

Palmyra Township
Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2026

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman John Turpening at the Palmyra Township Hall, 6490 Palmyra Rd.

John Turpening opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance

Members present: John Turpening, Dean Schnieder, Rich Beauleaux
Vivian Pell, Ryan LaRose, Dan Dougherty

Members absent: Mark Crane

Audience Attendance: 10

Agenda: Motion made by Pell and supported by Schnieder to amend the agenda as presented.
Motion Carried

June 2, 2026 PC Regular Meeting Minutes: Motion made by Schnieder and supported by Beauleaux to approve the June 2, 2026 PC Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. **Motion Carried**

Communications:

Rouget Road Solar Project: Chairman John Turpening reported that Rouget Road, LLC has filed to suspend discovery in full. Rouget Road, LLC requested suspension of all dates and agreed to waive the 12-month Commission decision deadline while it evaluates measures to address the impacts of the May 7, 2026 Court of Appeals decision in *In Re Implementing Provisions of Public Act 233 of 2023*. Applicant will make a filing once that determination has been made.

Written Comments: None

Public Comment:

- **Julie Koehn, WLEN Owner/General Manager:** Julie stated that she heard a conversation during the July 7, 2026, Planning Commission meeting between John Bear and other individuals in the audience regarding the liability of the proposed gun/training range. She asked if anyone had recorded that conversation. Clerk Whited stated that she had not recorded that conversation, and PC Chair John Turpening stated that the Public Comment period was closed.

Minutes: Motion made by Schnieder and supported by Pell to approve the June 2, 2026 Meeting Minutes as written. **Motion Carried**

Unfinished Business:

Discussion & Deliberation for a Special Land Use Application Submitted by Steve Wasenko, for 1581 Academy Road, PA0-106-2555-00, for a Proposed Private Firearms Range & Training Facility: The Planning Commission members discussed the following question: Does the Township assume any liability related to the operation of the proposed gun/training range? Clerk Christine Whited stated that she contacted the Township insurance agency to find out if the Township would be liable for damages or injury due to stray bullets. She said the insurance agent told her that the Township is not liable, but the Township could be named in a suit, which would be covered under the Township's insurance.

Chairman John Turpening stated that he spoke to the Township attorney Dave LaCasse regarding the Township's liability, and the attorney stated that under governmental immunity, the Township is not liable for injury or damage related to the operation of the facility. However, Attorney Dave LaCasse advised John that the Planning Commission should, upon approving the Special Use, as a condition of the special use, request that the Township be listed as an additional insured on the gun range's liability insurance policy. John also stated that the attorney recommended that the Planning Commission should require a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate.

Findings of Fact & Conclusion:

1. The subject property is legally described and located within the Agriculture Zoning District.
2. The proposed Firearms Range and Training Facility is a Special Land Use authorized within the Agriculture Zoning District, subject to Planning Commission approval and compliance with the Township Zoning Ordinance.
3. Proper notice of the application and any required public hearing was provided in accordance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act and the Township Zoning Ordinance.
4. The application materials are complete and contain the information required by the Township Zoning Ordinance for Special Land Use and Site Plan Review.
5. The proposed development complies with the dimensional requirements of the zoning district, including minimum lot area, setbacks, building height, lot coverage, and other applicable development standards.
6. The site provides adequate access for passenger vehicles, emergency vehicles, and service vehicles.
7. Off-street parking is provided in the number and configuration required by the Township Zoning Ordinance.
8. The proposed use will be served by adequate utilities, stormwater management facilities, and other public services necessary to support the development.
9. The applicant has demonstrated that the range design incorporates appropriate safety measures, including backstops, side berms, range orientation, controlled firing lines, and operational safety procedures designed to prevent projectiles from leaving the property.
10. The applicant has represented that the facility will comply with all applicable federal, State of Michigan, county, and local regulations, including building, fire, environmental, and occupational safety requirements, and shall obtain all required permits before operation.

11. Noise impacts have been evaluated through range orientation, berm construction, hours of operation, buffering, and other mitigation measures. Subject to the conditions of approval, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed use will not create unreasonable adverse impacts upon surrounding properties.
12. Landscaping, screening, fencing, and security measures are sufficient to protect adjacent properties and promote compatibility with surrounding land uses.
13. The proposed use will not be hazardous or detrimental to persons or property provided the facility is constructed and operated in accordance with the approved plans and all conditions of approval.
14. Based upon the evidence submitted, the Planning Commission finds that the proposed use is compatible with existing and planned land uses in the vicinity and is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Township Zoning Ordinance and, where applicable, the Township Master Plan.
15. Testimony received during the public hearing has been considered. The Planning Commission finds that concerns regarding safety, noise, and compatibility have been adequately addressed through the submitted plans and the conditions imposed herein.
16. The Planning Commission finds that the proposed Special Land Use satisfies each of the applicable approval standards contained in Article VI of the Township Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission has concluded that the applicant has met the burden of demonstrating compliance with the applicable standards for Special Land Use approval contained in the Township Zoning Ordinance.

Approval of the proposed Firearms Range and Training Facility, subject to the conditions stated below, is consistent with the purposes of the Township Zoning Ordinance and the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

Pursuant to MCL 125.3502, these Findings of Fact and Conclusions constitute the factual basis supporting approval of the Special Land Use.

Motion made by Beaulaux and supported by Schnieder to approve with the following conditions the Special Land Use Application for a Gun Range Training Facility submitted by Steve Wasenko, 1581 Academy Road, PA0-106-2555-00. The conditions are as follows: The applicant(s) Steve Wasenko and John Bear must list Palmyra Township as an additional insured on the facility's liability insurance policy, and Palmyra Township must be insured \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate. The Planning Commission recommends that the Palmyra Township Board grant the Special Land Use Permit. **Roll call vote:** Pell – yes; LaRose – yes; Schneider – yes; Turpening – yes; Beaulaux – yes; Dougherty – yes; Crane – absent
Motion Carried

Adjournment

Motion made by Schneider and supported by Beaulaux to adjourn at 5:55 p.m. **Motion carried**
Next Regular Meeting: September 1, 2026

Minutes were drafted by Clerk Christine Whited


