

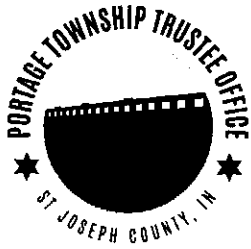


Meeting Minutes
Township Board of Portage Township, St. Joseph County, Indiana
March 17, 2026
Office of Portage Township Trustee
340 Columbia Ave., South Bend, IN 46601
[Online Link](#)

- I. Call Meeting to Order-Meeting called to order at 5:05pm.
- II. Roll Call- Jason Critchlow, Ryan Hill, Lana Cleary, Cheryl Ashe, Muhammad Shabazz.
- III. Approval of Agenda- Trustee Critchlow noted a minor amendment to the agenda to include minutes from the February 24, 2026, executive session in the meeting packet. Ryan Hill motioned to approve the agenda as amended, Cheryl Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.
- IV. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Board Meeting February 17, 2026- Muhammad Shabazz motioned to approve, Cheryl Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.
 - b. Executive Session February 24th, 2026- Muhammad Shabazz motioned to approve, Cheryl Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.
- V. Public Comment-None.
- VI. New Business
 - a. Portage Cemetery Fence Project-Trustee Critchlow presented information regarding installation of a temporary fence at the Portage Cemetery, which was recently transferred to township responsibility. The proposed fence would protect graves from vehicles and potential disturbance, establish the cemetery boundary, and prevent individuals from driving across burial sites.

The Board discussed prior incidents where vehicles had driven through the cemetery area. It was noted that the Township has access to approximately \$15,000 in ARP funds from the county, which may reimburse the Township after expenses for the fence are incurred. The Board supported proceeding with installation of the fence to protect the cemetery property.

- b. Spring Cleaning -- Trustee Critchlow presented a proposed Spring Cleaning Initiative in partnership with Burton's Laundry. Key elements of the proposal include purchasing approximately \$2,000 in discounted laundry gift cards. The gift cards would be distributed during food pantry operations. The cards valued at approximately \$20-\$25 to assist families with laundry costs will be distributed following the same intake procedures as food pantry assistance



Board discussion included reserving some cards for individuals seeking other township assistance (utilities, rent, etc). In addition to ensuring cards are distributed responsibly and tracked. The board expressed support for moving forward with the program with the budget source likely coming from the food pantry assistance budget.

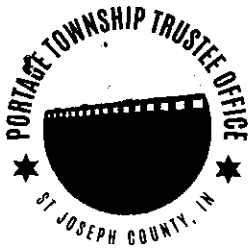
- c. Food Pantry – April Food Drive- The Township will conduct a Food Pantry Drive throughout the month of April. Planned efforts included outreach to local businesses and churches, placement of donation boxes at participating locations, and community promotion through township communications. Board members offered assistance with contacting churches and community organizations and Staff are preparing donation boxes and outreach materials.

VII. Old Business- Board members discussed the possibility of seeking sponsorships or grants to support the township community dinner program and exploring partnerships with nonprofits or local organizations to help fund meals. Trustee Critchlow indicated that staff would research potential funding sources.

VIII. Trustee's Report

- a. Budget/Assistance Review-Discussion occurred regarding the moratorium on electric shut offs through AEP expiring next week. It is expected that the end of the moratorium will cause assistance levels to rise slightly.
- b. Facilities- The William Street location sustained a vehicle accident very close to the premises. No substantial damage to the building occurred. Pursuit of the at fault drivers' insurance will occur.
- c. St. Joseph County Fire Territory-Discussion occurred regarding the outcome of a recent meeting between the Warren Township Trustee and The Portage Township Trustee with each party's legal counsel present. Funds are expected to be transferred from Warren Township to Portage Township regarding LIT monies owed.
- d. Community-None
- e. Staff-None
- f. Other-None

IX. Adjournment- Muhammad Shabazz motioned to adjourn, Cheryl Ashe seconded. Approved unanimously.



A BRIDGE TO STRONGER FUTURES

Trustee Jason Critchlow

Ryan Hill, Board Chair

Cheryl Ashe, Member

Muhammad Shabazz II, Member

Attested to:

Jason Critchlow