THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO
Regular Board Meeting
September 9, 2026
5:30 PM

The Oshtemo Township Board Meeting was held in person at the Township Hall. Residents were able to give public comment during the meeting. Supervisor Bell called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 PM.

PRESENT:
Supervisor Cheri Bell
Clerk Dusty Farmer- remote in Oshtemo Township
Treasurer Clare Buszka
Trustee Neil Sikora
Trustee Michael Chapman
Trustee Zak Ford
Trustee Kristin Cole

Also present were Public Works Director Anna Horner, Township Attorney James Porter, and approximately 11 interested people.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Ford, second by Sikora to approve the agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Officials and Community Partner Updates

Gail Walter from the Audubon Society presented on Lights Out Kalamazoo, providing principles for responsible outdoor lighting. She requested that those present take the pledge to turn off unnecessary lights at night as it interferes with the migration patterns of birds.

Kalamazoo County Commissioner Dale DeLeeuw was available for questions and comments.

Kalamazoo County Road Commissioner Larry Stehouwer provided updates and was available for questions and comments.

Work Session: 2027 Budget

Accountant Ben Wakley presented 2027 revenue projections regarding hypothetical millage scenarios. The Board requested fund balance policy, fund balances by fund, and current millage rates for the next meeting to assist with setting millage rates. Supervisor Bell reminded the public that Oshtemo taxes have been lowered in the last 3 years. Board consensus was to add another budget meeting after September 23 in case more time is needed to send the millage rates to the County. The Board also had questions regarding personnel costs, and Human Resources Director Sara Feister was available for questions.

Public Comment

Supervisor Bell opened public comment.

Supervisor Bell asked if anyone wished to remove anything from the consent agenda.

Consent Agenda

a. August 25, 2026 Meeting Minutes
b. August 26, 2026 Meeting Minutes
c. Receipts and Disbursements
d. Update – Public Works Update on Vehicle Barn Project
e. Appointment – Cemeteries, Buildings, and Grounds Committee

Motion by Chapman, second by Sikora to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

Resolution: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month

Trustee Chapman read the resolution.

Motion by Chapman, second by Ford to adopt a resolution recognizing September as Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month. Roll call. Resolution adopted 7-0.

Presentation: Quarterly Report – Detective Sergeant Kelm

Detective Sergeant Kelm presented to the Board and was available for questions.

Consideration: Winter Shelter Funding Request

Mary Balkema, Housing Director for Kalamazoo County, was available for questions. The request to the Township was for $25,000. The Board chose to take no action on this item.

Consideration: Non-motorized Project List and Contract

Public Works Director Anna Horner summarized her memo to the Board.

Supervisor Bell opened public comment.

Motion by Farmer, second by Ford to authorize Public Works to proceed with development and implementation of a two-year, as-needed nonmotorized construction contract with the option for one, two-year extension, to authorize the Supervisor to execute said contract for 2026-2027 with Peter's Construction, for a not to exceed amount of $500,000 in 2026 and a minimum commitment of $500,000 in 2027, and to approve the associated 2026 budget amendments necessary to complete the identified 2026 projects for $150,000. Motion carried 7-0.

Discussion: Energy Ordinance and Other Moratorium Updates

Trustee Chapman shared that the Planning Commission will further review the draft ordinance at the next meeting.

Attorney Porter shared that the Data Center draft ordinance will not be available in the immediate future.

Discussion: Human Resource Board Work Group

Trustee Sikora reviewed the different committees, which prompted the request for discussion. He would like each committee to have mission statements, to have some committees meet more often, and to receive more frequent updates from active committees. He would like the Board to review the full committee list. He would also like to see more Trustee involvement with the HR Board Work Group to address personnel items. Supervisor Bell shared that she does not think that personnel items are within the purview of the Trustees, and that the HR Board Work Group does not discuss personnel items.

Attorney Porter suggested that this item be discussed in closed session with a written opinion of counsel.

Discussion: Results of Oshtemo's America250 Food Drive

Supervisor Bell shared that the Township collected 425 pounds of food and delivered it to Loaves and Fishes.

Resolution: Closed Session re Real Estate Purchase

Motion by Farmer, second by Ford to adopt a resolution to enter closed session at 9:19 PM to discuss a real estate purchase. Roll call. Resolution adopted 7-0.

Motion by Ford, second by Buszka to exit closed session at 9:37 PM. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion by Ford, second by Buszka to proceed as discussed in closed session. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Comment

Supervisor Bell opened public comment.

Supervisor Bell adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:55 PM.

Prepared by	Dusty Farmer Township Clerk	Attested	Cheri Bell Township Supervisor