

VAN BUREN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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Van Buren County Planning Commission

March 27, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

- 1) **Call to Order & Attendance** - The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.
Present: Alyssa Hosbein, Tom Motycka, Scott Cedarquist, Jan Petersen, Kurt Doroh, Will Pugsley, Barbara Rose, Celinda Gilmore and Tony Hemenway. Others present included Lisa Imus Ransler.
Absent: None (2 current vacancies).
- 2) **Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Doroh, with support by Petersen to approve the April 24, 2024, agenda. Motion approved unanimously.
- 3) **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Pugsley, with support from Motycka to approve the March 27, 2024, meeting minutes. Motion approved unanimously.
- 4) **Public Comment:** None.
- 5) **Reports:**
 - a. **BOC Liaison Report:** Commissioner Doroh reported that the County had hired Karla Tankut as the new Public Defender and that the Board of Commissioners reviewed the millage renewals (road, veteran's, 911, and library). Crime Victim's Rights Week held a Resource Fair held at the Outpouring Café.
 - b. **Land Preservation Board (LPB) Report:** The next Land Preservation Board meeting will be held on May 8, 2024, with a presentation from MDARD regarding PDR Easements and the PA 116 program.
 - c. **Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) Report:** The April meeting was Commissioner Doroh's first meeting as Chair, and they began reviewing the 2024 Work Plan.
 - d. **Local Visits Report:** Members reported on local meetings that they attended. Covert Township is reviewing a short-term rental ordinance and state requirements for battery storage facilities.
 - e. **Staff Report:** Ransler reported that the Michigan Coastal Management Program Development Coordinator will be at the May 22, 2024, Planning Commission meeting to further educate the community on the Coastal Management Program and financial resources to increase the resilience of coastal communities in Van Buren County.
- 6) **Unfinished Business:**
 - a. **South Haven Charter Township's Master Plan was reviewed.** Members noted that they liked the concentration on infill developments and green infrastructure, and appreciated the farmland preservation efforts, however information regarding the school districts seemed biased. A motion was made by Motycka, with support from Cedarquist to concur with the recommended Master Plan. Motion approved unanimously.
 - b. **MSUE Citizen Planner Course Update.** The Course has been completed. Members commented that they appreciated the course and ability to participate.

- c. **Membership Recruitment.** Everyone was encouraged to think about recruits. Motycka agreed to reappointment.
- d. **Coordination of Local Visits:** It was suggested that Local Visit Coordination be put on pause until the membership on the Planning Commission was full.

7) **New Business:**

- a. **2023 Annual Report** –The 2023 Annual Report details the Commission’s efforts in guiding development within the county. It highlights the Commission's responsibilities, including reviewing local units updated master plans. The report notes that the Commission held ten meetings to address various township zoning and planning amendments, ensuring alignment with the county's master plan. Public engagement initiatives covered topics such as public transportation, broadband expansion, and housing studies. The Commission also focused on professional development, with members participating in various training programs to enhance their planning capabilities. Overall, the report underscores the Commission’s commitment to community development, transparency, and strategic planning, setting the stage for continued progress.
- b. **Michigan Association of Planning Membership** - Planning Commission membership with the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association was discussed and requested to be enrolled.

8) **Adjournment:** Hosbein adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Submitted by: Lisa (Imus) Ransler, Recording Secretary