

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
7275 West Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

November 10, 2025

Refer to page 3 for Virtual Meeting Information

REGULAR MEETING
5:30 P.M.
AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Remote Location Identification (for remote attendance when permitted by statute)
4. Township Mission/Vision/Core Values:
Core Value: Difficult questions are not marginalized.
5. Approval of the Agenda
6. Moment of silence for Oshtemo Firefighter Charlie Sullivan
7. Public Officials and Community Partner Updates
8. Work Session:
 - a. Presentation 2026 Oshtemo Township Employee Benefit Package ([Pg 5-6](#))
9. Public Comment on Consent Agenda or Non-Regular Session Items (Est. 6:45 PM)
10. Consent Agenda
 - a. Meeting Minutes [[Minutes of Regular Meeting October 28, 2025](#)]
 - b. [Receipts and Disbursements](#)
 - c. Fire Department Budget Amendment Correction ([Pg 7](#))
11. Recommendation and Consideration Hardship Advisory Council ([Pg 9-10](#))
12. Discussion and Consideration re Public Comment Digital Presentation Policy ([Pg 11-12](#))
13. Second Reading re Text Amendments to the Non-Motorized Facilities/Sidewalk Ord ([Pg 13-15](#))
14. Discussion and Consideration of 2026 Oshtemo Township Employee Benefit Package
15. Discussion and Consideration of first reading of Moratorium Concerning Battery Energy Storage Systems ([Pg 16](#))
 - a. Communication from NewEdge regarding Battery Energy Storage System ([Pg 17](#))
16. Public Comment
17. Board Member Comments & Committee Updates
18. Adjournment

**Policy for Public Comment
Township Board Regular Meetings, Planning Commission & ZBA Meetings**

All public comment shall be received during one of the following portions of the Agenda of an open meeting:

- a. Citizen Comment on Non-Agenda Items or Public Comment – while this is not intended to be a forum for dialogue and/or debate, if a citizen inquiry can be answered succinctly and briefly, it will be addressed or it may be delegated to the appropriate Township Official or staff member to respond at a later date. More complicated questions can be answered during Township business hours through web contact, phone calls, email (oshtemo@oshtemo.org), walk-in visits, or by appointment.
- b. After an agenda item is presented by staff and/or an applicant, public comment will be invited. At the close of public comment there will be Board discussion prior to call for a motion. While comments that include questions are important, depending on the nature of the question, whether it can be answered without further research, and the relevance to the agenda item at hand, the questions may not be discussed during the Board deliberation which follows.

Anyone wishing to make a comment will be asked to come to the podium to facilitate the audio/visual capabilities of the meeting room. Speakers will be invited to provide their name, but it is not required.

All public comment offered during public hearings shall be directed, and relevant, to the item of business on which the public hearing is being conducted. Comment during the Public Comment Non-Agenda Items may be directed to any issue.

All public comment shall be limited to four (4) minutes in duration unless special permission has been granted in advance by the Supervisor or Chairperson of the meeting.

Public comment shall not be repetitive, slanderous, abusive, threatening, boisterous, or contrary to the orderly conduct of business. The Supervisor or Chairperson of the meeting shall terminate any public comment which does not follow these guidelines.

(adopted 5/9/2000)
(revised 5/14/2013)
(revised 1/8/2018)

Questions and concerns are welcome outside of public meetings during Township Office hours through phone calls, stopping in at the front desk, by email, and by appointment. The customer service counter is open from Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2-5 p.m., and on Friday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Additionally, questions and concerns are accepted at all hours through the website contact form found at www.oshtemo.org, email, postal service, and voicemail. Staff and elected official contact information is provided below. If you do not have a specific person to contact, please direct your inquiry to oshtemo@oshtemo.org and it will be directed to the appropriate person.

Oshtemo Township Board of Trustees

Supervisor

Cheri Bell 216-5220 cbell@oshtemo.org

Clerk

Dusty Farmer 216-5224 dfarmer@oshtemo.org

Treasurer

Clare Buszka 216-5260 cbuszka@oshtemo.org

Trustees

Neil Sikora 760-6769 nsikora@oshtemo.org

Kristin Cole 375-4260 kcole@oshtemo.org

Zak Ford 271-5513 zford@oshtemo.org

Michael Chapman 375-4260 mchapman@oshtemo.org

Township Department Information

Assessor:

Kristine Biddle 216-5225 assessor@oshtemo.org

Fire Chief:

Greg McComb 375-0487 gmccomb@oshtemo.org

Ordinance Enforcement:

Alan Miller 216-5230 amiller@oshtemo.org

Parks Director:

