

Starke County Plan Commission
Regular Meeting
February 8, 2021

- ❖ **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Vice President, Crase
- ❖ **Pledge of Allegiance** was lead by Vice President Crase
- ❖ **Roll Call:** Bill Crase, vice president & surveyor; Bryan Cavender, Commissioner; Howard Bailey, councilman; Phil Woolery, extension educator; Todd Lawrence (absent), Denise Cultice, and Todd Jackson, citizen members; Robby Blodgett, code enforcement officer (absent); Martin Bedrock, commission counsel; and Pamla J. Starkey, clerk/secretary. There were three (3) visitors present.
- ❖ **Reorganization of the board**
 - Vice President Crase explained to the board that with Roger Chaffins resignation there is an opening we will need to fill for a new president.
 - With that being said Commissioner Cavender made a motion to nominate vice president Crase for president, seconded by Member Cultice. With no other nominations motion was carried (6-0)
 - President Crase stated that now that he is president we will need to nominate someone for vice president.
 - Commissioner Cavender nominated Member Jackson for vice president, seconded by Councilman Bailey. With no other nominations motion was carried (6-0)
- ❖ **Review job descriptions**
 - Attorney Bedrock stated that he didn't know if the board members knew that at a joint meeting of the council, commissioners and their attorney it was determined that the planning commission make the appointments for the building commissioner and the planning and zoning administrator.
 - President Crase stated that as Marty said that it has been cleared up by past ordinances that the planning commission is in charge of what we are going to retitle as the building commissioner and the way we had things titled before was improper. He also stated that the commissioners have made a recommendation to have job descriptions made so Pam and myself worked on the job descriptions, so moving forward with that you will see in your packet the description for the building commissioner which is what Terry was, and will essentially be in charge of all positions in the planning commission including the BZA. He went on to say we worked on the job descriptions and then asked if everyone had a chance to review them and would request a motion to accept the job descriptions as submitted.
 - Member Cultice asked if the motion is for just the building commissioner or all four.
 - President Crase said he would like the motion to be for all four.
 - Member Cultice asked, if the administrator is what Pam would be doing
 - President Crase said that is what she is currently doing now
 - Member Cultice asked if Mary Beaver would be the BZA secretary
 - President Crase said yes she would continue being the BZA secretary. He also stated that the jobs they are doing now will remain the same, we are just making it more structural and having a point of command and who is in charge and that in the past that wasn't identified and now we have the job descriptions with of a chain of authority for all positions.
 - Commissioner Cavender made a motion to accept all job descriptions as submitted, seconded by Member Cultice. Motion carried (5-1 with Councilman Bailey abstaining) as he didn't have enough time to review the descriptions.
 - President Crase stated that he will present the job descriptions to the Commissioners at their next meeting and once it is approved then we can post the building commissioner

position within first, someone that already works for the county, and if we do not get anyone from within we will advertise it in the paper and go through the normal hiring process.

- Councilman Bailey asked if the commissioners hire this person
- President Crase stated that the planning commission hires this person and if we have multiple applicants we will set up a time and date to interview them.
- Councilman Bailey asked if it would be the whole board, President Crase stated that it would be the whole board. That would be fair and we will create an agenda like we did when we hired Robby and would ask the same questions for all of the applicants and simply do the process by vote.

❖ **Approval of the minutes** of the January 11, 2021 meeting: Councilman Bailey explained that he made a mistake on his motion, he didn't realize he was making a motion to change Pam's job from clerk/secretary to administrator, he thought he was making a motion to nominate Pam to her current position of clerk/secretary. After his explanation, President Crase asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Vice President Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Member Cultice. Motion carried (6-0)

❖ **Building Commissioners Report**

- President Crase let the board know that he has changed the agenda a bit, he also stated that since we currently do not have a building commissioner we are still conducting business as usual and Kenny Pfof is doing the inspections and Pam and himself are going through the permits and moving forward.
 - Councilman Bailey stated that he does have a few questions and is glad that Kenny is helping us and asked how he is getting reimbursed.
 - Commissioner Cavender stated that he talked to the Mayor and he said as long as it doesn't interfere with his work, he is allowing him to help us for 5 weeks
 - President Crase stated that Kenny is using the county vehicle to do these inspections
 - Secretary Starkey stated that the county and city cover for each other for vacations and so forth

❖ **Code Enforcement Officer Report**

- Secretary Starkey passed out her report since Robby wasn't there
 - President Crase asked Secretary Starkey to have Robby type the report if she isn't coming to the meeting so that is more legible
 - Secretary Starkey let the board know that Robby usually does type them but she rushed her to get them done, but will definitely let her know
 - Extension Educator Woolery asked if something needs done with #7, Lane Street Center as she has it marked for the county to clean up.
 - Secretary Starkey explained that the last she knew it was being sold on land contract
 - Attorney Bedrock stated that he isn't sure if it is still on land contract or sold
 - President Crase assigned Attorney Bedrock with the task of finding out who the owner is and then we will check with Robby to see what we need to do and asked Attorney Bedrock to give a report on it next meeting and table it until then.
 - With nothing else President Crase asked for a motion
 - Member Cultice made a motion to accept the code enforcement officers report, seconded by Commissioner Cavender. Motion carried (6-0)

