

**Clearwater Township**  
Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting of April 5, 2021  
As Approved May 3, 2021

**Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:**

Chair Von See called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call of Members and Recognition of Visitors:**

Commissioners present: Fields, Keyes, Leffew, Von See, and Cassasa (attending virtually from within Kalkaska County, due to a possible COVID-19 exposure).

Township officials attending: Supervisor Tom Backers, Zoning Administrator Jordan Ackers

Public: Deana Jardee, Becky Norris, Matthew Keiper.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Added review of Keiper rezoning petition to New Business.

**MOTION** by Leffew, second by Keyes, to accept the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

**Call for Disclosure of Conflicts of Interests:**

All commissioners declared no conflicts of interests.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Approval of minutes of March 1, 2021

**MOTION** by Keyes, second by Von See, to accept the minutes of March 1, 2021 as presented. Motion carried.

Correction to the minutes of February 1, 2021 that were previously approved on March 1, 2021. There was a misstatement regarding the appointment of Trustee Keyes apparently to the ZBA as well as to the Planning Commission. The correction is to strike that statement.

**MOTION** by Casassa, second by Von See, to correct the minutes of February 1, 2021, by striking the reference to Keyes' appointment to the ZBA. Motion carried.

**Public Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:**

Deana Jardee – The Executive Director of Paddle Antrim updated the Commission on activities of the past year. She announced that there will be a ribbon-cutting for the water-trail on May 26, 2021 at Ellsworth. In preparation for that, there is a public awareness campaign currently underway. She spoke of the materials available for purchase and download from the website [www.paddleantrim.com](http://www.paddleantrim.com) including a waterproof booklet containing a map of the water trail and other information such as where access sites are. Additionally, there are a number of funding opportunities, such as sign sponsorship. They are also seeking volunteers to be ambassadors for the several access sites.

### **Commissioner Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:**

Trustee Keyes – commented that we anticipate being able to present to the Township Board on April 15, 2021, a zoning map we can rely on while we work to create the interactive map to be placed on the township website.

Commissioner Fields – noted that Casassa, Fields, Keyes and Leffew did attend the MAP training session Zoning and Planning Essentials on March 23 & 24.

Commissioner Leffew – commented that two training opportunities are coming up on April 12 & 13 regarding Board responsibilities. He has signed up.

[Editor's Note: the training session comments happened chronologically later in the meeting, but they belong under this heading.]

### **Correspondence for Matters Not on the Agenda:**

There was none.

### **Old Business:**

#### ***Report on Zoning Map Update:***

Secretary Fields – reported on the work done with Trustee Keyes, comparing the zoning map drawing and the boundaries descriptions as given in the Zoning Ordinance. Note has been made of every discrepancy found and work is progressing in correcting those discrepancies. Fields indicated that some of the information found in the Tax Map book of 2005 does not appear in the current book provided by the County Equalization Office, yet it is part of the description in the Zoning Ordinance. When the new interactive map is completed, each parcel belonging to a particular plat or addition should be so identified. The several additions in the village center are quite complex.

#### **Report on Traffic Safety Grant Application:**

Commissioner Leffew – reported that he completed and filed the AAA traffic safety grant application for two flashing speed zone signs to be placed on Rapid City Road at the north and south entrances to the village. The AAA is offering traffic safety grants up to \$15,000. The request we have submitted amounts to just under \$8,000. We are now waiting to learn if we are one of the award grantees.

#### ***Marijuana Ordinance Language Work:***

Other items have taken the time of the Planning Commissioners and the Township Board Members, so this topic will be continued. Discussion visited concepts such as scope anticipated for our ordinance, the need to keep recreational marijuana operations separate from medical marijuana operations, and how to carry out an open township forum to get needed input from the public. Trustee Keyes indicated he will ask the Township Board at the April 15, 2021, meeting when they want to hold that public forum and what they would like the Planning Commission to do in support of that effort.

### **Report of Planning Commission Chair:**

No report.

**Report of Township Representative:**

Trustee Keyes – Introduced Jordan Ackers, the new Zoning Administrator for Clearwater Township. Jordan comes to us with a background in building, which will assist him in his new role. Supervisor Backers is helping to acquaint him with the current situation. Assessor Dawn Kuhns has been approved by the Board to serve another three-year term with the township. The budget for FY 2021-22 has been approved. The township's asset list is being assembled. If anyone has equipment or property belonging to the township, please report it so it can be added to the list. May 1, 2021, will be the township's cleanup day; location is American Waste on US 31 N in Kalkaska; time is 7 a.m. to noon; volunteers are invited to contact the township to help; people needing help are invited to contact the township. May 15, 2021, there will be a Work-Bee at Freedom Park from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Parks and Rec Committee has been re-established and is being chaired by Kristi Spencer-Nemec.

**Report of ZBA Representative:**

Commissioner Casassa – reported that all the new members of the ZBA attended the MAP training session on Zoning and Planning Essentials. The quarterly ZBA meeting scheduled for April 12, was canceled as of March 16, for lack of agenda items. Subsequently, a variance request has been received. A meeting will be calendared to hear this variance request in the near future; the requestor does not want to wait until July.

