

KEWEENAW COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Monthly meeting

Draft Minutes

October 28, 2024, 4 pm

APPROVED DEC 28 2024

Roll call: John Parsons, present Steven Siira, present  
Barry Koljonen, present Harvey Desnick, present  
Dan Yoder, present AJ Kern, absent  
Bob Pokorski, present County board rep. Robert DeMarois, present

Five member quorum **present**, meeting was properly posted.

Pledge of Allegiance **recited**

Approve Agenda

*Agenda amended to correct date of special meeting as listed for minutes approval from "October 9" to "October 10"*

*Agenda amended to add 3 sections to follow "Other business": Public comment, Final comments, and Next regular meeting*

Motion by Pokorski to approve agenda as amended.

Motion to approve (M) Pokorski / Second (S) Koljonen, motion carried.

Approve minutes of previous regular meeting (September 30, 2024)

*Pokorski reminded members of Kern's request to include attachments and handouts in minutes and indicated that he will assist Parsons in including relevant attachments when sending to County Clerk for public posting.*

M to approve Desnick / S Parsons, motion carried.

Approve minutes from Special meeting (October 10, 2024)

M to approve Pokorski / S Parsons, motion carried.

Guests: *Guests acknowledged and invited to present public comment.*

\*Public comment: *none*

\*A time for public comments, not intended to be a period of dialogue. Each person who wishes to speak shall state their name and place of residence. Comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes or less for those who wish to address the planning commissioners.

ZBA report: (Kern)

*Kern absent, no report. Desnick stated that the recent ZBA meeting was cancelled.*

New business: *none*

Old business:

1. TNC master plan update (Pokorski)

*Pokorski provided update on TNC grant application as emailed to members on 10/22/2024. Pokorski identified and addressed various items in the proposal that needed to be adjusted per County Board and*

*Chuck Miller to advance the proposal. Consensus among members that updates were satisfactory. Members thanked Pokorski for his work on the project.*

Motion by Parsons to forward updated TNC grant agreement and related documents to zoning administrator Sue Hockings, attorney Chuck Miller, and County Clerk for County Board review and approval at the County Board's November meeting.

M to approve Parsons / S Desnick, motion carried.

## 2. Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO) update (Parsons)

**\*\*Review/clarify Section 18.7.1, Public Hearing Procedures**

*Parsons revisited progress on CREO, reminded members that there are three options for local jurisdictions regarding CREO: do nothing and let the State dictate large-scale energy projects, create custom ordinance, or adopt a boilerplate ordinance.*

*Parsons reiterated that planning commission consensus is to adopt a boilerplate ordinance due to lack of resources available to create a custom ordinance. Yoder noted that the commission had already supported this idea in the September 30, 2024, meeting as reflected in the minutes.*

*Next step is to schedule a public hearing, after which ordinance can be forwarded to County Board for approval.*

*Parsons referenced an MSU Extension presentation on the topic that he emailed to members 10/28/2024 which could be helpful for use during public hearing.*

*Yoder suggested that the boilerplate ordinance might need a small amount of customizing. Original template:*

*Michigan Association of Counties' Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO)*

*<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dHrztmqIdu0K1SQps8CIIflr9fH0u1-u/edit> as*

*listed in their legislative update <https://micounties.org/legislative-update-8-23-24/>*

*Parsons and Yoder agreed to review template and make changes as necessary prior to public hearing.*

*Members discussed timing of public hearing. Parsons suggested public hearing on November 12 so that County Board can adopt ordinance at their meeting on November 13.*

Motion by Pokorski to hold public hearing for new CREO ordinance on November 12, 2024, at 4pm.

M to approve Pokorski / S Siira, motion carried.

## 3. Black Bear rezoning application (Parsons)

**\*\*Review/Clarify Sections 20.6, 20.7, and 20.8**

*Parsons notified members that zoning administrator Hockings advised him that Black Bear's rezoning application was complete and that he should accept it. He accepted the application for rezoning on behalf of the planning commission by email response to Black Bear's agent, Trina Anderson.*

*Parsons explained that this was strictly an application asking commission to consider their rezoning request, not in any manner implying approval or denial of their request. The next step is to schedule a public hearing where their request will be formally presented to the commission and the public. After that hearing, a decision will be made on the rezoning appeal, which the commission will then recommend to the County board for their final decision.*

*Members discussed sections 18 and 20 of ordinance regarding the timing and requirements of the hearing. Members expressed concerns about timing, considering the scope of the request and process with limited zoning office support, as well as due to a scheduled absence of Lonie, the representative of the rezoning applicant.*

*Desnick noted that the next step is not a zoning approval of all the future potential uses and structures of*

*the property, simply a hearing of the rezoning request.*

*Parsons suggested that due to limited zoning office support and scheduling conflicts with the applicant, he proposes to the applicant that the planning commission hold the public hearing in mid-January, with an exact date to be determined at the next regularly scheduled commission meeting on December 9, 2024.*

*Parsons will communicate with applicant.*

*No motions made.*

**Other business:**

**1. Officers for 2025, new members**

*Parsons discussed upcoming need for planning commission members as well as zoning office support staff. Yoder's term ends December 2024 and will not be seeking reappointment. Parsons suggested that a new member be sought in Allouez Township due to the population. Yoder suggested seeking a candidate involved with the school district, per guidance in the Planning Enabling Act. DeMarois floated Don Simula as potential candidate.*

*Desnick recommended the hiring of a recording secretary to take minutes at planning and ZBA meetings. Desnick and Pokorski discussed a potential cost of \$2,500 annually, approx. \$150 per meeting. Pokorski asked whether County has budget to hire secretary for commission. DeMarois was unsure of specific budgeting.*

*Members discussed upcoming millage on November ballot and potential effects on zoning office support. Consensus among members that the zoning administrator position needs more support, ideally full-time.*

*No motions made.*

**Public comment:** *Guests invited to present public comment.*

*D. Shelonzek questioned Black Bear rezoning process and opportunity to offer input.*

*A. Campbell stated that zoning administrator is important role in Black Bear rezoning public hearing. Recommended that the commission find more support for the zoning administrator role.*

**Final comments:**

*Pokorski thanked public for attending meeting.*

**Next regular meeting December 9, 2024, at 4pm.**

**M to adjourn Desnick / S Koljonen, motion carried.**