Vanessa Street 216-5233 vstreet@oshtemo.org

Rental Info 216-5224 oshtemo@oshtemo.org

Planning Director:

Jodi Stefforia 375-4260 jstefforia@oshtemo.org

Public Works Director:

Anna Horner 216-5228 ahorner@oshtemo.org

Zoom Instructions for Participants

Before a videoconference:

1. You will need a computer, tablet, or smartphone with a speaker or headphones. You will have the opportunity to check your audio immediately upon joining a meeting.
2. If you are going to make a public comment, please use a microphone or headphones with a microphone to cut down on feedback, if possible.
3. Details, phone numbers, and links to videoconference or conference call are provided below. The details include a link to “**Join via computer**” as well as phone numbers for a conference call option. It will also include the 11-digit Meeting ID.

To join the videoconference:

1. At the start time of the meeting, click on this link to [join via computer](#). You may be instructed to download the Zoom application.
2. You have an opportunity to test your audio at this point by clicking on “Test Computer Audio.” Once you are satisfied that your audio works, click on “Join audio by computer.”

You may also join a meeting without the link by going to join.zoom.us on any browser and entering this **Meeting ID: 893 5178 4635**

If you are having trouble hearing the meeting or do not have the ability to join using a computer, tablet, or smartphone then you can join via conference call by following instructions below.

To join the conference by phone:

1. On your phone, dial the teleconferencing number: **1-929-205-6099**
2. When prompted using your touchtone (DTMF) keypad, enter the Meeting ID number: **893 5178 4635#**

Participant controls in the lower-left corner of the Zoom screen:



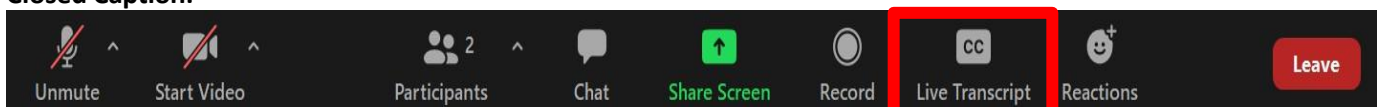
Using the icons at the bottom of the Zoom screen, you can (some features will be locked to participants during the meeting):

- Participants – opens a pop-out screen that includes a “Raise Hand” icon that you may use to raise a virtual hand. **This will be used to indicate that you want to make a public comment.**
- Chat – opens pop-up screen that allows participants to post comments during the meeting.

If you are attending the meeting by phone, to use the “Raise Hand” feature **press *9 on your touchtone keypad.**

Public comments will be handled by the “Raise Hand” method as instructed above within Participant Controls.

Closed Caption:



Turn on Closed Caption:

Using the icons at the bottom of the Zoom screen:

1. Click on the “Live Transcription” button.
2. Then select “Show Subtitle”.

Mission:

To advance the quality of life of all residents through a commitment to responsible growth, and value-driven municipal services that promote the relationships among economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and social equity.

Vision:

A sustainable and innovative community built through a legacy of planned, responsible growth and rural preservation.

Core Values:

PUBLIC SERVICE

- Fair treatment to all people.
- Each customer is welcomed, and their input is wanted.
 - Difficult questions are not marginalized.
- Allow residents to interact directly with Township staff and officials.
- Decisions are made based on the value to our Township and residents.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations.
 - Consider the environment through practices that reduce impacts.
 - Value-conscious decision-making.
 - Committing to quality fire and police protection.

INNOVATION

- Providing the best value-conscious technology currently available.
- Leverage new technologies and ways of doing business to increase accessibility and improve services.

PROFESSIONALISM

- Hire staff with strong core competencies within their given profession.
- Commitment to continuous improvement to government operations.
- Dedicated to open communication to improve productivity and effectiveness.

INTEGRITY

- Decisions are made logically through the collection of evidence, facts, and public input.
 - When promises are made, we follow through.
- We do not obfuscate – we say what we mean and do what we say.
- Transparent governmental practices are of the highest priority.

FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

- Ensure that taxpayer investments are spent wisely, effectively and efficiently.

Memorandum

Date: 10 November 2025
To: Township Board
From: Sara Feister, Human Resources Director
Subject: 2026 Employee Benefit Package



Objective

To summarize the 2026 Employee Benefit offerings and Board consideration.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve the 2026 Employee Benefit Package.

Background

The Township provides a comprehensive benefit package to employees. The Township works closely with Nulty as our agent for most of the benefits provided. Annually, typically in October, the renewal of benefit plans is discussed with Nulty. Subjects discussed include suggested vendor changes, rate impacts, regulatory compliance, and evaluation of offerings.

