

**SPECIAL MEETING  
January 23, 2018**

**PERE MARQUETTE CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD**  
held at Peterson Auditorium, 508 N. Washington Ave., Ludington MI 49431

Board members present: Supervisor Paul Keson; Clerk Rachelle Enbody; Treasurer Jacalyn Sroka;  
Trustees: Paul Piper, Andrew Kmetz, James Nordlund and Henry Rasmussen.  
Also present: Township Attorney Crystal Bultje of Dickinson Wright, PLLC.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Supervisor. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all. The agenda was approved by consent.

**NEW BUSINESS:** The Supervisor opened the meeting by saying he would like to welcome and thank everyone for coming to this very special meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the Township Board of Pere Marquette an opportunity to hear the public's voices regarding the Father Marquette Memorial in Pere Marquette Charter Township. This is a sensitive issue to which many people feel very strongly and he encouraged everyone who speaks tonight to be respectful in their words and reactions to those who may speak in opposition to their beliefs. Keson added that we all want this to be an informative, productive meeting. Keson then introduced Crystal Bultje of the law firm Dickinson Wright representing Pere Marquette Charter Township.

Ms. Bultje stated that as the attorney for the Township, the Board had asked for her to give context, history, and meeting rules. The Township inherited the Father Marquette Memorial about thirty years ago from the City of Ludington where it had been originally donated by the Butters family. The memorial was in need of repairs and the Township began saving for the anticipated restoration work a few years ago. The restoration project was approved in 2017, which is essentially what started this controversy. After the Board approved the restoration project, it received a letter, which has been followed by several letters from groups that are questioning the Township's ability to maintain the cross on public land and to pay for it with public funds. There is a legal framework that courts use to determine whether public land use is lawful. Essentially, there is one test that courts apply to this type of situation and it is called the *Lemon Test*. The *Lemon Test* asks three things in order for a government display to be constitutional. First, it has to have a secular purpose; second, it cannot inhibit or advance religion; and third, it cannot create excessive entanglement with religion. The Township Board is going to look at the legality of the situation and it is going to look at its options and will make the best determination it can from there. Ms. Bultje outlined the rules for the comment portion.

The meeting was opened for public comments.

Phil DeVries (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor of keeping the cross as a part of the Father Marquette Memorial.  
Leo Yennior (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Mark Petzold (Grand Rapids) – Spoke in favor.  
Scott Foster (Amber Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Mark Gurley (Kent County) – Spoke in favor.  
Kevin Rahe (Kent County) – Spoke in favor.  
Alicia Guerra (Mason County / Custer) – Spoke in favor.  
Jim Merchant (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Randy Bishop (Torch Lake) – Spoke in favor.  
Caleb Duran (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Jean Christman McCumber (Branch Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Greg Collins (Mason County) – Spoke in favor.  
Shirley VanderVeer (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Issac Duran (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Diana Verm / Becket Law (Washington D.C.) – Spoke in favor.  
Peg Gage (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Jennifer Richert (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Jack Daniel Berends (Muskegon County) – Spoke in favor.  
Jeremy (no last name given) (no address given) – Spoke in favor.  
Erica Sloan (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Diann Engblade (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Ron Peterson (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Llyod Andersen (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.

Carolyn Cater (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Kim McDonald Compeau (Summit Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Steve Jones (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Anne Caldwell (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
James Strange (Mason County) – Spoke in favor.  
Dann Anderson (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Ron Bennett (Grant Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Sheryl Anderson (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Elaine Muzzo (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Cathy Ingraham (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Deb DelZoppo (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Brian Sytsma (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Marylou Eppard (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Erwin Plouhar (Pere Marquette Charter Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Frank Sagan (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Janell Schade (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
John Krueger (Kent County) – Spoke in favor.  
Mark Caroselli (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Pat Fricke (Amber Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Tom Anderson (City of Ludington) – Spoke in favor.  
Everett Horton (Pentwater – Oceana County) – Spoke in favor.  
Tim Muldoon (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Robin Bogus (Branch Township) – Spoke in favor.  
Lorna Kendall (Hamlin Township) – Spoke in favor.

Written comments for the special meeting were received from:

C.J. Bifulco – Don't take the cross down. It is a religious cross but it's there for Father Marquette. It should stay.

William Wagner / President, Great Lakes Justice Center – Legal Analysis entitled The Historical Memorial to Pere Marquette does not violate the First Amendment Establishment Clause.

The Supervisor thanked everyone for sharing their comments and concerns. Keson stated the Township Board is committed to finding a solution and that there are a lot of factors and options that the Board must consider. He thanked the participants for the opportunity to hear from them.

The meeting was adjourned by the Supervisor at 8:01 p.m.

Rachelle D. Enbody, CMC, Township Clerk

Paul Keson, Township Supervisor