

HILLSDALE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes

The **Hillsdale County Planning Commission** convened in the Intermediate School District Conference Room, 310 W. Bacon Street, Hillsdale, Michigan, on Monday, June 15, 2009.

Members present: Ned Bever, Fred Fowler, Deb Sikorski, Brad Densmore, Ken Lautzenheiser, Charlene Page

Members absent: Julie Kanouse, Sarah Fronczak

Others present: Jasneet Sharma, Nicolas Wheeler

Call to Order: Ned Bever called the meeting to order at 1:43 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: *D. Sikorski moved to approve the Minutes of April 20, 2009. K. Lautzenheiser supported. Motion unanimously carried.*

Approval of Agenda: *The agenda was amended to add "Planning Commission Budget". B. Densmore moved to adopt the amended agenda. K. Lautzenheiser supported. Motion unanimously carried.*

Public Comment: None

Agenda Items :

Review of updated version of the Picture Hillsdale County Survey report (Report Attached) - Jasneet Sharma reviewed the report with the commission members. The first 25 pages are an introduction and the remaining pages are appendixes containing actual answers and/or comments by survey participants. J Sharma noted that it may not be necessary to have the appendixes be a part of the report and can be available on the internet. There was a 1% return on the survey and the question was asked how the 1% extrapolates to the overall numbers. J Sharma noted the majority of participants said it was important to preserve the rural character of the County. N. Bever asked all members to review the report and it will be added to a future agenda for more discussion and action. J. Sharma wants members to think about how to present the results to the public. F. Fowler suggested summarizing as is and let the people respond to the results. K. Lautzenheiser discussed the possibility of having 4 area meetings similar to those that occurred when first planning this process. There was a suggestion to refer to the report as "preliminary" at this point.

Role of the Planning Commission - Discussion about concerns from citizens as to the control the county planning commission has over individual township, cities and villages. There is also a concern over what the county master plan actually means and is it a step toward county-wide zoning. Jasneet Sharma discussed the various methods of getting these concerns addressed by possibly utilizing radio, newspaper, or a possible series of articles. K. Lautzenheiser mentioned that even though the planning commission is advisory it still is looked upon as having a leadership role. There was discussion on what authorities the various levels of government (State, County, Township, City and Village) have when it comes to land use. K. Lautzenheiser mentioned the possibility of having someone to guide the planning commission on how to proceed as a commission and how to utilize the data from the survey. He

indicated that perhaps that role could be filled by Jasneet Sharma. F. Fowler mentioned the possibility of having something similar to what the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) did when the results of the Hillsdale County Community Center were presented. C. Page asked how other counties handle the planning commission; J Sharma indicated that some counties have staff that deal directly with the issues. K Lautzenheiser asked C. Page how the planning commission interacts with Economic Development Commission (EDC); C. Page indicated the EDC puts planning commission results in to action and receives support from the planning commission when necessary to EDC actions.

Draft Ordinance Review - Discussion on the replacement of Robert Henthorne on the commission and a possible candidate from Camden Schools was mentioned. The vacated membership position is currently being advertised and any interested candidates should submit an application.

Planning Commission Budget - K. Lautzenheiser reported that the chair of the County Board of Commissioners is asking to start the budget process early this year. State and local cuts will make the budget process very difficult for the 2010 budget year. Although Hillsdale County is set to once again receive revenue sharing from the state in 2010 K. Lautzenheiser is not confident that money will be there for the County. K. Lautzenheiser discussed that in his opinion the County Commission could be on a “hiatus” for 2011 because of the budget issues.

Communications: Deb Sikorski handed out a survey entitled “City of Hillsdale and Hillsdale Township Parks and Recreation Survey” that will be used as part of an effort between the city and the township in creating a joint 5 year recreation plan.

Jasneet Sharma announced that she is trying to organize the Citizen Planner program that would include Hillsdale, Jackson and Lenawee Counties. D. Sikorski volunteered to be on the steering committee for this program.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Bever, Chair

Recorded by: Nicolas Wheeler, Equalization Director, County of Hillsdale