

**BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026
BIG RAPIDS TOWNSHIP HALL, 14230 NORTHLAND DR.
BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307
7:00 PM
APPROVED**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m. ROLL CALL: Borkovich, Bechaz, Everett, Saez, Teceno, Welch, present. Marek absent.

This special meeting was called by Supervisor Borkovich to discuss the following:

- 1. Assessor's Contract**
- 2. Data Center Discussion**
 - a. Introduction**
 - b. Description of a Data Center**
 - c. Purpose of Public Hearing**
 - d. What townships can and cannot do (restrictions)**
 - e. What has been done (Moratorium), joint meeting with the Board and the Planning Commission, data center overview, master plan highlights**
- 3. Rules for Speaking:**
 - a. Please sign in to speak, and leave your cell phone number if you wish to be added to the Township texting list**
 - b. Please state your name, and jurisdiction of residence**
 - c. You will be limited to 3 minutes (this is to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak)**
 - d. Please be orderly and respectful – especially to others who may not share your opinion.**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Donald May – Opposed to data centers for 2 reasons. Water consumption concerns and noise concerns. Also listed light pollution concerns.

Jim Frazer- Thanked board for being proactive. Negative concerns with data centers including water demand, thermal pollution, electricity usage.

Scott Dell- Thanked board for being proactive. AI/tech guru from Ferris. For & against data centers. AI changing hourly, proactive is good but anti is bad. Would vote no now, but that could change with new technology. Warning to be careful. Making companies sign a rate protection pledge.

Paul Quick- Concerns about noise, humming of fans, suggested quiet hours. Concerns on electric usage putting a strain on infrastructure. Suggests data centers have their own substation. Concerns about water usage putting a strain on wells. Concerns of flooding issue and water buildup from large parking lots.

David Horchner- Warns board to be cautious, has spoken to others near data centers and water and electric usage is much higher than they claim. Not opposed, but wondering if we need so many. Asks if they help grow our food or enjoy our land.

David Chipman- Licensed engineer, lists having acoustic requirements and suggestions on current noise ordinances. Spoke on the difference of DBC levels for vibrations/rattling rather than noise. Recommends a 5 decibel penalty to help support ordinance suggestions. Recommends the Township hire a licensed acoustic engineer and include that in the data center costs.

Penny Currie- Thanked board for the public hearing and a chance to voice concerns. Not for/against but has a gut feeling this is not a right fit for community. Informed board that the Industrial Park is owned by Township Residents and it's not theirs to sell without public input. Informed board about a sports complex being actively searched for to be put into the community which would generate millions and wanted to share.

Zylie Vitello- Spoke on water being our most significant resource in Michigan. Touched on areas suffering from droughts and potential evacuations due to data centers/AI. Wanted to emphasize water being the most significant issue that is their concern.

Lenny Schebil- "Only free cheese is in the trap". Thanked Vets in attendance for service.

Melissa Collins- Spoke 3 times, touched on energy concerns but primarily water concerns and our duty to protect it. Not enough positive reinforcement and is 100% against data centers. Touched on brain frequencies being affected, formation of children's brains, AI manipulating data. Studies on data/platform issues/concerns.

Rudy Bogojan- Thinks data centers are a great idea if they come and build their own power plant. Wants regulations on abandoned infrastructure. They are ambivalent, don't bring a lot of jobs. Does cost outweigh the risk. Thanked board for being proactive.

Brad Deal- Anti data centers. Concerned about electrical grids, prior employee of consumers and said they cannot support electrical usage. Concerns about cost to residents, respects those not pro/anti because future technology could come in to support them, but the Government always shuts down the cheapest and most efficient and safest production.

Daylan Nickisson- Concerned about how data centers would impact jobs in the area. Concerns on low volume noise being a very different type of sound. Feels they are inevitable but interested in making sure there are sufficient upfront requirements. Concerns on power usage and investment they would offer. Asks Township to ask them to make commitments.

John Ward- Electricity and data concerns. If they find/need 40 acres that's what they will use. Concerns on size and return on investment for something that does not fit the community.

Carla Melvin-Spoke on AI changing so quickly nothing can keep up. Thanked board for passing Moratorium. DC postponed recently and Federal regulations have been passed. Against data centers, has seen a lot of them end in disaster. Touched on Teenagers suing social media, with a point that it took off 20 years ago and has caused an epidemic with suicide rates. Warns to slow down to avoid harm.

Paul Quick- Asked if we can limit where data centers are built.

Brent Mason- (ZA) – answered that the board amended the Ordinance so that data centers are not allowed in the Industrial Park, but they are allowed in Industrial Districts. Anyone who meets qualifications on land can have their land rezoned into an industrial district.

Karen Turnbull- Very leery of data centers. Notes the zoning enabling act and how it's interpreted. Asks if zoning could deny them if not a demonstrated need. Notes the Gotion attorneys are the ones who made out so well. Thanked board for having a meeting and is hoping the Township moves forward with prohibiting what they can.

Borkovich – noted there has been no request/interest in a data center, we have 2 years on the Moratorium to build an ordinance but we will be proactive much sooner.

Donald May – Noted that data centers are being used a lot for crypto currency and not just AI.

Darell Greenbay- Asked about where water they used goes. Borkovich answered that its discharged, some use closed loop systems. Asked who in room as 2g or 1g phone. Spoke of need for data centers, but doesn't know if one is needed in BR. Touched on power and them addressing noise, as they have jet engine generators but are working on tech we are unaware of such as sound proof buildings.

David Horchner – countered that point with how they are toxic, attacking our brains like a microwave. Yes we all use it but don't need it.

Joe Bechaz- Thanked Bruce for the work he put in. Worries about the unknowns. Noted visit to a hydraulic plant and people having issues with motion of blades causing headaches in people nearby.

Borkovich read comments by those submitted via email, all anti data center.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:17pm

Big Rapids Charter Township will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed material, if individuals with disabilities, upon five business days notice to the township. Individuals requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Hannah Saez, Big Rapids Charter Township Clerk, 14212 Northland Drive, Big Rapids, MI 49307- call 231 796 3603 or fax request to 231 796 2533.