

**Palmyra Township
Special Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2025**

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Supervisor Dave Pixley at the Palmyra Township Hall, 6490 Palmyra Rd.

Board Members present: Dave Pixley, Angie Koester, Mark Crane. Steve Papenhagen, and Chris Whited

Members absent: None

Audience Attendance: 45

Motion Crane, support Pixley to approve the agenda as amended, by moving Communications above Public Comment. **Motion carried**

Communications: Supervisor Dave Pixley reported that he met with the Drain Commission and was told that the State of Michigan is requiring Palmyra Township to discontinue the Manor Farms water system. Dave also reported that Madison Township is willing to discuss supplying the water to Manor Farms. Dave said that he will be meeting with the Drain Commission and Madison Township in March.

Public Comment:

- The following individuals submitted letters to the Board requesting that the Board vote “Yes” to limit large scale solar projects:
 - Constance Muk
 - David Smaw
 - Karen Marcum
 - Kathleen Knowlton
 - Zach Hammoud
 - Alan Gust
 - Amber Southward
- Steve Wilson, 10200 Rouget Rd., Blissfield, addressed the lawsuit that may decommission PA233; tax credits that are given to solar companies to incentivize the building of solar projects; and the continual degradation of solar panels as well as the amount of natural resources that goes into the making of the panels.
- Danny Kohlman, Palmyra Township resident stated that the voters of Palmyra Township voted against solar three times.
- Tom Creque, 9555 Sylvania Ave., stated that solar will bring jobs and economic growth into the Township.

- John Weiss, Dickenson Wright attorney representing ESA/RWE Solar, stated that the draft solar ordinance is not workable. He also said that he had sent a letter requesting a meeting with the Supervisor and the Board. He stated that ESA is offering a revised draft of the overlay map for the Board to consider.
- Robert Nesbit, 5290 Sharp Rd., stated that he does not support solar.
- Patrick Fountain, 2784 Ogden Hwy., stated that the Township does not need solar, and he asked the Board if they ever saw what a solar project looked like.
- Ashleigh Schneider, 4670 Robb Hwy., stated that she comes from five generations of family members living in Palmyra Township, and expressed that placing solar on farm land is not the right decision. She also urged the Board to listen to the residents.
- Mark Farris, 419 Second St, Monroe, stated that DTE is getting ready to bring online four small nuclear reactors in Monroe County. He said that solar is the way to go because they do not pose a risk to the health and welfare of people.
- Kara MacBeth, 6592 Rodesiler Rd, stated that the Board needs to consider the economic impact solar can have on Palmyra Township. She stated that solar could potentially negatively affect agricultural industries.
- Jeff Ehlert, Blissfield, stated that the main issue is property rights, and the Board needs to do what is right for the Township as a whole. He also pointed out that contamination can come from farming just as well as from solar, pointing out that fertilizer is one factor.
- Deb Comstock, 2525 Ogden Hwy., stated that there has been little economic development in Palmyra Township over the past several years, and the Township definitely needs the revenue that would be generated by a solar project.
- Adam Leckler, Lasalle, MI, stated that property rights was addressed only once during public comment. He stated that PA233 was implemented due to the lack of cooperation of municipalities. He urged the Board to take advantage of the economic growth that could happen if a solar project was placed in Palmyra.
- Justin Brown, 5778 Carleton Rd., stated the farm land is zoned as Agriculture and not Commercial. He said that solar is good, but not good in the community.
- John Tuckerman, 5778 Riga Hwy., stated that the topic of solar is very emotional, but if the Township doesn't grow, then it will die.
- Eileen Creque, 9700 Sylvania Ave., stated that she is a supporter of solar and believes in the diversity of energy. She wants to see the Township benefit from the a solar project. She also stated that the landowners who are present in the meeting oppose the CREO and want the Board to amend it.
- Blake Brosamer, 5950 Rau Hwy., stated that he does not desire solar in Palmyra Township, and respects those who want solar, but does not believe it belongs in the Township.
- Morgan Powell, 4423 Rau Hwy., encouraged the Board to adopt the CREO, and stated that a workable ordinance does not does not stop a developer from coming into the Township. She asked the Board why ESA wants the Board to adopt a workable ordinance, and why ESA is so afraid of a CREO. She stated that the residents demand the CREO for protection.

