



**Minutes**

THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
Thomas Township Public Safety Building, 8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609  
May 16, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Rod Iamurri called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in addition to Mr. Iamurri were: Dave Sommers, Ruth McDonald, Pat Lynch, and Jennifer Curry. Also present was Dan Sika, Director of Community Development.

Absent: Doug Bird and Steve Yockey.

**1. *Call to Order and Roll Call***

Roll call was taken.

**2. *Pledge of Allegiance.***

**3. *Approval of Agenda:***

It was moved by Sommers, seconded by McDonald to approve the Agenda for the May 22, 2018 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. *Approval of Minutes:***

It was moved by McDonald, seconded by Curry to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. *Communications – Petitions – Citizens Comments – None.***

**6. *Presentations-None***

**7. *Sign Board of Appeals-None***

**8. *Hearings-None***

## **9. *New Business***

### ***A. Review/Discussion of Ordinance Section 18.30, Solar Farm***

Sika mentioned that a member of the Planning Commission had brought it to the attention at a previous meeting that with recent solar farm interest this ordinance section should be reviewed and discussed. Sika added that it is especially relevant given the information that was passed out at this evenings meeting. It was a letter and information received by the Township Supervisor from a company known as Cypress Creek Renewables. This is a company seeking areas in which to develop solar farms. Sika explained that the current Ordinance is fairly new, about 12-13 years old. Solar Farms were allowed by Special Use Permit and a large developer would have to develop 20 acres or more to be considered a large solar farm. Sika added that he is going to run the ordinance by a planner at Spicer to double check any law changes that may draw a red flag and then return it to the Planning Commission. He stated he did notice the reference to trees and having one every 25' all the way around the farm. May want to rethink this because higher trees would block the sun and defeat the purpose of the panels. Maybe the answer is ornamental trees or low shrubs. Most of the ordinance is pretty typical with ordinances in other communities. Research will have to be done to see if any changes need to be made. There was discussion of the new law in California concerning solar energy. An article pertaining to this will be presented at the next meeting to allow for further discussion.

## **10. *Administrative Review-Rail Trail Motor Company***

Sika noted that Rail Trail Motor Company had acquired the property next door and combined parcels. They are expanding some parking for the used car lot. This is simply informational so the Planning Commission is aware. No action is necessary by them for Administrative Reviews.

## **11. *Old Business***

### ***A. Results of the 2018 Business/Organization of the Year.***

Iamurri read the results which were: KFC/A&W-24 points, winner of the large category, with Taco Bell and Meijer Gas Station as runners-up. In the small category, Sporty's won with 19 points. Frost Road Market and Team One as runners-up. Watt will work on scheduling a time for presentations and notify the members of the date. McDonald suggested maybe one winner be chosen for each category without any runners-up. Iamurri noted that you can only win once every five years whereas you can be a runner-up consecutive years. He felt that this is what the criteria set up by the Planning Commission calls for. He did add that he would like to see an additional vote from both Sika and Watt because of the input they have on businesses in the Township. Sika mentioned that this is a possibility but it will be a vote from the Community Development Department as a whole rather than just their two individual votes. Watt will set-up the times to do the presentations in the next two weeks and get that information to the Planning Commission so they can be present.

***B. Medical Marijuana Articles***

Several articles were given to the Planning Commission relating to Medical Marijuana for further education on the issue.

***12. Receive and File All Correspondence-Planning & Zoning News; April 2018***

***13. Adjournment***

Motion by Sommers, seconded McDonald by to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. ***The next regular meeting date is June 20, 2018.***

*Respectfully submitted by Connie Watt, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer*