

**EMPIRE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

November 19, 2024

The Empire Township Planning Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2024. The meeting was held at the Empire Township Hall.

CALL TO ORDER: Dale DeJager, Vice-Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Dale DeJager, Larry Krawczak, Tom Petersen

Members Absent: Duane Shugart, Micah Deegan

Staff Present: Dana Boomer, Recording Secretary; Tim Cypher, Zoning Administrator

Petersen moved, Krawczak seconded to excuse Shugart and Deegan from the meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The PC briefly discussed the agenda. **Motion by Krawczak, second by Petersen to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The PC briefly discussed the minutes of the October 15, 2024 regular meeting. **Motion by Petersen, second by Krawczak to approve the October 15, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

COMMUNICATIONS: DeJager spoke with Bill Witler today, who would like to be on the agenda at a future meeting to present to the PC plans for a property owned by Glen Lake Schools, which they are tentatively planning for workforce housing development. There will be a presentation on this at the January School Board meeting. *(Note: After the meeting it was determined that this presentation would be at the December 9 School Board meeting).* The PC agreed to have Witler speak at the January PC meeting as an informational session.

PUBLIC COMMENT: David Hendricks introduced himself as the new Supervisor for Empire Township who has just been sworn in. He is here to see how the PC works. There was discussion between Hendricks and the PC about the potential for the Glen Lake Schools property.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Cypher had previously distributed his monthly reports for October 2024. He summarized the ZA business for the month. A new electronic permitting system has been initiated for the township, and should be on the website shortly. The PC and Cypher briefly discussed the performance guarantee and conditions for the Glen Lake Manor. **Motion by Krawczak, second by Petersen to acknowledge receipt of the October 2024 written reports. All in favor, motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS

- **Zoning Ordinance Review** – The PC returned to the discussion of the redline Zoning Ordinance. Boomer had distributed information from the MTA regarding large scale renewable energy siting and compliance with new state law and state-run permitting processes. DeJager asked whether it

would it be possible to expand the current ordinance to solar and storage. Boomer covered four main questions that had come up in previous discussions and recommended that Tim Figura be consulted – these questions are whether the current ordinance could be amended to comply with the new state law, whether there needed to be separate language for smaller sites/sites that generate less power than those regulated by the new law, whether townships are allowed to only allow larger installations in certain zoning districts, and whether the regulations for larger sites would be better as a police power ordinance or as part of the Zoning Ordinance. The PC had consensus to ask Figura for his thoughts on these subjects prior to the January meeting.

The PC moved the conversation to a discussion of the ongoing issues still to be discussed. These include a mix of topics left over from previous discussions. An overall discussion of housing and the renewable energy discussion are likely the two most major issues to finish. Cypher will bring proposals regarding any needed changes to restrictions on fences to the January meeting. He will also begin to put together the documentation for potential changes to the Mixed Use Gateway District.

NEW BUSINESS

- **2025 Meeting Schedule** – Boomer had distributed a draft meeting schedule for 2025, with meetings at the Township Hall at 7 pm on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from January through June and September through November (see attached). The PC discussed and made no changes. **Krawczak moved, Petersen seconded to accept the schedule for 2025. All in favor, motion carried.**
- **Pleasure of the Board** – Krawczak stated there is a new state act that might allow townships to request modifications to speed limits. He would like to see this sent to the Township Board. He would like to see the speed limits along Glen Lake revisited. There was discussion regarding the history of speed limits around the lake, and whether the township could coordinate with other townships around the lake on this work.

The PC and Hendricks discussed the upcoming appointments to the Planning Commission. With the retirement of Duane Shugart from the PC as of January 1 and the fact that Deegan was not re-elected as a township trustee, there is a public position open and a board representative position. The PC was unanimous that Micah Deegan would be an excellent candidate for the public position. There was discussion between the PC and Hendricks regarding potential new members and the relationship between the Master Plan and all of the other actions taken by the PC and Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT: **Motion** by Krawczak to adjourn at 8:09 pm, Petersen seconded. With no objection, DeJager adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Boomer
Recording Secretary

2025 EMPIRE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

10088 Front St.
P.O. Box 234
Empire, MI 49630-0234

Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	January 21
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	February 18
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	March 18
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	April 15
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	May 20
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	June 17
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	September 16
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	October 21
Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.	November 18

Meeting dates and times are subject to change with proper notice.
All meetings will take place in the Township Hall unless otherwise indicated.

Persons with questions or individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services to effectively participate in the meeting should contact the Township Clerk at 231-326-5349, PO Box 234, Empire, MI 49630, or at empiretownshipclerk@gmail.com