



**HELENA TOWNSHIP
ADVOCACY GROUP, NFP**
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HELENA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

HTAG RECAP

Present:

Joe Bassil
Jim Schilling
Sue McGlovkin
Mike Robinson
Fay VandenBerg
Jim Gurr
Gordy Schaffer
Butch Peeples
Bob Logee

Other Organizations

Norm (TLPA)

Mike Robinson called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Approval of Agenda

Gurr made a motion; Schafer seconded – motion carried.

Statement of Conflict of Interest: None were stated.

Approval of Minutes:

Gurr made a motion to approve the Minutes of the 2/6/2025 Meeting; McGlovkin seconded. Motion carried.

Communications:

Ongoing work with Attorney: Robinson asked VandenBerg to provide an overview. She indicated Butch Peeples worked hard with the attorney, and we now have an open and ongoing relationship with him. He is familiar with the work and is aware of the ordinances which require a quick turn-around. Peeples confirmed things are moving forward and should get whatever is sent to him within a week or before the next meeting.

Nothing was mentioned about October 23, 2024 Letter from HTAG.

Gurr – Helena Township indicated Leslie @ FEMA did not make another presentation....LISTEN TO VIDEO. As a result, Jim Gurr said the PC does not have to advance anything at this point but the 3/31/25 deadline has been waived at the federal level.

Logee received a notice from someone on Green Street about RVs and campers. VandenBerg said she replied to him, but no details were provided.

Public Comments

Resident (Wilcox) asked about the status of items sent to the Attorney from last October, specifically the letter sent to the PC from HTAG. The PC indicated a response has been received from the Attorney on the letter and will be discussed at next month's meeting.

Zoom. \$350 for Courtney to do it but PC does not have a computer to handle the Zoom. Clerk (Smedra) was the person who was handling the IT stuff but he hasn't been here.

Resident (P. Sak) picked up the draft of the ordinance language 5.2.01 and asked at the last commission meeting for a written copy of the current proposed ordinance language. Sak indicated the DRAFT is different from what was discussed between 2/10/25 and today. On 2/13/25 Sak sent VandenBerg, Logee and Peeples about what was missing from the ordinance. **SOME topics were put in, but it still is not what was voted on at the 1/9/25 meeting.** There is nothing included about the private waterfront access language as decided upon which no longer would be allowed.

Resident (Wilcox) shared frustration with what is being decided in one meeting is not making into the next "step" of progress. The PC then is spending time "re-doing" discussions and decisions already had and made.

Schafer made a motion to table 5.02.01 until next month's meeting; Gurr seconded. Motion passed.

5.02.02

Norm (TLPA) voiced confusion on the number of watercrafts allowed based on feet of frontage. A discussion then took place amongst PC members about the following proposed language:

Less than 100 Feet of frontage = 2
Every 50 Ft of additional frontage = 2

Logee – emphasized the need to include the fact that if a private waterfront access is built upon, access from the other 1-2 properties is no longer allowed. **A motion was made and carried. Gurr mentioned a roll call was required after voting on and passing a motion.**

Gurr explained the process of getting the ordinance language approved.

Vice-Chair

Gurr mentioned the Planning Commission did not elect a Vice-Chair at last month's meeting. Schafer nominated Gurr as Vice-Chair. Schafer made a motion to have Gurr be Vice-Chair; Robinson seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

5.01 3(d)

Play structures – completely different ordinance.

OLD BUSINESS:

Gurr will contact Leslie regarding whether or not the PC will be able to review FEMA Flood Plan.

May 1, 2025 PC Meeting - CANCELLED

The PC will be in training session on Thursday May1, 2025 for the PC and "any other people they determine should attend" at the same time as the scheduled PC meeting.

Resident (Wilcox) asked if the PC meeting could be held the following week before the Board Meeting as is typical in these cases.

VandenBerg adamantly indicated "no, it's just not possible with everyone's schedules."

Marijuana Shop:

Robinson addressed this comment to Schilling and Peebles.

There is a thing going on about the subway restaurant being turned into a marijuana shop. **From what he has heard, the ordinance can be changed, amended and you don't have to have a public hearing to do it. Gurr said they would be challenged if...**

Old Business:

Gurr complimented Residents Sak and G. Mayes on being patient. "If the PC is not going to review/discuss the ordinance language, suggested we draw near to ending the meeting."

Robinson asked VandenBerg if she were still having issues with getting things posted on the website. Not sure what is going on with the website – is being revamped.

Robinson asked the public if there were any issues with the Website.
Comments were shared about easily finding minutes.

Gurr: My suggestion about raising the issue and putting it off to the Board, for me, that is a desperate move to basically get action. For the years I've been involved, the Township has always sought for these appointed boards to do a majority of the work necessary to satisfy the MCL so the Board could choose to act. The Board has always reserved for themselves the right to make changes at that meeting. We have a Planning Commission that has the responsibility of dotting the I's and crossing the t's. It's become very useful for those bodies to deliberate and meet and do a lot of the birddogging necessary to move public policy. I hope we continue to be useful.

Robinson made a motion to adjourn; Jim Gurr seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Prepared by:

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