



A BRIDGE TO STRONGER FUTURES

Trustee Jason Critchlow

Meeting Minutes

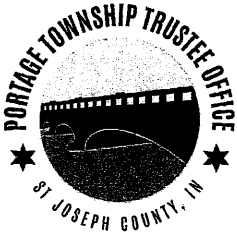
Township Board of Portage Township, St. Joseph County, Indiana

April 15, 2025

Office of Portage Township Trustee

340 Columbia Ave., South Bend, IN 46601

- I. Call Meeting to Order- Meeting called to order at 5:05pm
- II. Roll Call-Jason Critchlow, Ryan Hall, Lana Cleary, Muhammad Shabazz, Cheryl Ashe, Alex Bowman.
- III. Approval of Agenda- Cheryl Ashe motioned to approve, Muhammad Shabazz seconded, approved unanimously.
- IV. Approval of Minutes- Muhammad Shabazz motioned to approve, Cheryl Ashe seconded, approved unanimously.
 - a. Board Meeting March 18, 2025 – Cheryl Ashe motioned to approve; Muhammad Shabazz seconded. Approved unanimously.
 - b. Special Board Meeting February 25, 2025- Muhammad Shabazz motioned to approved, Cheryl Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.
- V. Public Comment-None.
- VI. New Business
 - a. 08-2025 Resolution for Community Centers- Mr. Critchlow explained that Mr. Bowman prepared Resolution 08-2025 for the board and the petition authorizes the Trustee to purchase or improve suitable land. In addition, the petition applies to any improvements to the Township office as well as the office on Williams Street. Mr. Critchlow states that he currently has over twenty-five freeholder (25) signatures and explains that 'freeholders' have the authority to sign the petition. Mr. Bowman went on to state that the auditor's office would review the petition in order to assess those who are property owners and those who are not. Ms. Ashe motions to approve with the noted change of correcting the address listed for N Williams Street to 133. Mr. Shabazz seconded. Approved unanimously.
 - b. 2025 Bond Public Hearing- Mr. Hill opened the public hearing for 09-2025. None in attendance.
 - c. 09-2025 – Final Bond Resolution- Mr. Critchlow explained that 09-2025 states all of the parameters of the bond resolution and appropriations approved during Portage Township's March 18th meeting. Mr. Bowman adds that the notice for the public hearing was noticed appropriately. Mr. Hill inquired about the term of the bonds in addition he inquired if the property tax relief bill were approved, how it would affect the Township. Mr. Critchlow stated that it wouldn't. Mr. Shabazz inquired if the bill allows local governments to raise local income tax. Mr. Critchlow stated that it allows a local option for income tax. Mr. Critchlow states that the tax rate in South Bend is at about 5.5%. Mr.

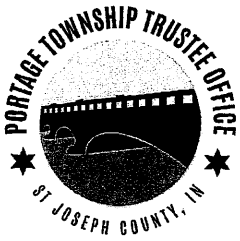


Critchlow states that we do not set those income tax rates. Ms. Ashe states that since the Township took over the cemetery, she is disappointed that funds were not allocated into a trust for the maintenance of the cemetery. Mr. Critchlow went on to state that the Township still does not technically own the cemetery as the title has not officially been transferred over. Mr. Bowman states that new boundary lines need to be established for the subdivision surrounding the cemetery. Mr. Critchlow went on to add that the boundaries of the cemetery have been slightly expanded. Mr. Shabazz motioned to approve resolution 09-2025. Ms. Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.

- d. 10-2025 Resolution Approving Matthys Little League Improvements- Mr. Critchlow states that this resolution designates the area surrounding Matthys Little League for improvements. In addition, he states the next step after approval would be to prepare a Use Agreement. Ms. Ashe inquires how the field will be used when the baseball team isn't there. Mr. Critchlow states that this would need to be addressed in the Use Agreement. Mr. Hill inquired what the obligation outlined within the Use Agreement entails. Mr. Bowman states that the Township taking an interest in the property enables the Township to make improvements to the property. Mr. Bowman states that the idea would be that if not in perpetuity, it would be in duration to the length of time of the improvements that the Township is making. In addition, Mr. Bowman stated that this allows the Township some rights to make improvements to the park. Ms. Ashe inquired about if all five fields would need to be restricted to the use of baseball. Mr. Critchlow states that he believes the layout of the park itself would make it difficult to convert the use for other activities or sports outside of baseball but that there are other possibilities for the use of the park. Mr. Critchlow states that the use agreement could be outlined in further detail at the next meeting. Mr. Hill inquired if the Township is obligated to a certain type of use once the land is designated as public land. Mr. Bowman clarified that the land will be subject to what it outlined in the Use Agreement. Mr. Shabazz made a motion to approve Resolution 10-2025. Ms. Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.
- e. Internal Controls – Board Members-Mr. Critchlow states that Ms. Cleary will be sending the Portage Township Board a video to view regarding internal controls in order to promote best practice.
- f. Portage Manor Ravine/Grounds-Mr. Critchlow states that there is interest in the county selling the ravine and the surrounding area and is inquiring if Portage Township might be interested in preserving it. Mr. Shabazz states that in his view, land is an asset. Mr. Hill states that he is concerned there may be lawsuits related to injuries in the ravine. Mr. Bowman adds that the Township would be granted permanent access to the cemetery through several provisions in addition to a 'curb cut.' Mr. Critchlow states that he does not believe access is a reason to take over the 21 acres.

VII. Old Business

VIII. Trustee's Report

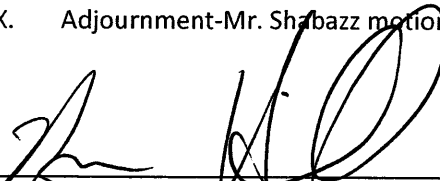


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- a. Budget/Assistance Review- Note at around 5:50
 - i. April Storm Response/Assistance- Mr. Critchlow states that the Township office worked very closely with residents in regard to storm response and that Mr. Corey Noland was extremely helpful in helping those who were without power.
- b. Facilities
- c. St. Joseph County Fire Territory
- d. Community
- e. Staff
- f. Other


IX. Adjournment-Mr. Shabazz motioned to adjourn. Ms. Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.



Ryan Hill, Board Chair



Cheryl Ashe, Member



Muhammad Shabazz II, Member

Attested to:



Jason Critchlow
Portage Township Trustee