

August 19, 2024

The Joint Meeting of the Chocolay Township Board and Chocolay Township Planning Commission was held on Monday, August 19, 2024, in the Chocolay Township Fire Hall. Supervisor Bohjanen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

TOWNSHIP BOARD.

PRESENT: Richard Bohjanen, Max Engle, Ben Zybert, David Lynch, Judy White, Don Rhein

ABSENT: Kendra Symbal

STAFF PRESENT: William De Groot, Dale Throenle, Lisa Perry

APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Rhein moved, Lynch supported to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Deborah Mulcahey, 633 Lakewood Lane – spoke on date and time for packet submission for both the Township Board and the Planning Commission, transparency in draft minutes, zoning enforcement, waterfront changes, accessory dwellings, getting input from residents before going forward.

Joseph Uren, 116 Dana Lane – spoke on enforcement of nuisance ordinance

John Smith, 2176 M-28 – would like to reserve time for discussion on AG zoning and voice support on the way that the Planning Commission did it. Encouraged Board to pass.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting – Regular Meeting, July 8, 2024 and Special Meeting July 25, 2024.
- B. Approve Revenue and Expenditure Reports – July 2024.
- C. Approve Bills Payable, Check Register Reports – July 12, 2024 (Check #'s 26961 – 26985, along with EFT 10(E), in the amount of \$58,848.41), and July 24, 2024 (Check #'s 26986 – 27010, in the amount of \$41,457.65).
- D. Approve Bills Payable – Regular Payroll of July 3, 2024 (Check #'s DD4322 – DD4360 and Check #'s 11548 – 11555, Federal, State, and MERS in the amount of \$50,600.11), and Regular Payroll of July 18, 2024 (Check #'s DD4361 – DD4389 and Check #'s 11556 – 11563, Federal, State, and MERS in the amount of \$50,737.84).

White moved, Rhein supported to approve the consent agenda as presented.
MOTION CARRIED

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Supervisor Bohjanen stated he was looking forward to hearing from the Planning Commission. The final document will be reviewed in September. Also wanted to let the Board know that there will be a Michigan Township Association local meeting on October 3 in Marquette. Encouraged Board members to attend.

CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Engle stated that there are 5,176 registered voters in Chocolay (Precinct One – 2,682 and Precinct Two – 2,494). 1,524 Absentee Ballots were sent out, with 1,257 returned (83%). In person voting – Precinct One had 205 and Precinct Two had 223 voters. Early Voting we had a total of 67 voters – Precinct One had 26 and Precinct Two had 41. Total votes cast for the Primary Election was 1,752, which is 34% of register voters. This is a normal percentage for a Primary.

TREASURER'S REPORT - NONE

PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

JOINT MEETING WITH THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission was invited to join for the Joint Meeting with the Township Board at 5:45 PM.

PLANNING COMMISSION

PRESENT: Ryan Soucy (Chair), Donna Mullen-Campbell (Secretary), Don Rhein (Board Representative), Stephanie Gencheff
ABSENT: George Meister, Rebecca Sloan, Kendell Milton

Chair Soucy called the Planning Commission meeting to order.

Rhein moved, Mullen-Campbell supported to approve the agenda as presented.
MOTION CARRIED

PLANNING COMMISSION – UPDATE SINCE FEBRUARY

Chair Soucy spoke on the AG / Forestry proposal to split into three districts: AG 1 – minimum acreage of 2 acres, AG 2 – minimum acreage of 5 acres, AG 3 – minimum acreage of 20 acres. The Planning Commission developed ordinance language and multiple drafts. When this went to public hearing, comments were taken into account and a new draft will be presented soon based on those comments. Regarding frontage, AG 1 – 75 feet, AG 2 – 150 feet, and AG 3 – 200 feet. Additional uses were added that gave property owners more of their rights back from the change in 2008.

Supervisor Bohjanen asked about a provision for people to petition for changes to the map. Chair Soucy indicated this is not part of the ordinance language but could be a possibility. Supervisor Bohjanen suggested a grace period where policy changes would apply without having to pay the standard fees. Bohjanen also felt there are a lot of conditional uses in the use chart that don't need to be there – would like to see more permitted uses, such as the hobby farms should be permitted use on agricultural land. Township Manager De Groot indicated that this would be under AG-1 based on acreage size. There may be concerns about the definition of commercial use versus residential, and how to balance with right-to-farm. Trustee White asked how AG-1 was chosen. Commissioner Gencheff commented they were already in existence. Trustee Rhein also clarified that they were already zoned agricultural.

Chair Soucy stated that other notable actions of the Planning Commission were proposed definitions to the Zoning Ordinance, currently discussing dwelling units, proposed non AG use – approved rezoning for a daycare, and denied a rezoning application for a residential parcel to be included in an industrial district.