- Peter Sinclair, a videographer who specializes in clean alternative energy sources, stated that studies have proven that solar has no impact on farm ground or real estate. In fact, he said, studies have shown that plants, animals, and insects flourish among and under the panels.
- Conrad MacBeth, 6592 Rodesiler Rd., a member of Deerfield Township Planning Commission, stated that he was surprised that Foster Swift attorney Mike Homier was not present at the Board meeting. He also encouraged the Board to vote “Yes” for the solar ordinance.
- Ryan Powell, 4423 Rau Hwy., stated that the new federal administration has frozen 21 billion dollars in renewable energy funding, which will affect the progress of solar projects. Ryan encouraged the Board to vote “yes” to adopt the CREO.
- Adam Forche, 5422 E. Gorman Rd., stated that he has invested \$30,000 to \$40,000 in the remodeling of his home, and asks that the Board vote “yes” for the CREO with the overlay map.
- LeeAnn Forche, 5422 E. Gorman Rd., requested that the Board vote “yes” on the solar ordinance. She stated that solar impacts the environment and the eco system of the community, and the Board should consider those impacts.
- Travis Cagle, 5840 Rau Hwy., stated that mega solar farms take away space and pushes out wildlife. He also pointed out that many of the people who spoke in favor of the solar project do not live in the community.
- Paul Wolfarth, Ottawa Lake, stated that Palmyra does not have a diversified economy and that not working on and building an acceptable ordinance would cause the Township to lose funding. He also stated that there is a lot of misinformation, and there should be thought about the over regulating of land.
- Ben Hoagland, 6315 Robb Hwy., stated that it is a travesty to turn agricultural land in to a solar field. Ben encouraged the Board to vote “yes” on the ordinance with the overlay.
- Ken MacBeth, 11725 Thompson Hwy., stated that he believes that solar is toxic to the ground, and claimed that solar is an industrial project. He stated that solar is not clean energy.
- Sarah Novac, 4639 Station Rd., thanked the Board, but asked the Board to look for growth in a different direction, and to do the job requested by the public. She urged the Board to vote “yes.”
- Craig Dunham, 6151 Deerfield Rd., asked the Board to consider all that was stated during the meeting, and do the job asked by the public, and represent everyone in the room. Craig stated that if the Board did not vote as wanted by those who do not want solar, our positions would be in jeopardy.
- Jeff Creque, 9555 Sylvania Ave., stated that he admired the Board for their undertaking, and also pointed out that the Township is better off working with the solar company than with the State of Michigan.

Business:

- **Amendment of Article V – Nonconformities of the Zoning Ordinance :** Motion Crane, support Papenhagen to adopt an ordinance to the amend Article V – Nonconformities, replacing in its entirety the current Article V of the Zoning Ordinance, #11-2020. **Roll call vote:** Crane – yes; Papenhagen – yes; Whited – yes; Pixley – yes; Koester – yes **Motion carried**
- **Amendment of Article VI – Special Land Uses of the Zoning Ordinance:** Motion Papenhagen, support Crane to adopt an ordinance to amend Article VI – Special land Uses, replacing in its entirety the current Article VI of the Zoning Ordinance, #11-2020. **Roll call vote:** Crane – yes; Whited – yes; Papenhagen – yes; Koester – yes; Pixley – yes **Motion carried**
- **Amendment of Article VII – Site Plan Review of the Zoning Ordinance:** Motion Papenhagen, support Koester to adopt an ordinance to amend Article VII – Site Plan Review, replacing in its entirety the current Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance, #11-2020. **Roll call vote:** Papenhagen – yes; Whited – yes; Pixley – yes; Crane – yes; Koester – yes **Motion carried**
- **Amendment of Article VIII – General Provisions, Section 8.13 Solar Energy Systems, of the Zoning Ordinance:** Motion Crane, support Papenhagen to adopt an ordinance to amend Article VIII – General Provisions, Section 8.13 Solar Energy Systems by adding a new subsection E to Section 8.13 and subsections E through K are changed to F, G, H, I, J, K, and L of the Zoning Ordinance, #11-2020. **Roll call vote:** Whited – no; Papenhagen – yes; Koester – yes; Crane – yes; Pixley – no **Motion carried**
Motion Pixley to amend the overlay map with PA0 property numbers presented. Motion failed due to lack of support.
- **Amendments of the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Wind Energy & Utility Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems:** Motion Whited, support Koester to postpone the Wind Energy and Utility Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. **Motion carried**

Adjournment

Motion Papenhagen, support Crane to adjourn at 9:06 p.m. **Motion carried**

Next Regular Meeting: March 11, 2025