

**CITY OF IRON RIVER  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
Thursday, May 8, 2025  
9 AM  
Minutes**

Vice Chairman John Kolbas called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m., in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Michael Poindexter, Michael Hoinowski, Benjamin Garcia, and Kolbas.

Absent: Jim Dellies, Pete Djupe and Bob Byczek.

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

Public in attendance: Holly Harvey, Paige Gannon and Timm Ballinger.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

Andreski asked that we move New Business to before the Manager's report, so Ms. Harvey doesn't have to sit through the entire meeting.

Garcia moved, Hoinowski seconded, to approve the agenda and move New Business to before the Manager's Report. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent: 3 - Dellies, Djupe and Byczek.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Conditional Use Permit – Home Occupation, H. Harvey Body Art Studio**

Holly Harvey applied for a Conditional Use Permit to run a Body Art Studio out of her residence. She had been in communication with her neighbors, and all were made aware of her potential business, and none were opposed. Her studio will be by appointment only, so parking will not be an issue.

Garcia moved with support from Hoinowski to approve the Conditional Use Permit- Home Occupation, H. Harvey Body Art Studio contingent on her obtaining her State of Michigan licensing.

Roll Call: Ayes: 4 – Poindexter, Hoinowski, Garcia and Kolbas. Nays: 0. Absent: 3 - Dellies, Djupe and Byczek.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

Hoinowski moved with support from Garcia to approve March 18, 2025, Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent: 3 - Dellies, Djupe and Byczek.

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Planning Commission Event – Andreski informed the Commission that there is training available in Iron Mountain on May 15, 2025, she encouraged those that could attend to do so.

- DPW – The street sweeper is being utilized, cleaning up the downtown area of all the wintertime debris. The DPW will continue to clean up from the winter and open the remaining parks.
- MDNR Conversion Issue – Andreski shared that she authored a column on the Conversion Issue for *The Reporter*, expressing hope that it will help inform and educate the public. She also met with Sara Basso, the attorney who previously worked pro bono on seeking a resolution during David Thayer's tenure as City Manager. Andreski remains optimistic that Aspirus may be open to engaging with the City to explore potential solutions. Additionally, she mentioned the possibility of reaching out to key stakeholders in Wausau to further pursue a resolution to the Conversion issue.
- Reporter Building – Andreski noted that the renovations to the building are moving along. IT has been running cables; the offices have been framed out. Currently, there is no move in date, but the project is scheduled to be completed at the beginning of October.
- Apple Blossom Trail – The City Council has adopted the Resolution and work will begin soon. The Shared Street and Spaces Grant in the amount of \$200,000 has been received and can now be applied to the project. The MDOT grant is a reimbursement grant so once the work is completed, we can utilize those funds.
- DDA Parking Lot Project – Andreski stated that in August or possibly September the berms will be removed from the City Parking lots. Martha Rypstra, of Taproot Community Farm, will try to salvage flowers and plants to relocate and replant.
- Beautification Committee – They will be holding their annual Community Clean Up day on Friday, May 9, 2025, at 9 a.m. Volunteers will be given garbage bags and a vest and are allowed to clean up any area they chose within the City. They have also purchased hardware for the flags and senior banners for Downtown. The DPW will be getting them up before graduation and Memorial Day.
- The City's annual Large Item Clean-Up will take place on Saturday, May 10, 2025, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Trailers will not be permitted this year. This change comes after observations that some residents were stockpiling items in trailers throughout the year in anticipation of the event. This practice has significantly increased the cost and burden of the program. Andreski discussed the future of the Large Item Clean-Up. While this service has been popular, it is expensive to operate—costing between \$4,000 and \$5,000 per event—and is funded by all taxpayers, even though not all residents use it. In previous years, the City held this event multiple times annually, but due to rising costs and abuse, the possibility of phasing out the program is under consideration.
- Congressional Spending Grant - Andreski stated that with the assistance of WICKWIRE, two grants have been applied for. One would cover a new DPW dump truck with a plow and a front-end loader. The other grant would be for the last section of old water main and repainting the water tanks. Both grants are a 25% match. October we will be notified. She noted that the City will need a new plow truck, as one in our current fleet has been totaled by the insurance company.
- McDonald's – WICKWIRE has been working on a quote to repave North Washington Avenue between East Genesee and Adams Street in front of McDonald's. This is a universally used area and is eroding where the storm sewer is. WICKWIRE will obtain a quote.
- Zoning Administrator – The City Council has tentatively agreed to look for a Zoning Administrator. The new Zoning Ordinance will go into effect on May 30, 2025.
- Equipment Sharing – Mike Stafford Bates Township Supervisor and Scott Tarsi Iron River Township Supervisor contacted Andreski regarding cost sharing on Meter Reading equipment.

Garcia motioned with the support of Kolbas to accept the Manager's Report. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent: 3 - Dellies, Djupe and Byczek.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **CY2026 CIP**

Andreski stated that WICKWIRE has conducted the PASER Study, and it details the condition of each street within City limits. Most of the roads are in bad condition, and some of the roads that were just redone were already showing signs of wear and tear. The salt has been deteriorating the roads faster than we can repair them..

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Kolbas asked about the City-Wide Deer Hunt, stating that he has seen a lot of deer in the City. Andreski stated that the hunt was brought to the City Council and at that time, they decided that the risk did not outweigh the reward.

Garcia added that at the time, Interim City Attorney Hannah L. Goodman suggested that the liability was a big factor that Council needed to consider. He continued that it could be placed in front of Council again, if Kolbas would like.

Poindexter asked when the City Council had decided this, and since the decisions were made so recently, why send it back for their review? Kolbas stated that he has participated in Iron Mountains Deer Hunt, and the reward has outweighed the risk for them. He suggested we continue to research a City-Wide Deer Hunt.


Garcia stated that the City needs to start to enforce the Rental Ordinances. He noted that "Slum Lords" are purchasing up houses from auction and not fixing them up accordingly. He also stated that we should investigate hiring a building inspector to make sure rentals are up to code and compliant with City Ordinances.

Kolbas inquired about an ordinance directly dealing with Air BNBs. He suggested an increased fee on Air BNBs that are not locally owned and operated. He believes this will help keep money within the City.

Garcia added that we should start putting something together for the Air BNB and for rentals. He added that we should limit how many Air BNBs operate within the City.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Garcia moved with support from Hoinowski to adjourn at 10:15 a.m. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: 3 - Dellies, Djupe and Byczek.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tyana Elenbaas, City Clerk