

**Barry County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 25, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Clyde Morgan at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Tyden Center located at 121 South Church Street in Hastings. The Planning Commission members in attendance included: Morgan, Vivian Conner, Jack Miner, Jack Nadwornik, Joyce Snow, and Robert Vanderboegh. John LaForge was absent. Barry County Planning Director James McManus was also present.

The Planning Commission reviewed the agenda of the meeting. McManus asked to strike the approval of the September 27th minutes. McManus suggested adding discussion about the interview candidates at the end of the agenda.

Motion by Miner to approve the agenda as amended. Support by Vanderboegh. All eyes - motion carried.

BUSINESS

McManus distributed questions to ask the interview candidates and asked the Planning Commission to review them.

Conner suggested adding a question about going virtual if necessary.

Snow prepared grading matrixes for each candidate, and McManus distributed those to the Planning Commission.

Interviews

The Planning Commission interviewed four companies to facilitate the generation of a Master Plan.

William & Works

Andy Moore and Nathan Mehmed were present for William & Works. Mehmed indicated he would be the primary project planner. They noted they had 20 years of experience in Barry County and they had completed at least 15 rural area Master Plans over the previous five years. They noted they will use pop-up engagements and online surveys to get public information. They noted the Master Plan should create policies at the community level.

Beckett & Raeder

Michelle Bennett and Rowan Brady were present for Beckett & Raeder. They noted they have had 55 years of business experience, and their philosophy is to look locally, but make it regional. They noted that they use GIS to integrate the maps and narrative. They indicated they work primarily in rural areas, and they suggested increasing housing and leveraging ag for revenue could be important topics. They said they would review all county plans and visit all jurisdictions. They recommended that a steering committee be created.

McKenna and Associates

Chris Khoury and Rebecca Harvey were present for McKenna and Associates. They noted they had just completed the City of Hastings' Master Plan and serve as a consultant for four jurisdictions. They noted Barry County's unique position between four large cities. They noted preservation of rural character is usually a signature issue.

John LaForge entered the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

McKenna continued and noted public input needs to be obtained at public events, so they go to the people. They noted they often do online surveys. They commented that our unique uses could be classified as PUD's or Overlays, but there needs to be consensus for goals and policies to differentiate between uses.

Rowe Professional

Jason Ball, Sean Bockman, and Douglas Schultz were present for Rowe. They noted their office in Kentwood is new, but they have a staff of 27 there and over 200 working for the company. They said they had worked for three rural counties, and noted that the new building construction in Barry County exceeded the population growth. They suggested using surveys and having flexible meetings to receive public input. They suggested identifying nodes of activity and using flexible language allow them to grow.

Set Dates for Public Hearings

A-3-2021

McManus noted the rezoning was in Hastings Township and the change was from MU to RR.

Motion by Nadwornik to set November 22, 2021 as the date for the public hearing for A-3-2021. Support by Morgan. All ayes - motion carried.

A-4-2021

McManus noted the request was for a property in Maple Grove Township. He noted the request was to change the zoning from A to RR.

Motion by Nadwornik to set November 22, 2021 as the date for the public hearing for A-4-2021. Support by LaForge. All ayes - motion carried.

A-1-2022

McManus noted this would be for the Village of Woodland. He noted the contract is being worked on.

Motion by LaForge to set January 24, 2022 as the date for the public hearing for A-1-2022. Support by Miner. All ayes - motion carried.

Farmland Agreement

#21-08

Mr. & Mrs. Joshua Case

McManus noted the property is both planned and zoned as Agricultural.

Motion by Vanderboegh to recommend approval of #21-08 to the Board of Commissioners. Support by Snow. All ayes - motion carried.

Special Meeting

The Planning Commission noted they needed time to review all of the information submitted by the Master Plan Consultant candidates. Morgan, as chair, set November 08, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. for the special meeting to discuss the candidates and select a consultant.

Motion by Snow to adjourn. Support by Miner. All ayes - motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jack Nadwornik, Secretary