

Starke County Plan Commission
Regular Meeting
February 14, 2022

- ❖ Call to Order-President Crase called the meeting to order
- ❖ **Pledge of Allegiance** was led by President Crase
- ❖ **Roll Call:** Bill Crase, president & surveyor; Todd Jackson, vice president and citizen member; Bryan Cavender; Commissioner (absent); Howard Bailey, councilman; Phil Woolery, extension educator; Mark Allen, trustee; Todd Lawrence, Denise Cultice, and Karl Swihart, citizen members (absent); Martin Bedrock, commission counsel; Wallace (Boz) Williams, building commissioner; Robby Blodgett, code enforcement officer; and Pamla J. Starkey, administrator. There were (7) seven visitors present.
- ❖ **Approval of the minutes** of the November 8, 2021 meeting: Vice president Jackson made a motion to approve minutes as written, seconded by Member Cultice, Motion carried (7-0)
- ❖ **Reorganization of the board**
 - **President**
 - Member Cultice made a motion to nominate the current president, Bill Crase as president, seconded by Vice President Jackson, with no other nominations motion was carried (7-0)
 - **Vice President**
 - Member Cultice made a motion to nominate the current vice president, Todd Jackson as vice president, seconded by Trustee Mark Allen, with no other nominations motion carried (7-0)
 - **SCEDF Board**
 - Vice president Jackson nominated Member Cultice to represent the planning commission on the Starke County Economic Development Foundation Board, seconded by Member Lawrence, with no other nominations motion was carried (7-0)
 - **Building Commissioner**
 - Extension Agent Woolery made a motion to nominate the current building commissioner, Boz Williams as building commissioner, seconded by Vice President Jackson, with no other nominations motion was carried (7-0)
 - **Administrator**
 - Vice President Jackson made a motion to nominate the current administrator, Pamla Starkey as administrator, seconded by Member Cultice, with no other nominations motion was carried (7-0)
 - **Planning Commission Counsel**
 - President Crase stated that there are two Attorneys interested in serving as counsel for the Planning Commission, Martin Bedrock, the current attorney and Justin Schramm who now is also serving as the Starke County Commissioners and the Starke County Council's Attorney.
 - President Crase asked for a nomination, with no nominations made, it was decided by the board to wait until next meeting to make a nomination so that they can talk to both attorneys as Attorney Schramm was not able to be present at this meeting.
 - Councilman Pearman stated that the Council hired Justin Schramm and he is doing a great job.
 - Member Cultice made a motion for both attorneys be present at the next Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Member Lawrence. Motion carried (7-0)
 - **Tech Committee**

- Member Cultice made a motion to keep the previous tech committee members which are Extension Agent Woolery, President Crase, Vice President Jackson, Commissioner Cavender, seconded by Vice President Jackson, with no other nominations motion carried (7-0)
- ❖ **Old Business and Violations**
 - **Rudd property**-Administrator Starkey stated that Attorney Bedrock sent a certified letter and it came back unclaimed
 - Building Commissioner Williams stated that he doesn't think anyone is staying there anymore. He knocks on the door and no one answers
 - **Sunderland/Nokes-Hickory Hills**
 - Administrator Starkey stated that Attorney Bedrock told her that another date has been set for Tuesday.
- ❖ **New Business and Violations**
- ❖ **Code Enforcement Officer Report**
 - **Bart Egolf-Railroad Twp**
 - Enforcement Officer Blodgett reported that the semi van trailer is still on the property and he was to contact the BZA secretary to ask for a variance to keep it but he has not done that yet.
 - President Crase explained that this is one that Terry had told that he could keep it there as long as it was behind the fence even though he does not have enough property to have it and did not get a permit.
 - After discussion Vice President Jackson made a motion for the planning commission to write a letter telling him he has 30 days to come in and apply for a special use permit thru the Board of Zoning Appeal or remove the semi van trailer, seconded by Member Cultice. Motion carried (7-0)
 - **Heidi Brewer/Shannon Trustee-North Bend Twp**
 - Enforcement Officer Blodgett stated that the camper is still there and has notified both Brewer & Trustee multiple times.
 - Vice President Jackson and Councilman Bailey asked if we cleaned it up can we put liens on the property
 - President Crase said yes we can and have but that sometimes gets dismissed if it goes to tax sale, he then asked Building Commissioner Williams to get some bids of having it cleaned up and also have a letter sent to them stating that we are going to clean it up and they will be responsible for the cost.
 - Vice President Jackson made the motion as President Crase stated seconded by Extension Agent Woolery. Motion carried (7-0)
 - **Irma Monte properties-Jackson Twp**
 - Enforcement Officer Blodgett stated that they are both cleaned up and campers removed
 - **Mike Blough-Wayne Twp**
 - Enforcement Officer Blodgett reported slowly tearing it down
 - President Crase asked the Enforcement Officer to check on it next month and let the board know of the progress.
 - **Shawn Allen-Wayne Twp**
 - Enforcement Officer Blodgett reported that the dwelling was demolished but debris is still there and Admin. Starkey had sent a couple of letters to finish demo.
 - President Crase stated that he would like to wait on legal counsel on this one.
- ❖ **Back to Old Business**

- President Crase explained that they had a tech committee meeting with Bob Aloï and went thru the ordinance and Mammoth North Solar has met our requirements and the drainage requirements, also Bob Aloï gave us a handout with some suggestions to make our ordinance stronger. President Crase went on to say that he is happy with the drainage aspect and is willing to go on with the permit, the tech committee agreed that there isn't any reason to hold up the permit. He also stated that they are going to have another tech committee meeting to discuss some of the changes that was suggested.