❖ **Old Business & Violations**

- Tina Rudd/Andrew Knapp-6835 E SR 10 Knox
 - Secretary Starkey explained what has been done so far and that we have actually been dealing with this since 2012

- President Crase stated to send Robby to the property to see if a demolition was done and take pictures to see what else needs to be done and set a public hearing for next month or the following month and be clear on a completion date and time and if not done within that time frame we will take action and impose fines
- Sunderland/Nokes-5820 E Manor Dr Knox
 - Attorney Bedrock stated that we have a judgement against Mr. Nokes for a certain amount and he will check to see what kind of payments he can make
 - President Crase asked if we could attach the judgement to his taxes
 - Attorney Bedrock stated that he isn't sure but some judgements attach to the property, he will check to see. He also stated that Ms. Sunderland is out of the situation the judgement is only against Mr. Nokes.
 - President Crase would like a report on this at the next meeting.
- Subdivision Ordinance
 - President Crase stated that he did research and found out that any piece of property that is subdivided falls under subdivision rules according to the state statute.
 - Attorney Bedrock asked why we can't let someone divide a parcel into four parcels and why would we restrict them from selling more than one lot at a time
 - Secretary Starkey stated that you would have to go through the subdivision process
 - President Crase said that it is very confusing but if you look under the IC codes it all goes back to subdivisions, he also stated that there is a difference between a planned development and a subdivision
 - President Crase would like to send the subdivision ordinance to the tech committee to review. He also stated that Pam and himself will look at the calendar and pick a date that everyone can agree on and let them know when.
- ❖ **New Business & Violations**
 - President Crase stated that as we move forward, when we make motions he would like the board to set completion dates and a time of 12:00 p.m. so that the building commissioner or Robby can check to see if they completed what was to be done, also when making a motion make sure you state the fines and enforce them unless there is a special reason why they couldn't make the completion date.
 - Attorney Bedrock stated that the ordinance enforcer has to give out an ordinance violation and give them a certain amount of time to make the necessary repairs or cleanup or whatever it is that needs to be done, if that is not done then we set a public hearing and the board issues an order and the order has to be complied or the fine will be imposed.
 - Vice President Jackson stated that the enforcer of the unsafe building ordinance would be the building commissioner.
- ❖ **Report from Starke County Development Foundation**
 - Member Cultice stated that she has not attended a meeting yet but Lisa sent her an email inviting her to the March meeting, although hearsay is that they may be cutting some positions and ours might be one that may be eliminated and that she will let us know in March
- ❖ **Public Comment**
 - No Public comment
- ❖ **Other Business from the Board**
 - President Crase stated that we are having trouble funding our unsafe building fund, he checked with other counties and they add a charge onto the cost of all permits and put that added fee into the unsafe building fund. He stated that he would like to go to the commissioners and council and ask to also keep a small percentage of the permit fees and add that to the unsafe

building fund as well. He went on to say that the bigger counties get funding for the unsafe building funds every year and some of the ones that don't get a percentage of the permit fees.

- President Crase asked if the board members had any other ideas on how to help fund the unsafe building fund
- Attorney Bedrocks stated that the city was taking down some unsafe buildings that they received a grant for.
- President Crase stated that they were using the Blight Elimination Grant and that he called KIRPC and tried to apply for that grant and he said for the county the only thing that it will work for is commercial or industrial property and we really don't have any of that, so we do not qualify.
- President Crase said that he will get together with Mayor Estok, to find out how and if the county can sell these properties to try to recoup our money, the City of Knox and the Town of Hamlet are doing this now.
- President Crase stated that he will go to the Town of Hamlet and the City of Knox and have Attorney Bedrock go with him to see what we can do.
- Councilman Leinbach asked if we have a total of what was spent on cleaning these up and a total of what has come back in.
- President Crase let him know that in the beginning the council gave a certain amount of money and we have been working off of that since and when we clean up the properties we would put a lien on the property but most of the owners let the property go for tax sale so then we do not collect our money back.
- President Crase said that he would contact some of our state representatives and see if there is anything else we can do.

❖ **Board will look over the end of the year reports**

❖ **Next Scheduled meeting** will be Monday, March 8, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

❖ **Adjournment**-With no further business to come before the board, Member Cultice made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Commissioner Cavender. Motion carried (6-0)

This meeting was recorded and will be on file in the Starke County Plan Commission Office. The next scheduled meeting will be held on **Monday March 8, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.**

Unless stated otherwise all Plan Commission meetings will be held on the second Monday 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
Clerk/Secretary