

Colfax Township, Weldon Township and Village of Thompsonville
Community Joint Planning Commission
14731 Thompson Avenue, Thompsonville, MI 48683
Meeting Minutes – July 5, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Sue Meredith followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at roll call: Jack Richter, Shelley Greene, Peggy Minster, Sue Meredith, Bryan Matthews, Don Suchocki and Craig Meredith. Absent: Marty Lonn, Pat Workman and Eugene Allen (excused). Debra Franke arrived at 9:22PM. Guests: Dana Schindler and Roger Bradley.

Citizen Matters. None.

Agenda Additions/Corrections. None; approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes. Peggy moved, seconded by Don, to accept the June 7 minutes. Ayes: all; motion carried.

Zoning Administrator Interviews. Sue stated the original plan called for an interview panel with a member from each entity. With no Village representatives present (Craig served as alternate but was also an interviewee) she opened the floor for discussion. It was decided Don and Peggy would ask questions and other JPC members would observe. By her choice, Sue declared she had a conflict of interest. She stated for the record she had checked and that nothing legislatively prohibited her presence or voting. Sue also stated she would leave the building. She turned the meeting over to Jack, JPC Vice Chair. Craig also declared a conflict of interest and excused himself with Sue at 7:10PM.

Jack gave the floor to Don, committee chair, who welcomed Dana Schindler. Don and Peggy conducted the interviews. Roger Bradley was interviewed next, followed by Craig Meredith at 8:00PM. Craig excused himself following the interview.

Jack stated that compensation had not been discussed prior to or during the interviews. Don questioned the ZA position as an independent contractor. Peggy said it was related to obligations as an employer (worker's comp, etc.). He suggested revisiting the subject. Don felt there was a good variety of responses and more member input was needed to make a selection. He suggested those absent listen to the tapes. Don said Dana's comment on an enforcement officer raised a question – will we have one; this needs to be addressed. Peggy led discussion of the importance of ordinance enforcement from a legal standpoint. Jack asked if other area ZAs are employees or contractors; requires investigation.

Sue and Craig rejoined the group at 8:38PM; Sue chaired the balance of the meeting.

Draft Master Plan Next Steps. Shelley described sample cover pages she gave Sue; lighter colors should reduce ink costs. Sue will bring to next meeting. Shelley pointed out some errors on the maps; any others should be brought up at the next meeting for correction. The group discussed several uncoded roads on the maps. Shelley will check with Harry on whether some can be removed (logging/private/driveways) if it makes sense and isn't counter to standard practice. Draft plan timing was reviewed. Townships/village approval was expected the week of July 9. July 18 was selected to start the 63-day public period; website must be loaded and registered parties notified that day. A public hearing was scheduled for Thursday, September 20 at 7:00PM. Notice must be published 15 days prior (September 5).

Unfinished Business and Reports

- Zoning Administrator Contract. Changes to the contract were reviewed. Jeff McCray's email explanation on insurance was reviewed. Shelley provided relevant info from a legal firm's website. Don said all the information we have begs us to investigate how other townships are set up for the position before going further. Extensive discussion on the draft contract length and detail as well as insurance raised many questions. Don will investigate other townships' practices. Sue suggested we ask Dick Figura's opinion at the August 2 meeting on employer vs. contractor and ZA hiring practices of other joint planning commissions. Shelley will ask Jeff McCray and Peggy will check with Kurt Schindler.
- Zoning Ordinance Quotes. Issue tabled.
- Expenses/Compensation Approval. It was agreed in June that one member from each entity would approve expenses as a checks and balance. Shelley submitted reimbursement for a Colfax Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) member who attended the Conflict of Interest workshop. Discussion on whether this was a JPC expense or Colfax's responsibility. Training was not extended to others on ZBAs. Sue said the joint planning ordinance states the joint zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this agreement shall provide for a zoning board of appeals from each participating municipality. Shelley's understanding was all nine ZBA members would hear and discuss an appeal but only the municipality's ZBA members would vote. Expense submission was withdrawn. Shelley presented other receipts which were approved.

New Business

- Training. Sue sent information on Inter-Governmental and Joint Planning workshop in July. She reviewed an MTA program on August 9 at McGuire's in Cadillac. Sue gave an overview of the Conflict of Interest/Incompatible Office/Ethics workshop held June 21 and pointed out highlights. Craig and Shelley also thought it was worthwhile. Debra suggested reviewing JPC bylaws based on material presented, and Sue agreed while saying the bylaws workgroup did a good job on what was approved. Peggy cautioned that paperwork can be overwhelming and it's difficult to cover everything and still conduct business.

Correspondence. Shelley handed out ParPlan literature on grants awarded. The detailed insurance policy binder was received. Jerry Adair called to set up an on-site visit regarding risk control. Shelley will arrange; there is no timeline or urgency to this. Sue suggested one person from each entity attend. Shelley will send letters of thanks to interviewees and say our decision may take some time until issues are addressed.

Adjournment. Jack moved to adjourn, seconded by Peggy. Next meeting is August 2.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene
Secretary

Minutes are proposed until approved at the next meeting.