❖ **Other Business from the Board**

- Councilman Bailey voiced concerns about the enforcement of the eyesores in the county and need to do something with the properties, clean them up and figure out how to recover our funds.
 - President Crase stated that the first thing we need to do is get the liens put on the property as soon as possible, the second thing to do is see about how to go about acquiring the property and sell it which is happening in Pulaski County, they found a way to market them and sell them. He also talked about what himself and councilman Pearman have been trying to figure out how to replenish the unsafe building fund maybe, by adding a fee to the building permit like a few other counties currently do.
 - Vice President Jackson doesn't think you should add a fee to a building permit to put in the unsafe building fund.
 - Trustee Allen thinks that the lien should take care of it.
 - President Crase said that we don't always get the money back that way, if it goes on tax sale we might get it back but if it goes to the commissioners or sheriffs sale we lose the money.
 - Councilman Pearman talked about a property on 25 N that we cleaned up and lost money, he asked Administrator Starkey how we recoup monies, she responded that the only thing we are allowed to do right now is put liens on the property and that does not always work.
 - President Crase asked the board to think about what to do and bring back recommendations at the next meeting.
 - Councilman Pearman stated that maybe we would need to take possession of the property before we clean it up.

❖ **Public Comment**

- Mr. Novath spoke about his move to Starke County and how he cleaned up the property, he also stated that he enjoyed listening to the boards discussions and thinks we are doing a good job.
 - President Crase thanked him and said that it is very seldom we get told that, most people come here to complain.
- Councilman Pearman asked about a property located on 1025 E stating that he has gotten complaints.
 - Ordinance Enforcement Officer Blodgett stated that trailer has been torn down.
- Bob Aloï stated that since we don't have a mechanism going forward with one of the reviews on solar, other than what you have in front of you, he will have to have an agreement with the solar company and that doesn't mean he can reach an agreement with the solar company and assumes he can throw that back at them and the planning commission to get another consultant and try to get an agreement at this point and have a mechanism in the ordinance
 - Pres Crase stated that when this came up the solar company agreed to fund this and you (Bob) gave us a contract that Boz and himself sent back to Justin Schramm and Richard Hall and it started to get worked on and when they started meeting Boz and himself told you (Bob Aloï) that the solar company would be billed for this, not Starke County because we cannot except their payment to us because we do not have a line item that is created for that.

- Bob Aloï stated that was not his comment it was that there needs to be some sort of mechanism in place.
- Extension Agent Woolery stated that in the ordinance it would need to say it was reviewed by an engineer.
- Bob Aloï stated that moving forward he would write his own agreement to the solar company, right now he doesn't feel ethically comfortable how he has to deal with Mammoth so he will write his own agreement for any future solar company. He went on to say that his purpose is to represent the county not the solar company and that to him is a conflict of interest
- Councilman Pearman stated that maybe it could say it is representing the county on behalf of solar or something like that
- Bob Aloï stated that he has seen two agreements and they are totally different so there has to be a mechanism in place so that he can do his work
- President Crase and Councilman Pearman stated that can be fixed.
- Councilman Pearman let Bob Aloï know that we all do appreciate that he is keeping the counties best interest into play and that is why we are having him do it because he (Bob Aloï) is the expert and as long as the fiscal body is okay with paying him directly then there shouldn't be a problem
- President Crase stated that now that he understands, he asked Bob to give him a little time and he will talk to Dave and Justin to see if they can come up with something to clarify this situation.
- President Crase stated that before we dive into the next one he would like Bob to take a break and let us get this one off of the table, then we can start working on Next Era.
- Councilman Pearman asked Bob Aloï if he was okay with the solar company paying him on this one.
- Bob Aloï stated that we haven't worked that out yet and he wants to serve the county, that was his mission
- President Crase asked Bob to give him a little time and he will talk to the council, commissioners and their counsel and we will get this all figured out.
- Councilman Pearman stated that we are all learning this together and both solar companies are working with us to get it done.
- ❖ Vice President Jackson stated that we need to setup a tech meeting and possibly change the day of the planning commission meetings.
 - Vice Pres Jackson would like to change the next meeting to Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 5:30 so that both attorneys can attend
 - Tech Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.
- ❖ **End of the month reports**
- ❖ **Next Scheduled Meeting-** will be Wednesday March 9, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
- ❖ **Adjournment-**With no further business, Trustee Allen made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Member Cultice. Motion carried (7-0)

This meeting was recorded and will be on file in the Starke County Plan Commission Office. Unless stated otherwise all Plan Commission meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. with the Board of Zoning Appeal meeting on the same night the latter of 6:30 p.m. or the conclusion of the Plan Commission meeting.

Pamla J. Starkey
Administrator