



**Van Buren County Planning Commission**  
219 E Paw Paw Street, Suite 201, Paw Paw, MI 49079  
Telephone (269) 657-8253 Fax (269) 657-0579

**June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
**6:30 PM**

## **1. Call to Order & Attendance**

In attendance: Tom Motycka, Alyssa Hosbein, Kurt Doroh, Scott Cedarquist, Jan Petersen, Barbara Rose, Tony Hemenway, Will Pugsley. Also in attendance: Tyler Augst, MSUE Extension.

Absent: Pam Sterner, Celinda Gilmore, Ray Martin

## **2. Approval of Agenda**

Motycka motioned to approve; Doroh supported. Motion carried.

## **3. Approval of Minutes from May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Doroh motioned to approve; Motycka supported. Motion carried.

## **4. Public Comment**

Kevin Kusmack was denied rezoning request in Hartford Township. He will speak under New Business, per agenda.

## **5. Reports**

### **a. County Commissioner – Kurt Doroh**

John Faul has a 2-year retainment deal with the county. 20 mil bond previously approved for Van Buren County Road Commission facilities will not be used yet because of rising materials cost. Hired new GIS staff.

### **b. Land Preservation – no meeting.**

### **c. Southwestern Michigan Commission Representative – Kurt Doroh**

Annual Audit Report is being finalized. 2 new board members added. 4 Spark Grant Applications submitted  
MEC awarded funds for broadband expansion

### **d. Local visits**

Cedarquist went on a guided tour offering more information on solar energy and battery storage.

Pugsley -- Arlington - township's meetings. Many changes have occurred on board.

Rose – attended a joint Covert Township/planning commission meeting for a presentation by McKenna and Associates on the process for updating the Master Plan. Provided board with minutes.

Petersen--attended the Covert meeting also to hear about the Coastal Zone Management Plan.

## 6. Old Business

- a. **Training Opportunities**— Chair appointed committee for organizing regional MSUE Citizen Planner Course: Rose, Doroh, Hosbein and Motycka.. We need a minimum in 20 people and max. of 50; training sessions will be in 2024 after February; approx. cost \$275 for a 6 week course, one day a week from 6pm-9pm. There is potential for scholarships through municipality; Kurt is checking with ISD for location.
- b. **Coordination of Local Visits** —Assignments still need to be done.

## 7. New Business

- a. **Hartford Rezoning**  
After much discussion about whether rezoning parcel 80-11-015-010-01 was the best solution to the owner's situation because of the surrounding residential zoning and recent Master Plan update to *fringe residential*, the board tried to generate other options. Motyka motioned to not concur with the Hartford planning commission due to not having enough information. Rose supported. After more discussion, Motyka motioned to amend the motion not to concur because there may be alternatives to rezoning eg. combining parcels to resolve land-locked issues.. Cedarquist supported. Motion carried.
- b. **PA 116 Application**  
Petersen motioned to concur with the Reed PA 116 application. Doroh supported the motion. Motion carried.
- c. **Scott's solar farm tour:**  
Cedarquist provided information about wind turbines, size and necessary land acquisition. He then discussed land use issues surrounding solar energy: fencing, potential for dual use applications (i.e. solar and ag working together), energy storage needed, and safety concerns surrounding the decommissioning.
- d. **Covert Township announcement to update Master Plan**

## Adjournment – 7:32pm

**Next meeting:** July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:30pm

Minutes by Hosbein and Petersen