

Bengal Township Planning Commission Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes May 27, 2026

Call to Order at 7:00 PM by Chairperson Brandy Solomon

Pledge of Allegiance led by Brandy Solomon

Members Present: Brandy Solomon, Nick Tipper, Tanner White, and Brenda Zlotek

Public Present: Ethan Walthorn, Assistant Planner for McKenna; township residents Jeff Hattis and Eileen Hattis and their personal representative Deborah Cooper.

Additions to Agenda: Brandy Solomon motioned to add discussion of the Inspector/Enforcement officer under New Business, subsection “a,” seconded by Tanner White, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes, Nick Tipper motioned to approve the Minutes from April 29, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting, seconded by Tanner White, motion carried.

Motion by Brenda Zlotek at 7:04PM to close regular Bengal Township Planning Commission Meeting and open public hearing on Road Frontage/ROW Amendment, seconded by Nick Tipper, motion carried.

Public Comment on Road Frontage/ROW amendment requirements from Eileen Hattis, Jeff Hattis, and Deborah Cooper, regarding a parcel they would like to split. Their concerns were addressed by Ethan Walthorp, Assistant Planner from McKenna (the townships Planning Administrator). He advised them the 1.37 acre parcel they are concerned about would likely fall under the Homestead Division if they increased the lot to 2 Acres with minimal adjustments. If the trust wished to do something that fell outside the parameters of the Zoning Ordinance, they would need to schedule an appeal with the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Hattis’ and Deborah Cooper requested the Planning Commission discuss possibly allowing “Flag Lots” in the future.

Motion by Brenda Zlotek at 7:27 PM to close Public Hearing on Road Frontage/ROW Amendment and open Public Hearing on Data Center Ordinance, Motion seconded by Nick Tipper, Motion carried.

No public comment on Data Center Ordinance.

Motion by Tanner White at 7:30PM to close Public Hearing on Data Center Ordinance, and resume regular meeting, seconded by Nick Tipper, Motion carried.

Public comment on Agenda Items- none

Public comment on non-agenda items-none

Reports

- a. **Township inspector/Enforcement officer**, Forrest Thurston. Not Present. Brandy Solomon reported that there was a complaint about damaged junk cars in a field on the South side of Townsend Road, east of Grove Road. Forrest Thurston was made aware of the complaint and indicated he would follow up on it.
- b. **Zoning Board of Appeals**, liaison Tanner White reported he was absent from the most recent ZBA because of Military duty. Ethan Walthorn from McKenna reported we had one Zoning Board Appeal. A resident was seeking a variance for unique lot dimensions. The variance was granted to preserve tillable farmland.
- c. **Township Board** update, liaison Nick Tipper reported the township is preparing for the upcoming election millages. There will be a proposal to renew the current bridge and road millage. There will be a proposal to reduce and renew the current dust control millage by 0.5 mils. There will be a new millage proposal for 0.75mils for Emergency services for 4 years.

Unfinished Business

- a. **PA-233 Appeal update and overlay district update**. Foster Swift, the law firm representing the municipalities (including Bengal Township) informed/advised that the municipalities involved in the lawsuit should petition the US Supreme court, if the involved parties choose to continue.
- b. **Road Frontage Requirement/ROW Amendment**. Brenda Zlotek motioned to advise the Township Board to adopt the Amendment to Section 3.05 "Minimum Lot Width for the A-1 district" to 250 feet for a 5-acre parcel as presented, seconded by Tanner White, motion carried.
- c. **Data Center Ordinance Discussion**. The Planning Commission reviewed the Draft Ordinance for Data Centers and Digital Mining provided by McKenna and presented by Ethan Walthorn, in detail. Mr. Walthorn answered questions and made note of the changes requested.

A Motion was made by Brenda Zlotek for Ethan Walthorn, Assistant Planner from McKenna, to make all the requested changes and provide the Planning Commission with a new draft for our next meeting. Motion seconded by Nick Tipper, motion carried.

New Business

- a. Discussion of Inspector/Enforcement Officer, Forrest Thurston. The current Inspector/Enforcement Officer is underperforming, and for several months has not attended any Planning Commission meetings. The Township Supervisor, Nick McDonald has been acting in the capacity of Inspector/Enforcement officer.

A Motion was made by Brenda Zlotek to recommend the township board relieve Forrest Thurston from the Township Inspector/Enforcement officer duties and hire a new Inspector/Enforcement officer. Motion seconded by Tanner White, motion carried.

Planning Commission Comments- the Planning Commission is still short one member, Brandy Solomon said she will remind Nick McDonald, township supervisor.

Motion of excused absence- N/A

Meeting Adjourned at 9:06 PM by Chairperson Brandy Solomon

Respectfully submitted by Brenda Zlotek, Secretary Bengal Township Planning Commission.

Pending Approval

Approved 06/24 /2026