

HILLSDALE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, January 25, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m.
33 McCollum Street, Hillsdale, MI 49242

1. Call to Order by Namoo at 1:18 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Namoo Carolan, Doug Ingles, Jack McLain, Troy Reehl (virtual), Aaron Ritter, and Sue Smith (virtual)

Members Absent: Andy Welden

Excused with Notice: None

Others Present: None

3. Approval of Minutes (11-16-2020)

Motion by Aaron Ritter to approve minutes as presented. Support by Jack McLain.

Approved unanimously.

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Sue Smith, support from Troy Reehl.

Approved unanimously.

5. Public Comment

Jack McLain spoke to Doug regarding the request to have Brad Benzing remain as the BOC representative on the Planning Commission. He feels as though our thoughts/requests are not being heard or considered by the BOC. Namoo indicated that the request was taken to the Commissioners. They chose to move forward with the new committee appointments. Doug mentioned that the committee assignments were done by secret ballot.

David Holcomb mentioned that Merit (broadband provider) would be willing to do a virtual presentation for us regarding broadband services in the County. This is something was discussed as needing to be added to the Master Plan.

6. Public Hearings

None

7. Unfinished Business

a. Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program PA116

i. Amos & Miriam Eicher, 30 15 019 100 008 19 8 3, 82 Acres (unable to approve at November meeting as there was missing information)

This issue of missing information on the PA116 when in receipt by the Planning Commission was discussed. It was decided that a letter would be composed indicating that we would not be addressing those with missing information.

Motion by Jack McLain, support received from Aaron Ritter.

Approved unanimously.

8. New Business

a. Adopt 2021 Meeting Schedule

Motion by Jack McLain to approve the 2021 meeting schedule. Support given by Troy Reehl.

Approved unanimously.

b. Election of Officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary

Chair Nomination for Namoo Carolan.

Motion by Aaron Ritter, support by Troy Reehl.

Vice-Chair Nomination for Aaron Ritter.

Motion by Aaron Ritter, support by Jack McLain

Secretary Nomination for Jack McLain.

Motion by Namoo Carolan, support by Troy Reehl.

All approved unanimously.

c. Welcome new member Doug Ingles, County Commissioner Representative
Namoo thanked Doug for his continued community involvement.

d. Welcome back Sue Smith, Economic Development and Namrata “Namoo” Carolan, Township Representative

9. Any Other Business/On-going Business

a. County Master Plan – Ongoing

i. Letter of review from Harmony Gmazel

Continued discussion was had regarding the Master Plan and the input received from Harmony Gmazel from MSU Extension. We will wait for the 2020 Census data to come out in order to have the most up-to-date census data in the Plan. The housing data from CAA provided by Namoo Carolan will be used. Doug Ingles suggested a survey money be used to gain more community input since the last community input was several years ago and only received 1% response. Using social media may be a great way to get more input. Motion by Jack McLain with support from Namoo to come to next meeting with questions we would like to see included in the survey. We will also attempt to gather any/all available

information from the County municipalities who have received community input to review for our own survey.

Approved unanimously.

- b. Vacancies on Board – suggestions, recommendations (Environmental/Natural Resources, Citizen-At-Large)

During discussion on how we may be able to fill seats on the Board, Namoo mentioned possibly a time conflict being an issue, credentials. How can we makes changes to the Ordinance that would “loosen” up the requirements to allow more people to be eligible? Possibly continue having meetings available virtually. The Ordinance needs to be revised with some adjustments in order to be an effective Planning Commission. Should the Planning Commission be able to review the applicants before they are appointed? Are the open positions being advertised like they should? Is this something the Recording Secretary could take over?

- c. Hillsdale County Planning Commission Ordinance of 2016 will sunset on July 1, 2021.

Jack (McLain) would like to see the Planning Commission members be prepared to update/revise the Ordinance at the next regular meeting.

Motion by Sue with support from Aaron to revise/update the Ordinance at the next regular meeting.

Approved unanimously.

10. Public Comment

None

11. Communications

None

12. Adjournment

Motion by Jack McLain to adjourn the meeting at 2:20 p.m. Aaron Ritter gave support.

Approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 15, 2021 @ 1 p.m.