

Baraga Township Planning Commission

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 4, 2025, 6:00 PM

Baraga Township Hall, 13919 State HWY M38, Baraga, MI 49908

1. Meeting called to order at 6:02 PM by Chairperson Parkila.
2. Roll Call: Present - Dale Parkila, Nick Lozier, Ariel Gougeon, Dianne Koskinen
Absent – Jerry Dompier
Chairperson Parkila declares that a quorum is present.
Also present – Bill Olsen, Jason McCarthy, George Danielson, 16 public

3. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Approval of the February 4, 2025, special meeting agenda

Discussion and additions to the agenda: None

A motion was made by Lozier, supported by Gougeon, to approve the agenda for the February 4, 2025, special meeting as presented.

Ayes: All in favor

Nays: none

5. Minutes of the January 8, 2025, regular meeting

Discussion: none

A motion was made by Gougeon, supported by Lozier, to approve the Minutes of the January 8, 2025, regular meeting as presented.

Ayes: All in favor

Nays: none

6. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only – Chris Bryan asked about the community survey, it will be addressed later in the meeting. Chris Bryan asked if the website could state “open” or “public welcome” on the meeting listings.

7. Correspondence - none

8. Old Business - none

9. New Business - The purpose of this Special Meeting is to meet with Northwoods Planning & Zoning Services to work on the master plan update, review the community survey, and hear public comment regarding the master plan. Jason McCarthy introduced himself and reported his background. He said SWOT analysis will be guiding planning. He asked for public input. **Strengths** discussed were housing, agriculture, local decision making, quality of life, health care, education, retaining residents, natural resources, tourism, NCT, HILPA, roads, giving community, potential for small business growth, tech and research industries, manufacturing, work ethic of residents, access to smart zones, social commitment, veterans' services, KBIC cooperation. **Weaknesses** discussed were affordable grocery availability, aging demographics, available and affordable housing, public transportation, lack of access to capital, drug use, mental health services, social services, recreational opportunities,

undeveloped land. **Threats** discussed were capital availability, AI, infrastructure, shoreline development and hazard areas, campgrounds, lack of investment in our community.

- A. Community Survey – The planning commission will not issue a community survey to generate public input. Factors leading to this decision include: a wealth of information and ideas has already been provided both at this meeting and at previous meetings, the response rate for surveys is low, a survey is not likely to produce additional or different input, the cost of a survey is significant.
- B. Master Plan -- Asset management will be included in the master plan. This master plan is to set goals and objectives, not to adjust zoning. Master plan is scheduled to be ready in early spring. Drafts will be posted on the Baraga Township website. A public work session will be held before the master plan is adopted, on Monday, March 10, 6:00 PM. Sections (1), (2), (3) no changes and will be posted on the website, drafts to (4) and (5) were provided tonight and will be posted on the website, drafts to (6), (7), (8), (9), (10) will be ready before the March 10 work session. At this work session the planning commission will review and forward any changes to Jason McCarthy and will adopt
- C. Public Comment on Master Plan – was heard throughout item (9) new business.

10. Public Comment (all other items) – was heard throughout item (9) new business.

11. General Planning Commission Discussion – the planning commission will review sections (4) and (5), (6-10) when available and hold a public work session on March 10 regarding the changes to the master plan. Any changes will be sent to Jason McCarthy to be incorporated.

12. Adjournment

A motion was made by Parkila, supported by Lozier, to adjourn at 7:56 PM.

Ayes: All in favor

Nays: none

The next regular meeting of the Baraga Township Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025 @ 6:00 PM