

ESCANABA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 7, 2022

7:30 Pm Escanaba Township Hall 4618 County 416 20th Rd Gladstone, MI 49837

18 participants present

Meeting was called to order at 7:36 PM by Chair, Dean VanLoon followed by recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present are Larry Klope, Dean VanLoon, Norman Fleury, Theresa Chenier. Greg Faust Absent, excused. 4 members fulfill the required quorum. Al Gareau, Zoning Administrator also present.

Larry K. made motion to approve January 3, 2022 meeting minutes with corrections and additions that the Board is looking into the cemetery map. Added that Dean VanLoon also was sworn in to a 3 year ^{and 1 year} term ^{term as} as Planning Commission ^{Chair person.} Chair. Clarification of the acronym RR is Rural Residential. The questions prepared for the attorney have been submitted, not scheduled for discussion at current meeting. Second by NormF. Verbal Vote: Larry K YES Norm F YES Theresa C YES DeanV Yes. Motion passed.

PIUBLIC COMMENTS: Fred Minor Bob Barron

LarryK made motion to approve Agenda as presented. Second by Theresa C. Verbal vote: LarryK YES DeanV YES NormF YES TheresaC YES. Motion passed.

Zoning Administrators Report: Al Gareau reported there is 1 new building permit and a fence construction.

Board Liaison Report. Theresa C gave report on the January 10, 2022 Board meeting. The budget is due in March 2022. They have been monitoring it throughout the year. MTA Conference, Library contract, Cemetery Tri-Media, Janitor cleaning Besse Hall, Norman Fleary and Michelle Chenier (alternate) were appointed to the Board Of Review, ARPA funds \$177,162.63 received, counter in office, Budget line item review, State audit, Tavern inspector and Planning Commission has 2 member positions open. It is encouraged that the public voice their ideas for the distribution of the ARPA funds.

New Business: Frank Chenier, Geologist and Larry Klope, Engineer, gave a presentation titled Preserving Groundwater as a Source of Potable Water. Highlights of the presentation explained groundwater is the primary source of potable water. The bedrock serves as the only source of groundwater available in this area. The soils serve as a filter to the surface water before encountering the underlying fractural limestone bedrock. Because of the thin soil layer in our area there is little opportunity for the proper filtration. Ground water contamination problems have been common in the area underlain by thin soils and shallow bedrock for many years, some which are documented in the Township Master Plan and documented by the County Health Department as "Areas of concern." Maps were displayed depicting depths of soil in all areas of Escanaba Township. Protection of the aquifers are of significant importance. There is no practical alternate source of water available if our supply became unusable. There is need to protect our groundwater not only for the present time but also for future generations. LarryK added the best means of protecting our groundwater is to manage activities or

uses within the areas that are vulnerable. He presented a list of suggested measures that could be followed.

Old Business: The Commission continued with discussion of the proposed draft ordinance for solar within our township. Questions that arose: How large of a solar overlay area do we need? Dean informed that in regards to the population of our township and usage by residents, the need would be less than 40 acres. Norm mentioned there needs to be an ordinance then a site plan. Theresa referred to the Master Plan and we are following the Master Plan which states one of our goals is to encourage development where suitable land exists. Dean said shallow soil depths make it difficult to come up with large areas for a solar overlay. Protecting ground water involves identifying soil conditions and knowing what adequate filters are for ground water. Norm suggested to elevate and put above ground systems. Larry suggests all piers be above the bedrock.

Dean announced he would like to table the continued discussion until next meeting. He would like to have more members involved resulting in more opinions and input. The members all agreed to table the discussion.

Theresa would like to approach attorney for legal input on this matter.

No Zoning Board of Appeals hearings were held.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bob Barron Fred Minor

Dean thanked Mr. Chenier and Mr. Klope for their presentation.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Theresa C with second by Norm F. Verbal vote:

LarryK YES NormF YES TheresaC YES DeanV YES. Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:07pm passed.

The next regular meeting of the Escanaba Planning Commission is scheduled for Monday
March 7, 2022 7:30 pm Escanaba Township 4618 County 416 20th Rd Gladstone MI 49837
906-786-6200

If you require any assistance to attend a meeting, please contact Cathy
at 906 280 6182.

Approved April 4, 2022