

Colfax Township, Weldon Township and Village of Thompsonville  
Community Joint Planning Commission  
14731 Thompson Avenue, Thompsonville, MI 49683  
Minutes – April 3, 2014 Regular Meeting

Sue Meredith declared the meeting open at 7:00 p.m. after the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at roll call: JPC Members Jack Richter, Shelley Greene, Sue Meredith, Chris Jones, Don Suchocki, Debra Franke and Eugene Allen; alternates Irene Dunham Thayer and Mike Foust; and Zoning Administrator Craig Meredith. Peggy Minster arrived at 7:02 p.m.

Citizen Matters/Public Comment. None.

Agenda Additions/Corrections. The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes. Jack moved, seconded by Jack to accept the March 6 regular meeting minutes; motion carried.

Insurance

Jeff McCray of Burnham & Flower reviewed the policy due for renewal in April which is the same as last year; premium increased \$15. He discussed vulnerabilities a zoning ordinance presents and optional coverage available at various dollar limits. Some suits may seek money damages while others may seek relief by a change to the ordinance or a decision. ParPlan attorneys work to resolve issues to keep costs down, not build up billable hours. Jeff stressed the importance of “Findings of Facts” and a system to track decisions. He said the Zoning Questionnaire is to be turned in when the ordinance is adopted; it is reviewed by the Risk Group. It is also a good guide to follow for best practices. Jeff was informed that the questionnaire was provided to the planning consultant and all members at the start of the zoning ordinance process.

Joint Zoning Ordinance Draft

Sue will provide Richard Figura with a copy for review/comment. Shelley will distribute copies to legislative body officials at upcoming meetings. It was decided to give officials a review deadline of 30 days from May 15. A joint meeting with legislative bodies and Mark Eidelson of LANDPLAN will be scheduled once we have Mr. Figura’s comments. Need to ask Mr. Figura if the townships are required to have “zoning in effect” road signs installed. Shelley presented layout for temporary planning and zoning interest signs. Jack moved, seconded by Don to purchase nine (9) signs and heavy-duty stands at a cost of \$20 each from Steve Heller; ayes all; motion carried.

Unfinished Business

A. Zoning Board of Appeals

Debra reported the Village has selected ZBA members and alternate. The vacant JPC member position remains open. Weldon and Colfax are still seeking ZBA members; Colfax has one. On ZBA training, Shelley said MSU-E had no workshops planned in the area this year. Their contract training is \$1,100 for up to 20 attendees. Mark Eidelson offers a two to three hour session for about \$1,000 and would gear it toward our zoning ordinance. It was decided to ask Mark for a formal quote; Shelley will handle.

B. Bylaws

Chris reviewed work by the committee. A conflict of interest section will be added. An update will be provided next month.

C. Zoning Administrator Update

Craig had one LUP to turn in for Ken Regits and is waiting for one on the Townsend property. The St. Ambrose signs look okay. Production Industries groundbreaking may be July 1. Craig had no new information on Crystal Mountain’s affordable housing project. He spoke of a grant application for

\$25,000 for a consultant in support of a Betsie River Water Trail. Acquisition of Old King Road property is also being discussed to make the location an access site and add a bridge for snowmobiles and ORVs. Craig mentioned an article on fracking; Shelley will scan/send.

#### D. Expense/Compensation Approval

Sue provided a budget spreadsheet for 2014-2015. Account balance at end of March was \$10,404.41. Sue told Lee Kane she will be receiving checks from the Village and Colfax for their annual share. Sue reviewed a quarterly bill from Weldon Township for \$1,643.39 for taxes, payroll and check writing fee. There is a \$2 fee per payroll check for software licensing through Intuit/QuickBooks which calculates taxes. On an annual basis this could amount to \$350 for the JPC. Sue presented a \$58 JPC check fee charge from Weldon Township for employment checks. Extensive discussion was held. Eugene, Peggy, the Village and Colfax all use QuickBooks and have no extra cost to generate employee payroll checks. Eugene and Peggy explained their very affordable software cost, how it works and the ease with which they process payroll checks. It was noted there are no hours involved in calculating JPC checks. Everyone felt that a payroll service was probably unknowingly purchased by Weldon not realizing the costs that would be charged. Don moved, seconded by Chris to approve the current check writing fee of \$58 and no further approval of charges until an alternate no-fee solution is presented to the JPC. Ayes: all; motion carried. Debra moved, seconded by Peggy to approve payment of bills for the JPC meeting schedule ad with Pioneer Group of \$33.68 and the insurance premium with Burnham & Flower of \$1,271.00. Ayes: all; motion carried. The compensation authorization was approved.

#### E. Community Cleanup Days

Shelley confirmed that the cost to communicate a volunteer effort by mail is not viable. Sue will make flyers for Weldon (May 17) and Colfax (June 14). Debra will again be the coordinator.

#### New Business

##### A. Training

NWMCOG is holding a workshop for Placemaking for an Aging Society on April 22 in Beulah. Debra, Sue, Chris and Shelley plan to attend. Shelley will add Irene, Mike and Chris to their email list.

#### Correspondence

Shelley summarized a letter from Richard Figura to the Board of Commissioners related to a citizen request for a county ordinance on use and possession of marijuana and to make violations a municipal civil infraction. His opinion is the County has no authority to enact such an ordinance. Counties are unlike cities, villages and townships and have very limited authority to enact police power ordinances. Even if it had such authority, making a violation a municipal civil infraction would be a violation of the Michigan Public Health Code.

#### Adjournment

Jack moved, seconded by Debra to adjourn at 9:40 p.m. Next meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on May 1 at the Weldon Township hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene  
Secretary

*Minutes are proposed until approved at the next meeting.*