Summary of 2026 Employee Benefit Package

- ❖ Medical Insurance (Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan)
 - High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)
 - 11.42% increase to premiums
 - Deductible increasing from \$3,300/\$6,600 to \$3,400/\$6,800
 - Out of Pocket Limit increasing from \$3,300/\$6,600 to \$3,400/\$6,800
 - Traditional Health Plan
 - 11.49% increase to premiums
 - In Lieu of Medical Insurance Credit ***Increase***
 - \$1,370.00 annual
 - The average cost of medical insurance increases in Michigan for 2026 is 16.8%. Recommending an increase to align with the average increase.
 - Medicare Reimbursement
 - Township reimburses 80% of Medicare cost for employees & spouses over the age of 65
- ❖ Health Savings Account for employees enrolled in the HDHP (Kushner)
 - Requesting Board approval to fund HSAs \$1,700/\$3,400 (50% of the deductible amount, which is proportional to 2025 funding)
- ❖ Health Reimbursement Arrangement for employees enrolled in the Traditional Health Plan (Kushner)
 - No structure changes
 - HRA will reimburse \$1,500/\$3,000 of the deductible (same as past years)
- ❖ Dental Insurance (Delta Dental)
 - 2.90% increase to premiums
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Vision Insurance (Delta Vision/VSP Network)
 - 2.89% increase to premiums
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Short- & Long-Term Disability Insurance (NIS/Kansas City Life)
 - No increase
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Employer Sponsored Life/AD&D Insurance (Colonial Life)
 - No increase
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Long Term Care Insurance (UNUM) ***Eliminating Plan***
 - UNUM is discontinuing new enrollments and imposing a significant increase in premiums to current enrollees

- ❖ Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (Kushner)
 - Requesting funding of up to \$5,000 per eligible employee on a reimbursement basis through Kushner
- ❖ Worker's Compensation (Accident Fund)
 - Increase amount is unknown and pending annual claim audit
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Firefighter Supplemental Insurance (VFIS)
 - Unknown amount of increase, if any
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Retiree Health Care Savings Plan (MERS)
 - \$3,600 annual employer contribution
 - No structure changes
- ❖ 401(a)/457(b) Retirement Plan (Greenleaf Trust)
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Employee Assistance Program (Pine Rest)
 - Unknown amount of increase, if any
 - No structure changes

Employee Paid Benefits

- ❖ Medical Flexible Spending & Limited Purpose Flexible Spending Accounts
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Supplemental Insurance (Colonial Life)
 - No structure changes
- ❖ Additional Life/AD&D Insurance (Colonial Life)
 - No increase except for age related increases

Core Values

Sustainability, Integrity, Fiscal Stewardship, Professionalism

Memorandum & Request



Date: November 10, 2025
To: Oshtemo Township Board
From: Chief Greg McComb
Subject: Budget Amendment correction

Objective

To rescind the previous budget amendment that transferred \$77,000 from account 211-000-67601 (Capital Revenue) to 211-344-97600 (Capital Outlay – Vehicle), and to replace it with the following revised budget amendment:

From: GL 211-000-67601 - Capital Revenue (\$77,000)
To: GL 206-340-86700 - Vehicle Operations (\$77,000)

Proposed Motion

Motion: To approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$77,000, transferring funds from 211-000-67601 (Capital Revenue) to 206-340-86700 (Vehicle Operations).

Background

In 2024, the Fire Department sustained the loss of a Chevrolet Tahoe that was deemed a total loss following a vehicle accident. The insurance settlement of \$77,000 was recorded under the *Capital Revenue* fund.

Currently, the Vehicle Operations line—used to cover service and repair costs for departmental vehicles—is nearly depleted. With approximately two months remaining in the fiscal year, this transfer will provide the necessary funding to continue vehicle maintenance and repair operations without disruption.

Core Values: Sustainability, Fiscal Stewardship

Memorandum



Date: November 10th, 2025
To: Township Board
From: Zach Pearson, Public Works Project Manager
Subject: Hardship Advisory Review Committee Recommendation

Objective

Update the Board on the Hardship Advisory Review Committee (HARC) meeting and recommendations.

Proposed Motion

I move to accept the HARC recommendation and authorize Public Works Staff to coordinate all applicable work necessary to complete the connection.

Background

The Hardship Advisory Review Committee held an additional meeting on November 6th, 2025 to review supplemental information for an application previously reviewed at the September 10th meeting. The Committee has approved the application and recommended it for Township Board approval. Once approved by the Board, Public Works Staff will work with the applicant's chosen contractor to complete the connection.

