

EUREKA TOWNSHIP
Dakota County, State of Minnesota

TOWN BOARD/PLANNING COMMISSION ROUND TABLE MEETING
May 21, 2024 – 5:00 P.M.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Town Board Chair Pete Storlie and the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Members Present: Pete Storlie, Mark Ceminsky, Tim Pope, Allen Novacek, Melanie Storlie, Dan Heyda, Beth Eilers, Brian Storlie and Donovan Palmquist (6:05pm).

Others Present: Liz Atwater (Clerk), Amy Liberty (Deputy Clerk)

Zoom Attendance: Deb Burkhardt, Wayne Bishop, Lu Barfknecht, Chris Fueller, Jeff Otto

Purpose of the Special Town Board and Planning Commission Round Table Meeting

Chair Pete Storlie stated the purpose of the meeting is to set the parameters for the year, ask questions, and discuss round table topics.

Round Table

Attorney contact / process for attorney engagement

Town Board Chair Pete Storlie stated the primary contact is Clerk Atwater. Chair Pete Storlie is the Town Board Supervisor liaison who will support the Clerk. All communication that needs to be sent to the attorney should be sent to Clerk Atwater, who then in turn will forward it to the attorney.

Review of Open Meeting Law

Elected officials of the Town Board and appointed officials of the Planning Commission must follow Open Meeting Law.

Responsibility of liaisons

A list of Town Board liaisons is provided from the Reorganization meeting and posted on the website. All members are to contact the proper liaison for a specific topic and not reach out to a contractor or agency directly. The liaisons are responsible for communicating for the Town Board and representing the Township. If a member asks a question over the phone, a follow up email should be sent, and the Clerk copied, for a written account of the discussion. A change this year is staff, Liz and Amy, are the primary liaisons for many of the contacts and supported by a Town Board Supervisor.

North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization

Planning Commissioner Chair Melanie Storlie volunteered to be the primary liaison for the NCRWO and Brian Storlie will be the alternate.

Monthly Summary Report

Clerk Atwater explained that reports should be in written form to submit to the Town Board.

Planning Commission Liaison Ordinance

Ordinance 62-2 (B) lists that Town Board Supervisors shall attend the Planning Commission meeting. The Town Board and Planning Commission discussed the pros and cons of this ordinance and having a Town Board member at the meeting. At the March 26, 2024, Town Board Meeting, a motion was passed to remove the Town Board Liaison from all Planning Commission meetings. However, since this is in the Ordinance, the Town Board will need to amend the current ordinance if they want to change it.

Documents for Permit Review

Clerks will review what is needed for the Planning Commission and the Town Board.

Communication

The best way to communicate is through the Clerks. Inquiries and questions should be sent to the Clerk for dispersing to avoid open meeting law violations. However, be mindful that all information is one-way only; we cannot use the Clerk to get around the open meeting law.

All Supervisors and Commissioners are responsible for checking their emails. If the Clerks send out communication about scheduling a meeting, they will schedule based on the majority of responses received. Clerk Atwater stated that there is a deadline for packets, so the Clerks have time to put together the packets.

Town Board Chair Storlie recommended that all members should take time to review or markup documents prior to the meetings. These marked up documents can be sent to the Clerks prior to the meeting to be included in the packets.

The Town Board and Planning Commissioners do represent the Township, but do not represent the Township as individuals. When discussing topics with others outside of the meetings, Supervisors and Commissioners need to be cognizant they are giving their personal individual opinion, and not speaking for the governing body.

Solving problems vs. administering Ordinances

The Town Board and Planning Commission must follow the rules of the Ordinances and try to stay within the boundary of the Ordinance's intent.

Planning Commission Requested Topics

Cannabis Moratorium

Clerk Atwater will reach out to the Township Attorney for any updates from the State legislation.

Definition of Front Yard

The Planning Commission will work on the recommendations of the language of the Front Yard in the ordinance.

Indoor Agriculture

The Planning Commission will do research on what the State Statutes will allow for Agriculture, including building sizes, and any differences with commercial agriculture.

Phase 2 speed study- 257th and traffic counters

Commissioner Eilers stated there is a concern of additional traffic on 257th. This could also help with future planning for rock and road repairs. The Town Board will discuss more at a future meeting.

Night to Unite and Budget

Planning Commissioner Chair Melanie Storlie asked about the possibility of the Township approving a budget for this event. Clerk Atwater stated that under the State Statute, the Electors may set aside an amount for the Town Board to use for a celebration or event. This could be put on as a topic for the Annual Meeting. The event can be funded by donations from businesses and residents.

Accessory Building Limitations

The Planning Commission and Town Board had a discussion regarding Accessory Building limitations. It was mentioned that some other Townships use a sliding scale to determine the size of a building based on acreage. It was determined this was not an issue at this time.

Home Extended Business

Planning Commissioner Donovan Palmquist stated the Town Board and Planning Commission has discussed in the past but has always run into roadblocks. He stated the most difficult parts are defining a home extended business and how do you enforce it? It was discussed this should be investigated more.

Town Board Requested Topics

Agritourism

Town Board Chair Storlie stated Agritourism should be a top priority to review and address.

Commercial

Town Board Vice Chair Ceminsky stated the Township should look at Commercial districting. He would like the Planning Commission and Town Board to look at all three aspects: Home Extended Business, Agritourism, and Commercial. Further discussion was had about coming up with a plan for these aspects, then starting to have open houses to meet with residents. Planning Commissioner Eiler suggested sending out surveys to residents to get input.

House # for permits for new builds, remodels and additions

Farmington Fire brought to the Township's attention that some houses do not have or do not have visible address signs. The Clerks will investigate if the Township can have a requirement for owners to purchase a sign for new builds and remodels. Can this be added as a part of the building permit request or does this have to be a part of the ordinance?

Buildable Lots

It was discussed that housing density should be researched and discussed. A change would require an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Squatter's Ordinance

Town Board Vice Chair Ceminsky recommended an ordinance like this for the Township to help protect the citizens.

Clerk Matters

Housing Rights/Cluster Agreements

Deputy Clerk Liberty requested the Town Board and Planning Commission to review and update the application and paperwork. Deputy Clerk Liberty also suggested that lot splits and housing right transfers should not be done on the same evening. A resident should complete a lot split first, get the new PIN from the County, then come back in to do the housing right transfer. The Town Board agreed to have the Attorney look at the old application and get recommendations for updating the form.

Training Opportunities

Clerk Atwater explained the training opportunities offered to the Minnesota Association of Townships.

Town Hall Procedures

Clerk Atwater recommended that all Supervisors and Commissions attend a training with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk on property Town Hall procedures for opening and closing of the building and how to use the copier. Clerk Atwater explained weather or emergency closures will be sent to the Town Board and will be posted online. Clerks ask the Board and Planning Commission to look ahead at dates for meetings around holidays, so everyone can plan time off or away.


Adjournment

Motion: Town Board Supervisor Novacek moved to adjourn. Town Board Supervisor Pope seconded the motion.

Motion carried 9-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Liz Atwater, Town Clerk

Minutes Officially Approved By:  on: 10/1/2024
Planning Commissioner Date

Minutes Officially Approved By:  on: 10/8/2024
Town Board Supervisor Date