by Mr. Shabazz. Passed unanimously.

Muhammad Shabazz II, Board Chair

Cheryl Ashe, Member

Ryan Hill, Member

Attested to:

Jason Critchlow
Portage Township Trustee