

**CITY OF IRON RIVER
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, October 10, 2024
9 AM
Minutes**

Vice Chairman Michael Hoinowski called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Pete Djupe, Benjamin Garcia, Michael Poindexter and Hoinowski.

Absent – 3: Dellies, Kolbas and Byczek

Also present: City Manager Rachel Andreski, Chief Harrington and City Clerk Tyana Elenbaas.

Public attendance: Tyler Cotton (The Fire Station).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cotton introduced himself as the General Manager of The Fire Station located on 4th Street. He stated that The Fire Station has an item on the agenda, and he greatly appreciates the Commission looking over their proposal. He believes that the proposed parking lot, will help with traffic flow.

APPROVE AGENDA

Garcia moved with support from Djupe to approve the agenda as presented. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent – 3: Dellies, Kolbas and Byczek.

APPROVE MINUTES

Garcia motioned with support from Poindexter to accept the August 8, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent – 3: Dellies, Kolbas and Byczek.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Zoning Ordinance Rewrite

- Andreski started by welcoming Michael Poindexter to the Planning Commission.
- She explained that our Capital Improvement Plan looks bare, but we have grant requests that are still to be evaluated and reviewed.
- CWSRF – We were contacted by EGLE that we were selected to receive assistance with sewage. The program will be a 30-year loan with a 2% interest rate along with 25% principal forgiveness. There was a special meeting held with the City Council to approve moving forward. This would repair approximately 74 manholes that are collapsing throughout the City. This project could begin as soon as Spring 2026
- Apple Blossom Trail Boardwalk Project – Shared Street and Spaces Grant was applied for by Andreski after the flooding to the Apple Blossom Train. This Grant is worth \$200,000 which can be used for biking and walking paths. October 18, 2024, we are to be notified on whether we will be awarded this grant. With the Shared Street and Spaces Grant and the money awarded from Section 19, it would cover the cost of replacing the boardwalk. Section 19 will issue a \$250,000 reimbursement for the project. Andreski has applied for two other grants to help with the costs sustained by the flooding. She is still waiting to hear about the outcome of those grants.

- Capital Improvements – The DDA has opened bidding for the resurfacing of City owned parking lots and some adjacent alleys. The bids will open October 16, 2024. She recommends that the Planning Commission investigate the downtown streets that need to be repaired. Since the DDA is going to cover the costs of the parking lots and the alleys, she suggested having the Planning Commission come up with a list of streets in the downtown corridor to add to the repair list, while these parking lots are getting repaired. It will save on mobilization costs if we could coordinate it for the same time.
- Northern Getaway – Andreski stated that she has been in contact with the tentative new owner of the Northern Getaway. The owner would like to turn it into a family style restaurant and Andreski has been working with her on zoning. Andreski stated that it will be nice to give our community another restaurant and one less vacant building in our City. The tentative owner will be demolishing the house that is located on property and will be putting in outdoor dining in that space.
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region – Andreski stated that we have a little more funding left after the WRI grant, which was for the water project up in the Forbes location. Since there are funds left, WUPPDR will assist us with a Public Participation Plan. This is required by the RRC, which is through the MEDC. The Public Participation Plan should be a laid-out plan to get the public more involved. WUPPDR will be assisting in writing a plan as they are RRC certified. They would like to have it finished by December.

Garcia moved with support from Hoinowski to approve the Managers Report. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent – 3: Dellies, Kolbas and Byczek.

OLD BUSINESS

Cy2025 CIP

- Andreski stated that we were not successful in obtaining the SRF Grant for Water Projects. 98% of our water system has been updated so she feels it would be better to focus on the sewage. She has other grants that are still pending.
- PASER Study – The PASER study was completed, and a copy of the results were forwarded to MDOT. The data shows that our badly rated roads were decreasing with the improvements that we have made since our last PASER study in 2016. It was also noted that some of the roads that were just completed within the last two years are already in moderate to bad condition. This PASER study can be used to aid in a plan to improve our streets.

NEW BUSINESS

TFS – Conditional Use Permit

Mr. Cotton (The Fire Station) stated that they would like a conditional use permit for the lot next to their store. They demolished the building that was on the lot with the intention of paving it for more parking. They would have it gravel for this winter and pave it spring. MDOT owns the parking lot that is in front of The Fire Station and the City maintains it. Cotton assured the Commission that this would help with traffic flow and would allow for better parking. They teamed up with WICKWIRE to make sure the storm drainage was compliant as well. Gravel is not included in the ordinance for a parking lot, which is why the Planning Commission needs to decide. Andreski recommended moving forward with the approval but have a deadline on when they would need to pave the lot. Djupe motioned with support from Poindexter to approve The Fire Station's Conditional Use permit to allow a gravel surface, with a deadline of October 2025 to pave the lot fully. Roll call: Ayes – 4: Garcia, Poindexter, Djupe and Hoinowski. Nays – 0. Absent – 3: Motion carried. Dellies, Kolbas and Byczek.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

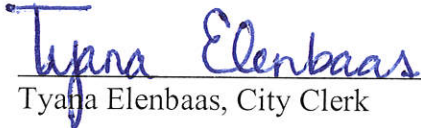
Garcia stated we need to work on a mobile sign at the bottom of Stambaugh hill. He would like it put there by Spring of next year. He suggested having business pay for a spot to advertise. Andreski stated that we would have to make sure the sign follows all ordinances and laws regarding signage. Garcia would like the sign to be put on the next agenda so we can further discuss it. All agreed that signage is needed and encouraged Andreski to keep working on the Wayfinding Plans.

Djupe suggested that Mineral Hills, the Forbes location and Ice Lake Road need stripping down the road. Andreski noted that the City has spent approximately \$16,000 for stripping for the roads.

ADJOURNMENT

Djupe moved with support from Garcia to adjourn at 9:40 a.m. All were in favor; Motion carried.

Absent – 3: Dellies, Kolbas and Byczek



Tyana Elenbaas, City Clerk