

Monday, April 11, 2023, 6:00 P.M.
VILLAGE OF ONEKAMA
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
5283 Main Street, Onekama, MI (231) 889-3171

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission members present: Christopher Forth, Deborah Storms, Susan Halloran, Joe Suchocki, and Wendy Kamaloski.

ACCEPT/AMEND THE AGENDA

There being no changes to the agenda, a motion was offered by Kamaloski, seconded by Storms to approve the April 11, 2023 agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

There being no changes to the March 27, 2023 meeting minutes, a motion was offered by Storms, seconded by Kamaloski to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 2023 Master Plan - Request for Proposals (RFP) – The RFP has been distributed to several consultants and has been posted to the Michigan Association of Planning RFP webpage. Consultant proposals are due by 2:00 p.m. on April 24, 2023. Forth indicated there are very few master plan RFP's currently posted to the MAP webpage for Master Plans, which might suggest consultants may not be that busy resulting in more favorable proposals.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Fence Ordinance (for discussion only) – Suchocki suggested postponing discussion until the Commission could review ordinances from other locations and have Mike Szokola available

2. for comments because he noted the potential problems with the Village's existing ordinance.

Halloran suggested moving forward with changes to waive fees and remove the barbed wire and electrical fencing requirements since those were problems identified by Mike Szokola. Forth indicated he has reviewed a number of ordinances being utilized by other communities and would forward them to the Commission members for review and consideration in writing a new fence ordinance. Forth suggested the Commission members review these other ordinances before deciding to either 1) propose amendments to the existing ordinance or 2) rewrite the ordinance. Additional discussion regarding changes to the fence ordinance will be included as an agenda item on the May 9, 2023 agenda.

3. Signage Ordinance (discussion only) – Storms suggested waiting for the new Master Plan to be completed before reviewing the existing ordinance for a rewrite.

Forth said it was important to consider how signage can impact the appearance of the Village along Main Street. A vision should be established which may or may not include freestanding signs (ground level and/or pylon mounted) when considering signage ordinances.

Halloran offered to research Sign ordinances utilized by other communities, and Forth will find further reference materials for the Commission to study.

4. Blight Ordinance (discussion only) – Suchocki said the Village has a sound ordinance that needs enforcement. The Planning Commission is scheduled to do a walk-through of the Village on April 22nd and that would be an opportunity to identify locations that are in violation of the blight ordinance. Issues could be reported to Village Council for enforcement action rather than requiring individual property owners to submit complaints.

The discussion indicated that individual residents are unaware of their ability to submit blight complaints (many do not have internet service to access forms online) and there is a fear of retaliation even though the complaints can be submitted anonymously.

Nola Taye (resident) stated a twice-per-year pickup of large trash items could help eliminate or reduce blight issues. The discussion identified a pickup of large trash scheduled on June 24th by the Township. Halloran said she will check to see if the Township event will include Village participation.

Forth noted the Village could inform residents that blight elimination is a priority and request all residents comply with ordinance requirements. A notice could be included in the sanitary sewer utility bill, as an example.

There was additional discussion on area agencies or services that could provide aid to elderly residents or those without the financial capacity to solve blight issues on their properties.

A resident spoke of a blight issue that has existed for years. A previous complaint had been filed, but no action was taken to resolve the issue. The discussion identified that the issue involves a property owned by a current Council member. A new complaint form was given to Halloran for submission to the Village for appropriate action.

The Commission determined a need for enforcement and will forward identified blight problems to the Village Council for action once the April 22nd walk-through is completed.

PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES)

There were no further comments from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Forth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Forth, AICP
Planning Commission Chairman