

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission

March 29, 2023

Avon Township Hall (16881 Queens Road, Avon)

**Call to Order:** Chair Lori Yurczyk called to order the meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission (PC) at about 7:00 PM in the Main Chamber of the Town Hall. The meeting, like all Town meetings, was also available via Zoom at the following URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945> (PIN: AvonTown).

**Pledge:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call:** Present – Craig Blonigen, Rich Sanoski, Stephen Saupe, Andrew Wensmann (*via Zoom*), and Lori Yurczyk (*Chair*). Also present: Chad Klocker, Kelly Martini.

**Approval of Agenda:** Added to the agenda were a discussion of bank insurance and the Stearns County website. Sanoski moved to approve the agenda as amended. Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Minutes:** Sanoski moved to approve the minutes from the January 25, 2023 meeting as presented. Wensmann second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Hearings:** *none scheduled.*

## **Business:**

- 1. Introductions.** Supervisor Klocker was present as the Board liaison. As a new member on the Town Board and to foster collegial relationships, Chair Yurczyk asked Klocker if he would be willing to share a little bit about himself. After, PC members and Martini did the same.
- 2. PC Policies –** The policies and procedures for the PC were discussed in light of the recent appointments of Saupe and Yurczyk to the PC at the Qualification/Organization meeting. The PC validated the policies and procedures document. The Clerk will be sure to follow the guidelines in this document more carefully in the future (*i.e.*, appointment of PC members should occur at the April Supervisor meeting).
- 3. Bank Insurance –** In light of recent bank failures, there is a concern that Township monies may not be adequately protected. Martini and Yurczyk (who has prior banking experience) reported that they had spoken with a representative at our bank and he assured them that Township accounts are reasonably safe. Though private accounts are only insured to \$250,000, government accounts (such as the Township) have added protections to further protect all of the deposited funds. This means that it will not be necessary to transfer any Township funds to another bank for FDIC protection.
- 4. Escrow Agreements –** More than \$250,000 was received from Novel solar for the Gertken solar project escrows. Our Township bank doesn't have separate escrow accounts. However, the funds could be deposited into earmarked accounts and a separate agreement signed to provide protection to all parties (Township, Novel) regarding the escrows and how they will be handled. The PC thinks an agreement is necessary. Blonigen moved to recommend to the Supervisors to establish a written, signed, escrow agreement between Novel/Gertken and the Township. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried. Martini will contact the County for samples. Saupe will provide a copy of the Falcon Bank agreement used for the previous Gertken project.
- 5. County Mapping Website –** Yurczyk noted that there seems to be some changes in the Stearns County GIS/mapping website. Currently, the Township has access to at least two mapping programs (*i.e.*, Stearns

County Property Viewer, Beacon). Both are excellent. One advantage of Beacon is that it can be used to quickly create mailing labels for residents. There is a secure area on the Property Viewer site that provides more information and allows searches by resident name (contact the Clerk for the login information). Martini suggested that the County may not maintain Beacon in the future.

- 6. **Facebook** – Supervisor Klocker is planning to update/maintain a Township Facebook page to complement the website and provide rapid information for Town residents. Klocker especially hopes that it will encourage more residents to participate in the Annual Meeting and other Township activities.
- 7. **Staff Manuals** – The Clerk had created a manual that summarized his responsibilities. In response to wanting to provide a better experience for board member transitions, the Clerk decided to update the manual for all Township staff. The Manual will provide an overview of important township policies, documents, monthly list of things to do and so on. The first draft of the Manual is now available.

**Reports/Announcements:**

- **Rental Home** – An inquiry was received from a realtor about splitting a rental home into a duplex. The County handles these requests. No action taken.
- **Rezoning** – the County alerted the Township to an individual wanting to rezone A40 property (35961 165<sup>th</sup> Ave) into residential. The resident was provided with an outline of the procedure and told to contact the Township because the Township is required to provide an opinion. The County alerted the resident that rezoning would be ‘very difficult’ because the property would be surrounded by A40 (i.e., spot zoning) and is part of the environmental overlay. The resident was invited to a township meeting to discuss the possibility.

**Next Meeting:** The next PC meeting is April 26, 2023 at 7:00 PM. (see ‘Call to Order’ for the Zoom log-in)

**Other Meetings:** Other Upcoming Meetings/Events (see ‘Call to Order’ for the Zoom log-in)

- Supervisor’s meeting, April 5, 2023
- Local Board of Appeals & Equalization – April 17, 7 PM

**Adjournment:** Wensmann moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephen G. Saupe, Clerk

**date:** March 31, 2023

**Approval:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lori Yurczyk, *Planning Commission Chair – signature*

**date:** \_\_\_\_\_