Core Values

Fiscal Stewardship

Attachments

HARC Recommendation Form

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
COUNTY OF KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN**

HARDSHIP ADVISORY REVIEW COMMITTEE - RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Oshtemo Charter Township Hardship Advisory Review Committee resulting from a public hearing conducted on November 6, 2025.

The Hardship Advisory Review Committee, after reviewing the application regarding parcel number 3905-26 - 405 -040 recommends:

 X Approval Denial

of the application for

 X Hardship Financing for private connection costs

 Deferment of public connection fees

This recommendation is made after due consideration and investigation of the application of the property owner (or their legal representative).

The Hardship Advisory Review Committee finds that the applicant

 X meets does not meet

the qualification standards for hardship and/or deferment under Section IV of Oshtemo Charter Township Ordinance No. 620.

For approved applications:

 X The property owner (or their legal representative) has agreed to enter into an installment payment agreement for the subject property.

By: _____

Neil Sikora, Chairperson
Oshtemo Charter Township
Hardship Advisory Review Committee

Date: _____

11/7/2025

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DIGITAL PRESENTATION POLICY

Adopted:

General Purpose:

To ensure the security and functionality of Township technology systems during public meetings, this policy establishes guidelines for individuals who wish to present digital materials during public comment.

Policy Summary:

Members of the public are permitted to speak during designated public comment periods at Township meetings. To maintain IT security standards and minimize technological disruptions, individuals must submit any digital presentation materials in advance of the meeting in accordance with the following:

Policy Details:

1. Submission Requirements:
Individuals who wish to present digital materials (e.g., slides, documents, images, videos) during their public comment must email the presentation file to the Township at operations@oshtemo.gov, no later than twenty-four (24) hours before the meeting date
2. Permitted Formats:
Acceptable file formats include PDF, PowerPoint (.ppt/.pptx), Word (.doc/.docx), and image files (.jpg/.png). Video files must be in .mp4 format.
3. Technology Restrictions:
Individuals are not permitted to connect personal devices including laptops, phones, flash drives, or other external hardware to Township technology systems during public comment periods.
4. Presentation Display:
Township staff will make the submitted materials available on Township equipment for use by the individual(s) during their public comment period.
5. Security and Compatibility:
All submitted files will be scanned for malware and reviewed for compatibility. The Township reserves the right to reject files that pose a security risk or cannot be opened using standard Township software.

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DIGITAL PRESENTATION POLICY

MOTION TO APPROVE BOARD POLICY:

Motion was made by _____ and seconded by _____, to adopt the foregoing Policy by Board Resolution.

The following voted "Aye":

The following voted "Nay":

The following were Absent:

The following Abstained:

The Supervisor declared the motion carried and the Policy duly adopted.

Dusty Farmer, Clerk
Oshtemo Charter Township

CERTIFICATE

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss.
COUNTY OF KALAMAZOO)

I, Dusty Farmer, the duly appointed and acting Clerk of the Township of Oshtemo, certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a board policy adopted at a regular meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Board held on November 10, 2025, which meeting was preceded by required notices under the Michigan Open Meetings Act, being 1976 PA 267; that a quorum of the Board was present and voted in favor of said Resolution; and that minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by said Open Meetings Act.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto affixed my official signature on this ____ day of November 2025.

Dusty Farmer, Clerk
Oshtemo Charter Township

Memorandum



Date: November 10, 2025
To: Township Board
From: James Porter, Legal Counsel & Sierra Lucas,
Paralegal Manager
Subject: Second Reading re Text Amendments to the Non-Motorized Facilities/Sidewalk Ord

Objective

MOTION: I make a motion to approve the second reading and adoption of the Text Amendments to the Non-Motorized Facilities/Sidewalk Ordinance, Section 294.007 Maintenance of Sidewalks and Non-Motorized Paths/Facilities.

Background

This amendment will greatly enhance public safety and accessibility, particularly benefiting our most vulnerable residents, including seniors and individuals with disabilities. It also helps ensure that high traffic areas remain safe and pedestrian friendly.

Information Provided

Final Ordinance

Core Value(s)

Public Service, Professionalism

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO. 686

Adopted: _____

Effective: _____

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE

An Ordinance to amend the Oshtemo Charter Township Non-Motorized Facilities/ Sidewalks (Ordinance No.604), as amended, and to repeal all Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict.

