

TOWN OF HOWARD PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Planning board members present: Andrew Burdin, James Fodge, Josh Furgeson, Barry Kidder, Robin Phenes, Shane Slayton, William Thew

Excused: Brad Laverty

Absent: Sean Turner

Guests: Richard Stewart

William Thew called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Shane Slayton made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 19, 2023 meeting, with a slight correction to the logging law notes. Barry Kidder seconded the motion. Carried: Burdin, aye; Fodge, aye; Furgeson, aye; Kidder, aye; Phenes, aye; Slayton, aye, Thew, aye.

New Business: Barry Kidder provided an update on the tree order for the visual barrier to the salt storage facility. The Town Board wants someone to install the trees when they arrive, so Barry will be obtaining bids for tree planting.

Andrew Burdin informed the Planning Board that the Town Board members decided not to pursue compensation for damage to a Town road caused by a logging operation. There was additional discussion about the need for an updated logging law if the Town Board is not going to pursue compensation for damages. The logging notification law would notify the Highway Superintendent that the logging job is happening, but is that enough? Lee Pyer favored having an insurance clause in the logging notification law. A suggestion was made to leave the insurance clause out of the law to make it less restrictive, and if the Town Board decides to include the insurance clause, then an additional clause for the Amish would be included.

Jim Fodge made a motion to send the draft Town of Howard Logging Law (2023) to the Town Board for review, seconded by William Thew. Carried: Fodge, aye; Furgeson, aye; Kidder, aye; Thew, aye; Burdin, nay; Phenes, nay; Slayton, nay.

Public Comment: Richard Stewart mentioned an urgent matter that should be considered by the Planning Board involving the potential termination of the PILOT agreements for the wind turbines. Assessors are required to use a certain model to assess the value of the wind turbines, but 9 towns have gone to court to block the use of the model. According to SCIDA, wind companies can terminate the PILOT at any time, which would cause a substantial loss in revenue to the Town of Howard. The Planning Board should determine if the Special Use Permit references the PILOT, and if so, determine if there is a way to revoke the Special Use Permit if the PILOT is terminated by the wind company.

Barry Kidder mentioned Howard Community Days will be on September 11, 2023.

The next Planning board meeting will be held on June 21, 2023.

8:05 pm: Shane Slayton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Barry Kidder. Carried: Burdin, aye; Fodge, aye; Furgeson, aye; Kidder, aye; Phenes, aye; Slayton, aye; Thew, aye.