

**Meeting Minutes**

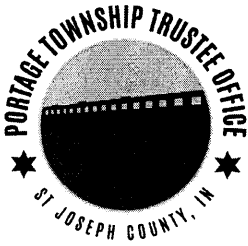
**Township Board of Portage Township, St. Joseph County, Indiana**

March 18, 2025

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
- II. Roll Call  
Present: Muhammad Shabazz, Ryan Hill, Jason Critchlow, Lana Cleary, Cheryl Ashe, Sarah Correll, and Steve Downey.
- III. Approval of Agenda  
Ms. Ash motioned for approval, seconded by Mr. Shabazz, and passed unanimously.
- IV. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Board Meeting February 18, 2025  
Mr. Hill requested edits made by Ms. Cleary on the paper copy. Motion to approve by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Shabazz, and passed unanimously.
  - b. Special Board Meeting February 25, 2025  
Minutes not available in board packet. Tabled for April Meeting.
- V. Public Comment  
There were no public comments.
- VI. New Business
  - a. 03-2025 Resolution Purchase of Ford Explorer  
Mr. Critchlow explained the need for additional vehicles due to expansion of services and staff. Additional Ford Explorer will be utilized by the Territory Operations Manager as she is spending a significant amount of time driving between facilities. The F150 will be utilized by the Township Facilities Technician to support his work and travel between township facilities, residential properties for inspection, or wherever else needs dictate. Purchase will be paid for with from upcoming bond issuance. Mr. Shabazz motioned for approval, seconded by Ms. Ashe, and passed unanimously.
  - b. 04-2025 Resolution Purchase of Ford F150  
Explained above. Motion to approve by Mrs. Hill, seconded by Mr. Shabazz, and passed unanimously.
  - c. 05-2025 Preliminary Bond Resolutions  
Sarah Correll with Ice Miller discussed both this and the next resolution which relate to the upcoming bond issuance. This bond resolution is the first one to be adopted by the board before a public hearing must be held. The following resolution then allows the Township Board to appropriate the spending of the bond money. Mr. Hill asked if the language is too broad. Sarah explained that, from a legal standpoint, you typically want



the language to remain broad to allow for maximum allowable usage. The needs can then be refined later if necessary. Mr. Hill requested a financial summary on how the bond proceeds are spent. Mr. Critchlow explained that those expenditures will be included in the monthly financial reports to the board. Mr. Critchlow described the need to acquire 25 signatures on a petition from property owners in Portage Township. He passed out the petitions to the board and asked them to organize the collection of signatures. Mr. Hill motioned for approval, seconded by Mr. Shabazz, and passed unanimously.

d. 06-2025 Additional Appropriations Resolution

Explained above. Mr. Hill motioned to approve, seconded by Mr. Shabazz and approved unanimously.

Jason described signature requirement.

e. 07-2025 SJCFT Ambulance Purchase Approval

Chief Downey described the need to purchase an ambulance by June 1 in order for those firefighters with paramedic certification to be able to maintain them. This is also in a planned effort to expand services to be able to provide emergency transport throughout the fire territory. It is expected that this Ambulance would be available by the end of April. The price for this ambulance only includes the vehicle itself, but equipment will be needed to utilize.

Mr. Hill and Chief Downey discussed long term cost savings that are produced by the purchase of this ambulance now and allowing the current firefighter certifications to remain in place versus allowing them to lapse and then having to invest in re-certification.

Ms. Ashe asked if a resident's insurance status makes a difference on responses and Chief Downey confirmed that it does not. Response will always be the same and if an individual does have insurance, it will be billed for the transport service. But there will be no additional financial burden on the resident.

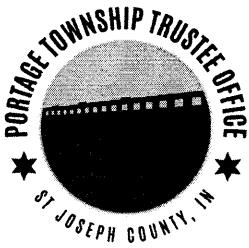
Mr. Hill motioned to approve, seconded by Ms. Ashe, and passed unanimously.

f. Fractional Marketing Agreement

Mr. Critchlow presented a draft fractional marketing agreement as the Township is exploring the ability to get more information in hands of people who need it regarding Township services. There are ways of getting information to individuals outside of traditional media markets such as TV, print, and radio. Ms. Ashe noted she prefers we work with individuals who live in Portage Township when possible. The board was favorable to the concept.

g. Board Chair Ryan Hill/City of South Bend Discussion Re-cap

h. Mr. Hill met with South Bend Mayor James Mueller to discuss issues between the Township and the City, most specifically around the purchase of 340 Columbia. He stated that it did not go well from his perspective and that he believes the



communication issues within the City continue to be inconsistent and the Mayor does not agree with the Township's perspective. Mr. Hill noted some of the hostility seemed to be centered around the former owner of the building. Mr. Hill reiterated that the goal of the Township is to work together wherever we can. However, Mayor Muelelr was generally dismissive and just believes their lawsuit against the Township is a "slam dunk." Mr. Ashe noted the importance for detailed records for our communications with the city.

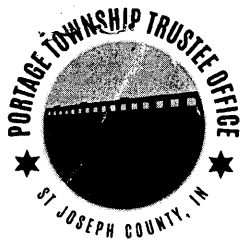
VII. Old Business

- a. Voucher Due Date Policy – No update.
- b. 2025 Township Guidelines Signature Page – Completed.

VIII. Trustee's Report

- a. Budget/Assistance Review
  - i. CASA Q1 2025 – Report reviewed and additional payment will be made as planned.
- b. Facilities
  - i. Portage Pantry Nonprofit – Mr. Critchlow provided an update on the Pantry and is exploring the upsides and downsides of creating a separate nonprofit for management of the Portage Pantry.
  - ii. Matthys Little League – Mr. Critchlow noted conversations continue regarding the renovating and re-invigoration of Morris Matthys Little League. There is great community interest around the project and there are ball clubs committed to operating the Little League again which include a partnership with South Bend Cubs. However, capital investment is need to make the ballfields playable again. Mr. Critchlow committed to bringing specifics to the next board meeting if possible.
- c. St. Joseph County Fire Territory
  - i. Swearing In Ceremony detailed shared.
- d. Community
  - i. St. Patrick's Day Parade – Details shared.
  - ii. Senior Center – Opening detailed shared.
- e. Staff
  - i. Drug Testing Policy – Mr. Critchlow described a new drug testing policy for Township staff.
- f. Other
  - i. Sew Loved – Mr. Hill described a potential partnership opportunity with Sew Loved.

IX. Adjournment – With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.



A BRIDGE TO STRONGER FUTURES

Trustee Jason Critchlow

Ryan Hill, Board Chair

Cheryl Ashe, Member

Muhammad Shabazz II, Member

Attested to:

Jason Critchlow

Portage Township Trustee