

ESCANABA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 3, 2022 7:30 pm EST

Escanaba Township Hall 4618 County 416 20th Rd Gladstone, MI 49837 906-786-6200

The regular meeting of the Escanaba Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Person, Dean VanLoon at 7:33 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Mr. VanLoon announced he received notice of resignation from the Commission by Theresa Norton. The Commission is currently accepting applications for 2 positions. Applications can be presented to the township to be directed to our Township Supervisor, Tom Rymkos for review. Mr. VanLoon thanked everyone in attendance for joining the meeting tonight.

Verbal roll call: Present are Larry Klope, Greg Faust, Norman Fleury, Theresa Chenier, Dean VanLoon. 5 members fulfill the quorum requirements to proceed with meeting and voting issues.

The members reviewed the December meeting draft minutes. Motion to approve the minutes was made by GregF as modified with spelling correction of reference to DEA s/b DEQ on pg 2. Motion was seconded by Theresa Chenier. **Verbal Vote: LarryK YES GregF YES NormF YES TheresaC YES DeanV YES. Motion passed.**

Public Comments pertaining to the agenda: NONE

Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by GregF with second by TheresaC. **Verbal Vote: LarryK YES GregF YES DeanV YES NormF YES TheresaC YES. Motion passed.**

No Zoning Administrators report. Al Gareau not present.

Theresa Chenier gave Board liaison report. Two of the fire trucks need repairs. A risk assessment is being conducted. Turning the fire calls over to the county was found to be more expensive. Cemetery map is ~~in process of needed updates~~. Partial funds were received from **ARPA** grant that was applied for. They would appreciate the residents input and suggestions for use of the funds. The moratorium to pass a solar ordinance was extended for one more calendar year.

Planning Commission member Larry Klope was sworn in by Supervisor Rymkos today for a 3 year term. The Bylaws require a vote for Chairperson, Vice Chair and Secretary. TheresaC made motion to nominate Dean VanLoon for Chair. Larry K second. **Verbal vote: LarryK YES GregF YES NormF YES TheresaC Yes. Dean VanLoon accepted the appointment of Chair Person.** DeanV made a motion to nominate Greg Faust as Vice Chair. TheresaC second. **Verbal vote: LarryK YES DeanV YES NormF YES TheresaC YES. Greg Faust accepted appointment of Vice Chair.**

Dean VanLoon also sworn in to a 3 year term as Planning Commission Chair

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Dean V made motion to nominate Theresa Chenier as Secretary. LarryK Second. **Verbal vote: LarryK YES GregF YES DeanV YES NormF YES. Theresa Chenier accepted the 1 year term as Secretary.**

Dean reminded the members that continuing education for planning commission issues has a 4 hour requirement per year. Several opportunities are available online through the MTA. The township is enrolled with the program and covers the class expenses. TheresaC said she will verify that everyone on the commission is enrolled to participate.

Rural Residential

Under old business the commission continued review and discussion of the draft solar ordinance to ensure all issues are taken into consideration. An area of concern was the PA116 state program, which will be discussed with the attorney, and enforcing the ordinance guidelines. Dean would like to see ~~PR~~ added to be allowed ground structure solar panels.

Restoration after use, hazardous waste management and definition of abandonment will also be discussed with the attorney. Setbacks and noise will be addressed. Screening concerns were mentioned by LarryK that the fire departments recognize conifers as high fire fuel. Shallow soil areas make it difficult to grow in this area. Once masonry walls or berms are placed, it could be difficult to restore the land back to the original condition. It seems impossible to get the original soil back. GregF added having a 3rd party do inspections may eliminate conflict of interest but there is only a limited amount of professionals available to do these inspections. One of the major concerns mentioned by DeanV is the decommissioning. Dean asked the members to put together any questions they may want addressed by the attorney and ~~bring them back to the next meeting to be discussed~~. At the February 7, 2022 meeting, they would like to review the maps that depict the solar overlay and soil depths. MTU and CUPPAD are sources for the maps.

DCS already submitted to Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Fred Minor expressed he has zoning issues on his property that need clarification. Karen Whitney asked for advice regarding health concerns along with soil and water contamination pertaining to the VERSO Grow that is being heavily spread on the farm fields adjoining residential properties. What chemicals are being scattered onto the top of the ground and then become airborne or contaminate ground water via run off. DeanV suggested to contact *EGLE (Michigan Dept. Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy)*.

Motion to adjourn was made by NormF. Second by LaryK. **Verbal vote: LarryK YES GregF YES NormF YES TheresaC YES DeanV YES. Motion to adjourn was passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:34 pm.**

The next meeting of the Escanaba Planning Commission is scheduled for February 7, 2022 7:30 pm at the Escanaba Township Hall 4618 County 416 20th Rd Gladstone MI 49837.

Contact Cathy at 906-280-6182 for assistance to attend any meeting.