

Powell Township Planning Commission
P.O. Box 319, 101 Bensinger Street, Big Bay, Michigan 49808
June 18, 2025
Minutes

1. Call to Order at 7:05 P.M. by the Planning Chairperson.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call of Officers: Bruce Hutchinson (Chairperson) present; Michael Kantola (Vice Chairperson) present; Kim Tull (Member) present; Nicholas Korstad (Member) present; Nancy Gaines (Member) present; Denise Hudson (Member/ Trustee Liaison) present.
4. Approval of Agenda: **Motion** to approve Agenda with the following addition: Add Item #3 Review zoning procedures Article I Purpose of Zoning (K. Tull, N. Gaines). All in favor, motion carried.
5. Approval of Meeting Minutes: **Motion** to approve May 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes (K. Tull, D. Hudson). All in favor, motion carried.
6. Review of Zoning Permits
 - a. From March 8, 2025, to June 18, 2025, there were 22 new permit applications approved.
 - b. On properties, principal use building construction must occur before other construction. There are related issues surrounding this with some current and previously approved permits, and partial and completed construction.
 - c. There is a necessary review underway regarding identification of principal use buildings on properties.
 - d. There is a necessary review underway of accessory dwelling units in relation to homestead and non-homestead taxation on properties.
7. Correspondence
 - a. From The Powell Township Supervisor: There is a meeting with the Marquette County Land Bank Monday, July 14, 2025, 10:00 A.M., at Powell Township Hall, to discuss the resources and requirements of the township regarding lots and land use and overall property stewardship.
 - b. From Powell Township Assessor: A Letter to Powell Township Residents regarding tax collection scam or fraud attempts is posted on the township bulletin boards and township website. Please spread the word.
 - c. From the Marquette County Clerk: The Public Accuracy Tests for the August 5, 2025, Special Election will be held for Powell Township on Monday, July 14, 2025, at Powell Township Hall, 101 Bensinger Street, in Big Bay, Michigan. Notice is posted on the town site, bulletin boards, and town hall doors.

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- d. From Michigan Secretary of State (SOS): If enough residents are interested, the township will request a local SOS Mobile Office Event. If interested, please call or e-mail Powell Township (906-345-9345 ext. 10, clerk@powelltownship.org, or dep-clerk@powelltownship.org). Please mention a few days and times of the week that might work best for you, in case we can find an optimal time for everyone.
- e. From Marquette County Register of Deeds Office: Property Fraud Alert services are available. The flyers with full information are in the town hall and posted on the Marquette County website.
- f. From Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR): You can review and comment on 2027 local forest plans before they are finalized. Proposed plans are online at the DNR Forestry Public Input page, or by request by calling the DNR. There are mail, e-mail, online, and in-person options for public input. You can call or use the DNR Forestry Public Input page for info and inputs or attend the in-person OPEN HOUSE (3 to 6 P.M., June 25, 2025, at the Baraga Customer Service Center). The DNR will take all inputs and then decide on final treatment plans for forests in this region at a formal review on July 17, 2025.
- g. From U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the GREAT LAKES TUNNEL PROPOSAL: A tunnel proposal was submitted, and the USACE is taking any input from you and others about it. An Environmental Impact Statement is available for your review and any comments. All details and submission deadlines are at www.line5tunneleis.com. The due dates and basics are also posted on the township bulletin boards and website.
- h. From Bay Cliff Health Camp and Powell Township staff: The annual 4th of July Parade starts early, at 10 A.M., to kick off the day. The parade route is posted in newsletters, online, and on boards, and it is the usual route from previous years.
- i. From the Marquette 4-H Council MSU Extension: 2025 Plat Books are available for \$40. Details and official links are posted in the township office and on the township website.
- j. From the Big Bay Stewardship Council (BBSC) and the Big Bay Fitness group - Charise Baker will be leading an exercise class in town hall, open to everyone, every Wednesday from 5:30 P.M. to 6:20 P.M. If further information is needed, the contact number is 906-360-8529, OR you can check or message the Facebook group page for "Big Bay Fitness".
- k. From the Parks and Recreation Committee: New local trail usage statistics are available and will be posted to the town website this week.
- l. From the Powell Township and Marquette County Clerks:

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- i. A local Public Accuracy Test Notice is posted at town hall. The Test will take place on Monday, July 14, 2025, 10:00 A.M., at Powell Township Hall, in preparation for the August 5, 2025, Special Election. A Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the computer programs used to record and count the votes cast at an election meet the requirements of law.
- ii. A Notice of Registration for the Tuesday, August 5, 2025, Special Election, To the Qualified Electors of Precinct One of Powell Township, County of Marquette, State of Michigan, is posted at town hall. It includes in-person registration hours and registration deadlines.
- iii. A Notice of Election for the Tuesday, August 5, 2025, Special Election, To the Qualified Electors of Precinct One of Powell Township, County of Marquette, State of Michigan, is posted at town hall. This is for the Operating Millage Renewal Proposition. The polls will be open on August 5th from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.
- m. From the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority (MCSWA): The solid waste tipping fees at the MCSWA location will increase to \$87.00 per ton effective July 1, 2025.

Public Comment

- G. Champagne: Will attend meetings whenever possible and appreciates everyone involved in planning. Don't get discouraged in the planning process; it may be a slow process at first, but you are building a solid foundation of knowledge to make sounds decisions going forward that will benefit the land and residents and town overall.
- L. Ellis:
 - o If the town front-loads responsible and proactive planning, and not just reactive based on current issues, it could protect the unique character of the town and help to manage its development scale. There are towns with strong planning infrastructures that protect the land and residents from exploitation or from change that seems okay but has long-term (and irreversible) damaging effects to town resilience. We could learn and borrow planning practices from them to protect the town and residents as things change over the years.
 - o I will give Howard Robare the Planning Commission members' emails for future use, to open the lines of communication.
 - o I also met with Howard who discussed recommendations to include:
 - The Wellhead Protection Area Zone needs to move since the wellhead has moved.

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- There is now a paved and plowed CR 510 area heading toward Triple A Road with utilities that could now be considered residential. There are some questions about mining company permits, to include power, and what will be removed when the mining permit(s) end(s).

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

1. Discussion of short-term rentals and guidelines.
 - a. Commission members will review planning and zoning documentation in preparation for this discussion's continuation at the next meeting.
 - b. Commission members will gather specific statistics related to rental properties and seasonal consumer bases/demand in preparation for continuing discussions.
2. Discussion of Master Plan.
 - a. The Commission will contact Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission (CUPPAD) and request their assistance with specific planning concepts
 - b. The Commission will also discuss the potential of CUPPAD's help with the Master Plan.
3. Discussion of Article I Purpose of Zoning.
 - a. Commission members will review planning and zoning documentation in preparation for zoning articles discussions at the next meeting.
 - b. Commission members will contact Brad Neumann and/or colleagues from the Michigan State University – Extension to request a guest speaker at a future meeting. The purpose will be to assist and explain specific planning concepts.

Public Comment: None.

Planning Commission Comment: None

Next Meeting: Planning Commission Meeting Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 7:00 P.M.

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Adjourn 9:22 P.M.

Minutes prepared by: M. Mramor, Deputy Clerk, Powell Township