

Canosia Township

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Town Board: Chair Daniel J. Golen, Supervisor Kurt Brooks, Supervisor Kevin Comnick
Clerk Susan Krasaway, Treasurer Cheryl Borndal

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES: P&Z ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

August 27, 2018

ATTENDING: Chair Dan Golen, Supervisor Kurt Brooks, Supervisor Kevin Comnick, Clerk Susan Krasaway and four residents. Chair Golen called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. and stated the purpose: to discuss potential changes to the township P&Z ordinance and related processes and township rights/responsibilities.

AGENDA: motion by Comnick, seconded by Brooks, to approve the agenda with one addition; review Golen's suggested ordinance changes along with the other recommendations.

URBAN/RURAL DISCUSSION: As part of the general discussion portion of the meeting, the supervisors again debated whether Canosia is an urban or rural township as defined by the state of Minnesota. To be clear, this definition will not make a difference in the procedures for adopting or updating a zoning ordinance, but would impact how other "general welfare" ordinances are adopted by the town board and PLAWCS.

Motion by Comnick, seconded by Golen, authorizing the clerk to contact township attorney Michael Orman asking whether Canosia is urban or rural and asking him to provide the basis for that determination. *Discussion*: the supervisors all agree it appears we meet the requirements for being urban, as noted in our comprehensive plan and MN statute 368.01; however, Golen and Brooks believe it's unclear whether the township ever actually adopted those urban powers. This has been a topic of debate by past town boards as well, and it's unclear whether any of them ever reached a definitive decision. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

Later in the meeting the board also asked the clerk to reach out to John Powers, the consultant we used for drafting the comprehensive plan.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: Before discussing the recommended changes to the ordinance, Supervisor Comnick asked whether the township should consider handing our zoning over to St. Louis County. He feels the county has the full-time, trained professionals and resources that would better serve our residents. He also noted that zoning legal fees are costing the townships thousands of dollars each year, and even when we win a court case, our enforcement options are minimal.

Supervisor Brooks said administering our own zoning has been a point of pride for the township over the past 40+ years, especially when there was an increased need for local control, most notably around the lakes. Now, however, we are no longer any more restrictive than the county in the vast majority of situations. Therefore, we spend a lot of time and resources trying to match our ordinance to theirs and stay up to date on their changes and requirements. Brooks also pointed out that it has become

increasingly difficult finding people willing to serve on the Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment.

Brooks did note possible downside: we would lose some control over the commercial districts and the ability to set aside areas for certain uses, although we rarely do this now. Resident Jim Gilmore said the residents' main concerns would likely be the perceived loss of control and the possibility they might have to travel to Virginia for public hearings.

NEXT STEPS: Motion by Connick, seconded by Brooks, to table all potential ordinance changes for the time being as we pursue discussions with SLC about the logistics of turning over township zoning to them. *Discussion:* the next step is to get a county representative to our upcoming meeting or schedule a special meeting to accommodate them. Connick will set this up. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

The board all agreed that informing the residents and addressing their concerns will be a key factor moving forward. After hearing from the county in September, Brooks will draft an informative newsletter article that will go out to all residents. The article will contain the date for the formal public hearing.

The supervisors reviewed a map showing that Canosia is among the minority of townships still administering their own p&z. The supervisors will reach out to neighboring townships to discuss their experiences with the county: it appears Grand Lake is happy so far with their decision to hand their zoning over; Solway has another system in which their township P&Z commission makes recommendations to the county. Midway still administers their own zoning; they are likely hesitant to change it due to Proctor annexation concerns. If we turn our zoning administration over to the county, it is not necessarily permanent; if we were unhappy with the change, the supervisors believe we could get it back after two years.

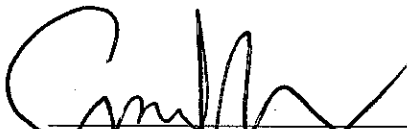
Turning our zoning over to the county would not impact our role on the Joint Airport Zoning Board.

ADJOURNMENT


Motion by Brooks, seconded by Connick, to adjourn the meeting at 2:23 p.m. Motion carried unanimously, 3 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:



Susan Krasaway, Clerk
September 5, 2018



Daniel J. Golen, Chair
September 5, 2018