

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 20, 2004 MEETING
TUESDAY AT 3:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Howard Balzer, Joyce Benedetto, Glen Hymer, and Hulda Moffitt.

Members Absent: None (see New Business, item A).

Others Present: Tracy Hatmaker, Township Administrator
Connie Swisher, Township Zoning Inspector

Call to Order: In the absence of the chairman and the vice chairman, there being a quorum present to transact business, clerk Hulda Moffitt called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Chairman Balzer, delayed by a business trip, arrived after the call to order.

Meeting Minutes: Moved by Joyce Benedetto, seconded by Glen Hymer, and unanimously passed to approve the Minutes of the December 16, 2003 Meeting as submitted.

Old Business: Medium Density Suburban Conservation District

Mr. Hatmaker distributed a *Proposed Text for the Medium Density Suburban Conservation District* and led the Commission through a page-by-page interactive discussion of the document as authored by him. Commission members, assisted by Ms. Swisher, recommended several clear-cut changes and earmarked other items for additional research and follow-up debate.

Sections of the proposed text are as follows:

- Purpose of the Medium Density Suburban Conservation District
- How Overlay Established
- General Planning Requirements
- Review Process
- Minimum Development Standards
- Incentives for Exceeding Minimum Development and Open Space Requirements
- Extension of Time/Modification of Final Development Plan

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New Business: See items A – D.

A. Resignation of Zoning Commission Member

On January 19, 2004, Chairman Balzer telephoned members of the Zoning Commission and informed them that vice chairman Neil Distelhorst had resigned effective immediately.

B. Turnover of Township Personnel

Addressing Mr. Hatmaker, both Ms. Moffitt and Ms. Benedetto expressed their concern about the persistent turnover of Township personnel, which was recently publicized in the *Westside Messenger* (January 12, 2004) and on the Internet website www.prairietwp.com.

Ms. Moffitt said that multiple terminations in a short time frame within a small staff did not inspire confidence that the Board of Trustees was managing the Township's human resources competently and professionally, that is, in accordance with impartial, consistent, and well-written and executed personnel policies and practices.

She stated that internal strife should not be allowed to obstruct delivery of first-class local government to residents, or to exacerbate the considerable external pressures that threaten Prairie Township's future.

Ms. Benedetto asked Mr. Hatmaker to review his responsibilities as Township administrator and his relationship to the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Hatmaker said that he reports to the Board of Trustees and that his overarching job function is to act as a liaison between department heads and the Trustees. He is responsible for day-to-day Township administration, which includes coordination and facilitation of department functions, human resources, and other policy issues, such as those germane to implementation of the Prairie Township Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hatmaker indicated that the Township is in the process of immediately effecting best practices in human resources management in order to realize the benefits of a stable and competent paid staff, as well as to attract capable community volunteers.

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C. Election of Officers

Chairman Balzer called for the election of officers to the Zoning Commission for the year 2004 and announced the following nominations:

Chairman	Howard Balzer
Vice Chairman	Glen Hymer
Clerk	Hulda Moffitt

He then asked if there were any additional nominations from the Commission. There being none, Chairman Balzer asked for a motion to elect the slate of nominees in toto. Motion made by Glen Hymer, seconded by Joyce Benedetto, and unanimously passed.

D. Appointment of Zoning Commission Member

Ms. Swisher said that Loni Cunningham, a former member of the Commission, has agreed to fulfill Mr. Distelhorst's term of office. Ms. Cunningham awaits official appointment by the Board of Trustees.

Announcement(s): Chairman Balzer reminded attendees that the February meeting has been moved ahead one week.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Zoning Commission will be Tuesday, February 17, 2004, 3:00 p.m., at the Township Hall, 23 Maple Drive.

Adjournment: Howard Balzer adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Hulda Moffitt, Clerk

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