

Royalton Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
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26 September 2023
Approved

7:00 p.m., 26 September 2023, Chair Leslie Orvis called the Royalton Township regular planning commission meeting to order with Members Jeff Schlaeger, Priscilla Schneider, and Clerk Duane Swanson present in the meeting room and Gary Valvoda present via remote electronic means. Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, Road Superintendent Dan Saumer, Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson, and members of the public also attended.

Member Schneider moved, Clerk Swanson seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Member Valvoda moved, Member Schneider seconded, to approve the minutes of the 29 August 2023 regular commission meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Member Schneider moved, Member Schlaeger seconded, to approve the minutes of the working planning commission meeting of 19 September 2023 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Chair Orvis reported that the county has updated the definitions in their proposed campground regulations and urged members to study that for the working meeting.

Chair Orvis noted that because hemp is a legal agricultural product in Minnesota there would be no need to try to regulate it. Regarding cannabis issues, regulation is a different matter that is still in flux. Patrice DeGray noted that she had been told that odors from growing cannabis can be smelled two miles away. Chair Orvis noted that any proposals for such would have public hearings. Clerk Swanson distributed designs of containers for cigarette butts; Chair Orvis asked that these be reviewed at the next working meeting.

Clerk Swanson distributed applications for a CUP/IUP and a variance from Daniel Smith for his detailing business at 110 Greeley Road. Chair Orvis opined that the applications contained insufficient data, that the sign has not been removed or covered as the town requested, and that the county right-of-way may extend only to the drivable edge of the road. Chair Orvis moved, Member Valvoda seconded, to recommend to the board to have Zoning Administrator John Kemen remove the sign within 14 days. The motion carried unanimously.

Regarding Joe Zappa's possible cannabis growing operation, the commission, by consensus, recommended that a letter be written to Mr. Zappa expressing the township's concerns regarding the shared driveway should only one of the two parcels be sold. If either parcel is sold, the existing septic systems would have to have a compliance inspection, including the holding tank on the greenhouse parcel.

Chair Orvis reviewed the discussion at the working commission meeting regarding dust control and reclamation projects at the sand pit off Frost Drive. He opined that the commission had spent enough time on these issues, that these were the issues of a single individual, and that discussion should cease. If either party wishes to continue discussions, whether it relates to definitions or access, such discussions should be between legal counsel of the parties concerned and not of the township. Chair Orvis moved, Member Valvoda seconded, to recommend to the board that discussion by the township about any issues relating to

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either the current or past conditional/interim use permits go directly to legal counsel for the parties concerned. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

Clerk Swanson presented draft Resolution 2023-5 verifying Braham fire service area within Royalton township. He explained that several sections of the township appear in both Braham and Pine City fire areas and that Braham had asked for clarification. The Braham interim city administrator had asked Pine County Dispatch which fire departments would be dispatched to fires on two parcels at either end of the questioned sections. Pine County Dispatch indicated both parcels would be served by Braham. Interim Administrator Lynda Wolfe later confirmed this with Pine City Fire Chief Tom Miller. Clerk Swanson moved, Member Schlaeger seconded, to recommend to the board approval of the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

Clerk Swanson noted that septic inspection compliance reports are required by Minnesota rules to be filed with the responsible jurisdiction within 14 days of completion. Most inspectors comply with this regulation, but some appear recalcitrant. Septic Administrator Thompson and Clerk Swanson prepared a draft letter to be sent to inspectors operating in the area noting that, as of 1 October 2023, inspectors neglecting to file reports would be reported to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. By consensus, the commission approved the draft letter.

Clerk Swanson and Septic Administrator Thompson reported on discussions about the possibility of the township issuing administrative citations for things like septic non-compliance. Counsel for the Minnesota Association of Townships appears to recommend that townships have this authority. Additional discussion will occur at the next planning commission meeting.

Chair Orvis called the next working commission meeting for 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, 17 October 2023.

FYI:

The next regular planning commission meeting is 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, 24 October 2023. Note the date change from the last Tuesday in the month, which would be Halloween.

At 7:35 p.m., Member Schlaeger moved, Clerk Swanson seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk/Member

Leslie Orvis, Chair/Member

Jeff Schlaeger, Member

Priscilla Schneider, Member

Gary Valvoda, Member