Chair Soucy indicated that there is a Citizen Planner training course being offered by Michigan State University through the Extension Office which goes over the basics of Planning and Zoning. This will be offered every Wednesday from October 2 – November 13 (except for October 16). The training will be held at the Marquette County Health Department (Negaunee Township). Soucy encouraged everyone to attend. CUPPAD is subsidizing the cost of the training.

PLANNING COMMISSION – FUTURE DIRECTION DISCUSSION

Future Planning Commission discussion with the Board:

1. Waterfront zoning relative to FEMA maps.
2. ADU discussion – residential zoning district standards.
3. Parks and Recreation Plan
4. Invitation to Marquette Building Department regarding their standards in Chocolay.
5. Redo Ordinances that are overdue.

Lynch indicated that this is a hefty workload to bring to the February Joint Meeting.

Township Manager De Groot indicated that there was a review from the Marquette Planning Authority and that they supported the information that was presented.

INTRODUCTON 2025 FISCAL BUDGET DRAFT

Township Manager De Groot presented a “truly” draft budget. On page 4 of the memo, there was a grant applied for \$660,000 for a new pumper truck which was not successful. Best case scenario for revenue sharing is \$684,000. State budget was passed – hasn’t seen the questionnaire to get the final 2%. We will not know until the end of September on our healthcare, which looks like it will take a substantial increase. De Groot will be going out and getting quotes from other pools across the State. Budget suggests 2.7% increase for wages as a starting point, with individual raises based on annual review and market analysis.

Commissioner Kendell Milton joined the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Manager De Groot requested that the new Board meet in February / March, with a deeper presentation in September for setting the new direction from the new Board.

CONSIDER WAIVING 257 SILVER CREEK ROAD SEWER FEE DUE TO FIRE

White moved, Lynch supported that the Chocolay Township Board approves staff recommendation and waive all accrued sewer related charges to 257 Silver Creek Road from the day of the house fire, May 13, 2024, through present. Any payments already received shall be applied to the owner’s past due amount.

MOTION CARRIED

Supervisor Bohjanen suggested that the motion should read “until it is occupied again” instead of “present”. Rhein supported to accept the amended motion.

MOTION CARRIED

MANAGER UPDATE OF WORK PLAN AND CORPORATE STATUS.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Don Rhein – None

Kendra Symbal – absent

Judy White – None

Dave Lynch – Thanked the Planning Commission for the hard work that they have done in the past year.

Ben Zybert – None

Max Engle - None

Richard Bohjanen - None

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Smith, 2176 M-28 – spoke on zoning change and what the next step is and how long it will take. Agrees with grace period for residents. Feels it gives back rights to property owners. Thanked the Planning Commission for all their hard work and the abuse they take.

Supervisor Bohjanen indicated that the first reading of the final language will be at the September meeting, and the second reading will be at the October meeting.

Attorney Zappa indicated that before the Ordinance came to the Board, he had given recommendations (obsolete statutory references, etc.) – requested that the Planning Commission and Township Board review and consider his recommendations. They do not change the substance of the Ordinance in any way.

Supervisor Bohjanen asked if the draft they are seeing today contained those changes. Attorney Zappa indicated that they are not in the version that is in the Board packet. Bohjanen suggested that those changes be discussed at the next Planning Commission meeting. Attorney Zappa will resend the recommendations. Chair Soucy wondered about a new public hearing date – Attorney Zappa doesn't think so.

Bill Sanders, 105 Country Lane – spoke on AG / Forestry district proposed. Encouraged to pass as submitted pending attorney suggestions.

Rhein moved, Engle supported that the meeting be adjourned.
MOTION CARRIED

Rhein moved, Milton supported to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

- A. Minutes – Chocolay Township Planning Commission; Regular Meeting of July 15, 2024, Draft.
- B. Minutes – Chocolay Township Planning Commission; Regular Meeting of July 25, 2024, Draft.
- C. Minutes - Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority – Regular Meeting, June 19, 2024.
- D. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority – Special Meeting, July 8, 2024.
- E. Minutes – Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority – Special Meeting, July 17, 2024, Draft.

- F. Minutes – Marquette Area Wastewater Treatment Facility Advisory Board; Regular Meeting of July 25, 2024, Draft.
- G. Minutes – US-41 Corridor Advisory Group – Regular Meeting of June 11, 2024, Draft.
- H. Information – Chocolay Township Newsletter – July 2024
- I. Correspondence – Joseph Uren, 116 Dana Lane
- J. Correspondence – Deborah Mulcahey, 633 Lakewood Lane

Max Engle, Clerk

Richard Bohjanen, Supervisor