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN
ORDAINS:

SECTION I. AMENDMENT OF COMPILED SECTION 294.007, MAINTENANCE OF SIDEWALKS AND NON-MOTORIZED PATHS/FACILITIES, is amended as follows:

- B. Public Snow Removal - No person having the care, either as the owner or occupant, of a house, building or lot, parcel or building site shall permit any accumulation of snow to remain upon the sidewalk or non-motorized path/facilities in front of such house, building or lot for longer than 24 hours. When ice is formed on any sidewalk, the owner or occupant of the abutting premises shall immediately cause the same to be removed or treated to prevent a hazard.
- C. If a person neglects to remove an unreasonable accumulation of snow and/or ice upon a sidewalk or non-motorized path/facilities, as required, the Ordinance Enforcement Officer may cause the snow and/or ice to be removed as provided in Section XI. The cost of removing the unreasonable accumulation of snow and/or ice shall be charged and assessed to the property owner as provided in Section XI Penalties & Enforcement.
- D. Obstructions – (Section Change from C to D)
- E. Owner Caused Defects – (Section Change from D to E)
- F. Barricades – (Section Change from E to F)

SECTION II. AMENDMENT OF COMPILED SECTION 294.011, PENALTIES & ENFORCEMENT, is amended to add the following:

If a property owner refuses to comply with this ordinance, after the Ordinance Enforcement Officer provides notice to the property owner by personal service, or by posting notice, at the beginning of the annual snow fall, authorize entry onto the premises to remove the unreasonable accumulation of snow and/or ice. All expenses incurred in such snow and/or ice removal shall be paid by the owner(s) of such land. Additionally, an administration fee, the amount of which shall be determined by the Township Board

from time to time by resolution, shall be paid by the owner(s) of such land. The Township shall have a lien upon such land for such expense and fee, which may be enforced in the same manner as the enforcement of tax liens through entry upon the next tax roll of the Township and assessment as a general Township tax. Such expenses shall be subject to all interest and penalties provided for taxes due and collectible within the Township under the general tax laws of the State of Michigan. In addition to the foregoing, the Township may sue the owner(s) in an appropriate court of law for the collection of said debt.

SECTION III. EFFECTIVE DATE: This Ordinance shall take effect upon publication after adoption in accordance with State law. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

DUSTY FARMER, CLERK
OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Adopted:

Effective:

An Ordinance to impose a Moratorium on all Commercial Energy Storage Facilities until such time as the Township's Ordinances can be revised to develop appropriate Ordinance provisions necessary, to ensure the public health, safety, and welfare, associated with the development of Commercial Energy Storage Facilities.

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO
KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN
ORDAINS:

**COMMERCIAL ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY GENERAL MORATORIUM
ORDINANCE**

SECTION I. THE TOWNSHIP MORATORIUM ON COMMERCIAL ENERGY
STORAGE FACILITIES:

The Township hereby imposes a one year Moratorium (until otherwise amended or repealed) on the development of all Commercial Energy Storage Facilities (as defined under Michigan PA 233 of 2023), until such time as the Zoning Ordinance and General Ordinances can be reviewed and amended, if necessary, to develop the appropriate ordinance provisions necessary, to ensure the public health, safety, and welfare, associated with the development of Commercial Energy Storage Facilities.

SECTION II. EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Ordinance will take effect upon Publication after Adoption in accordance with state law. Ordinances, or parts Ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby suspended until the Moratorium provisions of this Ordinance are otherwise amended or repealed or until the Moratorium ends.

DUSTY FARMER, CLERK
OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP

November 5, 2025

Dear Director Stefforia and Attorney Porter,

While NewEdge has not submitted site plans for a battery energy storage system (BESS) to Oshtemo Township, we want to be transparent and share updates with you and the Township's leaders as we look at potential permit application timing.

Recently, we learned of changes in the MISO interconnection queue that will affect our project timeline. Based on these changes, the earliest we would look to submit an application would be the second half of 2026.

We know that residents and officials desire information about BESS and have questions and concerns. While we cannot present specific project details without passage of a BESS ordinance, we offer time and resources to the community as part of our outreach and support.

We defer to you, the Oshtemo Township Planning Commission, and Township Board regarding your preference and timing for such resources. Please find a few ideas for your consideration:

- Energy Safety Response Group ([ESRG](#)) consultants could offer a "BESS Safety 101" to the Oshtemo Fire Department. ESRG's team comprises active firefighters and fire service veterans who offer BESS safety training, emergency response plan development, and ongoing support to local governments and communities. The purpose would be to educate local emergency responders on international and national codes, safety protocols, and best practices that are used across the country.
- Community education opportunities - host a virtual town hall where Township officials and residents could participate and ask questions. ESRG and a non-profit education group could present on battery energy storage technology and operations.

We recognize some Oshtemo citizens, Township officials, and staff have questions. We are committed to answering those questions and providing resources when and as you see fit.

We look forward to hearing your feedback and providing you with updates on potential project development.

Kind Regards,

Rachel Walker
Director of Permitting

rachel@newedgepower.com