**Report of Zoning Administrator:**

Supervisor Backers – spoke on working with newly hired Zoning Administrator Ackers, to get him settled in and acquainted with the office. Over the past weeks, Supervisor Backers has been working to catch up on the tasks left over since the resignation of the former Zoning Administrator. The plan is next to tackle one problem at a time, the next being violations, particularly the trash in the township. Among the issues to sort out is who actually owns properties where violations are observed. Some are rental properties, three are abandoned – and it is not clear whether any individual still owns them or whether they have reverted to the state. We will help those physically unable to do the cleanup, and may even schedule another cleanup day in the summer.

Commissioner Casassa – asked how violation management will be documented. Backers responded that the trip and contact logs will be detailed and a proper paper trail generated.

**New Business**

Rezoning Petition from Matthew Keiper – this petition is to rezone property at 6736 Rapid City Road, having tax id 40-004-021-002-10, from Agricultural to Commercial-Light-Industry. It replaces the two originally presented, which have been withdrawn. The purpose at this meeting is to determine whether the petition is complete. If it is complete, then a public hearing must be scheduled for arriving at a recommendation for the Township Board to entertain. The property is across the street from the existing Commercial-Light-Industry district, in the Rapid City Road south corridor, which complies with the Master Plan. Upon review, we found two minor items to correct. 1) on the question of whether the property was platted, the X was in the wrong spot – with permission from the petitioner, we corrected that; 2) on the question of

whether the petition was in compliance with the Master Plan, there was no response – it being evident that it is in compliance, and with permission from the petitioner, we corrected that.

**MOTION** by Fields, second by Von See, to deem the petition to rezone the property at 6736 Rapid City Road, with tax id of 40-004-021-002-10, with the corrections made at this meeting, as complete. Motion carried.

**MOTION** by Leffew, second by Keyes, to hold the public hearing for the subject rezoning petition at the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting of May 3, 2021. Motion carried.

Rezoning Petition from Michael Connel – this petition is to rezone property at 6704 Rapid City Road, having tax id 40-004-021-002-10, from Agricultural to Commercial-Light-Industry. The petition is not quite complete. Mr. Connel is not present, so we are unable to assist him at this time. Ultimately, it was decided that Secretary Fields will draft a letter to Mr. Connel, explaining the minor defects in the petition and requesting he refile a corrected petition.

**MOTION** by Casassa, second by Von See, to task Secretary Fields to draft a letter to Mr. Connel, explaining the minor defects in the petition and requesting .he refile a corrected petition. Motion carried.

Items to Consider for Planning Commission to Undertake

1) Establish Recycling Station in Rapid City; the nearest ones are in neighboring townships. Casassa offered to contact American Waste on this matter.

**MOTION** by Leffew, second by Casassa, to authorize Commissioner Casassa to contact American Waste to explore the cost and feasibility of establishing a Recycling Center in Rapid City. Motion carried.

2) Update on the village center abandoned alleyways. Keyes will invite Supervisor Backers to the May meeting to give us an update. Fields will place the item on the agenda.

3) Alden State Bank is available for Clearwater Township to use as repository of proceeds from marijuana operations. It is a state bank, not a federal bank.

4) Utility rights-of-way. Leffew questions the control over the rights-of-way and the multiple wires and cables of the several utilities that seem to be in disrepair. We don't know who to contact to find out where all the utilities are located. The issue is a valid matter of concern.

5) Emergency planning for the township. Do we have such a service? Joe will ask the Fire Chief at the next Township Board meeting.

Update on Shapes Files for Clearwater Township

The cost this year for the shapes files is \$550 per township. They are importing the information from all the townships at this time and recommend waiting until the end of May to buy the shapes files, because otherwise the files may not be complete. One volunteer has already stepped up to work with the committee to craft the interactive zoning map: Deputy Clerk Margret Spann whose college major was Geography. When the interactive map is completed, a user will be able to go to the township website, select any parcel and have access to all the pertinent public information for that particular parcel.

**Closing Public Comment:**

There was none.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION** by Fields, second by Von See, to adjourn. Adjournment at 8:52 p.m.

**Assignments:**

- Fields to see to newspaper publication of the legal notice for the public hearing on the Keiper rezoning petition and to advise the Clerk's office of the need to send notice letters out to the owners of properties within 300 feet of the subject property, no later than 14 days prior to the May 3, 2021 meeting.
- Fields to draft letter to Michael Connel, explaining the minor defects in his rezoning petition and ask him to refile a corrected petition.
- Casassa to contact American Waste to explore cost and feasibility of establishing a recycling station in Rapid City.
- Keyes to invite Supervisor Backers to the May 3, 2021 meeting to update the Planning Commission on the alleyways project.
- Fields to add the alleyways update to the May agenda.
- All commissioners to do whatever research they are able to do with regard to utilities and their governance.

**Next Meeting:** May 3, 2021

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Norris Fields  
Secretary