POWELL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING – Wednesday, September 16, 2026

MINUTES (Draft, Subject to approval at the October Meeting)

1. Call to Order.
   The meeting was called to order by Chair B. Hutchinson at 7:05 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Attendance (Roll Call).
   Present: Bruce Hutchinson, Denise Hudson, Mike Kantola, Bob Suess
   Absent: None
4. Agenda (Approval).
   Motion to approve.
   - Moved by D. Hudson, Seconded by B. Hutchinson. Passed 4-0.
5. Hearing the Public.
   A. Public Hearings. None.
   B. Presentations/Invited Speakers. None.
   C. Correspondence/Communications. None.
   D. Comments. None.
6. Business.
   A. Minutes (Approval).
      Motion to approve.
      - Moved by B. Hutchinson, Seconded by M. Kantola. Passed 4-0.
   B. Old Business. None.
   C. Consideration of Matters RE: Presentations/Invited Speakers. None.
   D. Other Communication. None.
   E. Reports.
      1) *Short-Term Rentals (STR) Committee.*
         Chair B. Hutchinson reported on his research findings. The Commission discussed a far-ranging number of topics, including prohibition in certain zoning districts, limiting the number of STR in other districts, and possible exclusion of or exceptions to restrictions in some districts; establishment of a permitting application/approval process; definition of terms; grandfathering existing STR; a wide variety of health/safety and utilities issues, parking issues, and occupancy capacity/limitation issues; and possible exceptions for rustic rentals. Chair B. Hutchinson agreed to conduct research for specific ordinance language utilized by other Michigan townships and cities that the Commission could utilize to frame future discussions.
      2) *Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) Committee.*
         Chair B. Suess distributed a copy of research notes on the topic and reported that Levi Ellis had agreed to serve as a member of the committee. Committee member M. Kantola expressed support for ordinance language that would permit any ADU in compliance with existing ordinances and building codes. The committee plans to meet prior to the October Commission meeting.

3) *Data Centers (DC) Committee.*
Chair D. Hudson announced two educational/informational opportunities: (a) Seminar entitled "Development Moratorium: Getting It Right" hosted by the Michigan Township Participating Plan and scheduled for November 10 in Marquette (Contact Jennifer Venema at parplan@tmhcc.com for information and registration); and (b) the "Data Centers" webpage on the Michigan Township Association (MTA) website (MTA-member login required). Committee member B. Suess expressed support for township adoption of a one-year moratorium on new data center permitting and construction and for township support of bipartisan legislation imposing a one-year statewide moratorium on new data center approval.

F. New Business.

1) *Monthly Permit Report.*
D. Hudson expressed disappointment and frustration with Township Zoning Administrator Howard Robare for his failure to a) attend monthly Planning Commission meetings despite explicit invitations and (b) provide the Planning Commission with monthly printouts of permits issued.
Motion: The Planning Commission authorizes the Secretary to transmit a written request for monthly printouts of permits issued to Township Zoning Administrator Howard Robare.
   - Moved by B. Suess, Seconded by B. Hutchinson. Passed 4-0.
2) *Data Center Meeting.*
D. Hudson and B. Suess will attend the November 10 meeting if their schedules permit; B. Hutchinson and M. Kantola are encouraged to attend if available and interested.
3) *Data Centers.*
Motion: The Planning Commission recommends that the Township Board of Trustees impose a one-year moratorium on the permitting and construction of new data centers.
   - Moved by B. Suess, Seconded by B. Hutchinson. Passed 4-0.

Motion: The Planning Commission recommends that the Township Board of Trustees contact local state legislators (State Senator Ed McBroom and State Representative Karl Bohnak) to encourage their support of bipartisan legislation (House Bills 5594-5596 and Senate Bills 1018-1020) that would place a temporary statewide halt on ne data center approvals; and that the Board of Trustees invite Sen. McBroom and Rep. Bohnak to attend the October 21, 2026 meeting of the Planning Commission.
   - Moved by B. Suess, Seconded by B. Hutchinson. Passed 4-0.

G. Public Comment

1) Stephen Girard shared that the Michigan Township Association website was an invaluable source of information and encouraged its utilization.

H. Commission Comment

1) D. Hudson shared information regarding two upcoming meetings dealing with issues related to human trafficking. Contact D. Hudson for details.

I. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

- Moved by B. Hutchinson, Seconded by M. Kantola. Passed 4-0.