

Bengal Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes January 31, 2024

Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 Pm by acting Chairperson Brandy Solomon

Pledge of Allegiance led by Brandy Solomon

Members Present: Eric Boak, Kurt Koenigsknecht, Sam Nielsen, Brandy Solomon, and Brenda Zlotek

Public Present: Christopher Khorey, Bengal Township Zoning Administrator, Theresa Owen, Greenbush Township resident, Kathy George, Essex Township resident.

Additions to Agenda- NONE

Vote to appoint Planning Commission Chairperson: Brenda Zlotek nominated Brandy Solomon for Bengal Township Planning Commission Chairperson. Eric Boak seconded the nomination. No further nominations were presented. Nomination passed unanimously. The Bengal Township Planning Commission welcomed Brandy Solomon to the board as the Chairperson.

Approval of Minutes: Kurt Koenigsknecht motioned to approve the minutes from September 28, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Sam Nielsen. Motion carried.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: Kathy George of Essex Township expressed they are still considering joint Planning Commission with Bengal and or Greenbush township, but they are waiting to see how Clinton County proceeds with their proposed Zoning Amendments. They will have a better understanding of how to proceed in early March. Theresa Owen of Greenbush township concurred with Ms. George and expressed her township is also waiting for Clinton Counties determinations.

Reports:

Township Inspector/Enforcement officer Forrest Thurston: not present/no report.

Zoning Board of Appeals: Kurt Koenigsknecht stated the ZBA had a meeting in December for a Variance request for lot split, the request was approved. Chris Khorey stated the ZBA may have a Variance request due to zoning denial of an accessory structure. The property owner is currently exploring further options.

Township Board Liaison: Eric Boak reported that the Township Treasurer Lori Pung has resigned and the Township Board appointed Nolan Solomon treasurer. The Township Hall rental fees will increase for 2024. The Dexter trail bridge rebuild is currently in the bidding process. The Essex Center Road/Walker Road bridge rebuild is on hold due to cost. The township will likely have to request a special millage for the Essex Center Road bridge.

Unfinished Business:

Article 7 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS): Chris Khorey presented some potential changes to the current zoning language. The Planning Commission discussed the language presented, suggesting a few changes. Chris will draw up a draft of the changes for further review and finalization at a later date.

Proposal for Joint Planning Commission with Essex and or Greenbush Township: Chris Khorey explained Bengal Township will need a formal review of its Master Plan in 2025, if we join the Essex and or Greenbush township it would be best to have one Master Plan for all. The Bengal Twp. Planning

Commission will have a better understanding of the situation after the Counties meeting at the end of February when Essex and Greenbush Townships will decide if they want to proceed with a joint Zoning Ordinance and Planning Commission.

Pay Equity: The Planning Commission discussed the current pay scale and compared to Wheatfield township in Ingham County and Dallas township in Clinton County. A per meeting, straight annual salary, and a hybrid pay structure were all discussed. **Brenda Zlotek motioned to recommend to the Bengal Township Board to keep the pay structure of the Bengal Township Planning Commission the same for 2024 as it was for 2023. Sam Nielsen seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

New Business:

Clinton County Off Road Vehicle (ORV) ordinance: The Planning Commission reviewed the county ordinance.

State Control of Large-Scale Solar Farms: Chris Khorey explained the potential impacts of the new legislation to the Bengal Township Ordinance. He did suggest that the township add an amendment to include provisions for Battery Energy storage systems. Chris will provide guidance and language for the PC to review at the April meeting.

Defining time frame for the inspection process and proposed non – compliance fee: we have some of this already. Discussed revisiting when the inspector/enforcement officer is present.

Public Comment on Non- Agenda Items- NONE

Planning Commission Comments: Eric Boak stated residents are still complaining about farm equipment muddying the roads. The residents are encouraged to contact the County Road Commission with as much information as the resident can provide. The PC discussed Eric Boak's term as the Township Board Liaison expires in November. Kurt Koenigsknecht reminded the PC that his term is up in June, and he will be stepping down.

Motion of Excused Absence: Not applicable/all members present.

Meeting Adjourned by Chairperson Solomon at 8:14PM.

Respectfully submitted, pending approval

Brenda Zlotek, Bengal Township Planning Commission Secretary

Approved _2_/_28_/2024.