

Bridgewater Township Board of Supervisors
County of Rice, State of Minnesota
Special Meeting held January 12, 2022 @ 5:45 pm.
Official Minutes

Call to order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Kathleen Kopseng, Glen Castore, Andy Ebling. Mike Little arrived at 5:51.

Introduction of Guests: John Klockeman with the Planning and Zoning Commission

Approval of Agenda: Andy moved to the approve the agenda, Glen seconded, motion passed 3:0.

Ordinance enforcement:

John Klockeman spoke with the Board at length regarding some of the issues that the Planning and Zoning Commission is currently dealing with. It was noted that the previous Zoning Administrator for the Commission had his own way of doing things. There were undocumented agreements with individuals in the township and the Zoning Administrator. These undocumented agreements have since put the township in a bind when the Zoning Administrator left the position.

John has been a licensed architect since 1983, and notes that his experience may lead to differences in the way the ordinances are written and interpreted. John shared that the Planning Commission has been in difficult circumstances, especially when the neighbor down the road was approved for something (that didn't follow ordinances), and now they would like the same things. There is a backlog of decisions made that didn't follow the ordinances. The question is how do we move forward with this backlog?

* One issue is that the Township is missing agreements with the county (ie. gravel pits). The people who had IUP and didn't renew them, and are not following agreements that were put in place, and are not following the county agreements either.

* The Comprehensive Plan does not give any real good guidance as it currently is. An updated plan is needed as it goes hand in hand with Ordinance enforcement.

Andy noted it comes down to funds in order to enforce issues.

Glen said Township residents want to know what the Board is going to enforce.

The Gravel Pit is a separate deal, and the Township should talk with the Rice County Administrator Sarah(?) , as well as Julie, and hopefully Cindy and Julie can work together to deal with the gravel pit.

The Township needs to prioritize safety issues for enforcement.

The Board needs to create Ordinances that are enforceable.

John's priorities are as follows:

1. Gravel Pit. CUP approved by County so Township can take over. The Offenders need to know the Township is serious about the Ordinances. Need to send a message out to Township residents. Interim Use for business' will be awkward.
2. The Comprehensive Plan needs to be completed. Cindy has provided samples that range from 33 page for Hanover Township to 100 pages for the City of Northfield. So they range in size. The Comp Plan need to be an overview of what the Township wants for progress over the

future years. Board needs to use Town Hall meetings to shape the Comp plan, and use documents from those meeting to shape the plan, as the Board needs to involve the residents in the development of the plan

3. Enforcement. This needs to be consistent. What can the Board afford? What happens if we go to court and the person ignores a judgement for the Township?

Examples are Keepsake Cidery, who had to go through the wringer to get up and going, yet there was a sunflower maze that didn't do anything. Or having a 60 foot buffer on Rice Creek. No one followed it. If it had been in the Comp Plan, it would have been easier to enforce.

Kathleen said that Cindy is currently working on 1. Legal Descriptions for the 6 landowners for the Industrial Zone. (Hopefully done this week.) 2 Flood Plain Ordinances (done in early April).

3. General Ordinance Review. 4. Comp Plan.

Question was asked where in the Priority List are the CUP's and Rice County?

Cities usually hire a consultant to complete the work for the Comp Plan. The Board would provide an outline about what they want the Comp Plan to talk about. They instill the framework for the Plan.

Need to talk with Sarah regarding the CUP's. It might be easy to do, and therefore those could be moved up on the list.

The Industrial Zone need to be recognized by the County and the process is in motion to get there. There are 6 land owners involved, and the process at the County level takes a while to get through as there are public hearings to go through before it can be recognized at the County level.

For the Planning and Zoning Commission, they need to set an agenda, and even if there are no public hearings, the Commission still needs to meet. The Commission needs to work with Cindy and Frances to ensure this.

1. CUPS to County.
2. Comprehensive Plan.
3. Enforcement.

Discussion was held on the issue of enforcement. Is Cindy the person who needs to do the enforcement? There are situations that have made Cindy not feel safe while trying to talk to folks about situations where there are violations. The Board would need to talk to the Sheriff when safety is an issue. Peter Tiede had talked about enforcement issues. The Board would like to look at hiring him as a consultant.

Special meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Adjourn

Chair	
Clerk	