

Chassell Township Planning Commission

MINUTES

06 March 2025 / 7:00 PM / Chassell Fire Hall

ATTENDEES

Brian Waters, Doug Hamar, Rich Smith, Cindy Cowell, Steve Spahn, also attending guest Brett Palosaari

AGENDA

1. Call to Order 7:06 pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of the Agenda B. Waters motions, D. Hamar seconds, all aye. Agenda approved

4. Reading and Approval of January 2, 2025 Minutes D. Hamar moved to approve January 2, 2025, R. Smith seconds, all aye. January 2, 2025 minutes approved.

5. Public Comments Will move to New Business item A. New business item A. will be discussed first to give the floor to Brett Palosaari on update to the Mountain Bike Trail/Skills Track/Visit Keweenaw Destination Development Grant.

6. Road Commission Report and 5-year Road Plan Discussion No updates

7. Capital Improvement Committee Report No updates

8. Recreation Committee Report No updates

9. Recreation Facility Issues Move to 11 b.

10. Old Business

a. Chassell Mercantile Update No new project updates. Discussion was held regarding the availability of adequate parking for the proposed mixed use building planned for the mercantile property.

b. Snowmobile Trail Updates The south end of the trail is clear of all equipment. Discussions are still in process regarding partnership with Baraga County for the trail project.

c. Centennial Park Engineering Study No updates.

d. Old Holy Trinity Church The demolition and clearing of the building is ready to proceed. The contractor is waiting for the weather to clear in order to start.

e. Sturgeon River Launch Improvements Two grants pursued for the improvements were not awarded. Proposed improvements are the addition of a pit toilet and picnic area and also accessibility additions and improvements.

f. Kick Sled Track on Pike Bay No updates.

g. Keweenaw Water Trail No updates.

h. Baraga/Chassell Trail Project Collaboration Tracks between Arnheim and Chassell have been removed. Bids on track removal for the second section of old railroad tracks are due on March 11.

i. Veterans' Banners No updates

j. Historical Trail Buckthorn Project The MTU instructor and classes that have been working on the removal project would like to get permission to plant native plants along the trail where the Buckhorn grew. A discussion of the value of the planting activity was held.

k. Hamar Creek Restoration Project No updates on restoration project. D. Hamar asked if any discussions have been held with the Corp of Engineers regarding Hamar Creek. There have not been any. B. Waters asked if any PC members possessed or are aware of any old photos of the mouth of the Hamar Creek as it originally existed.

l. Cemetery Mapping D. Hamar received the mapping that the MTU students completed at the cemetery. A discussion was held regarding the goal of creating an online digital directory using the mapping information. B. Waters pointed out that the directory will be more than a directory, but be of historical value to the township also.

m. Cemetery Landscaping A discussion was held regarding potential landscaping enhancements at the cemetery. It was discussed how the old church building removal will enhance the entrance of the cemetery.

n. Rail-Trail Discussed in 10.h.

o. Disc Golf Course S. Spahn had a discussion with Mark Ware. There is potential for a school class to conduct a spring clean up of the disc course.

p. X-Country Ski Trail Marinette Street Access No update. B. Waters requested to go on record thanking S. Spahn, K. Meyers, and J. Tervo for their time, effort and commitment to grooming the x country ski trails this winter. Job well done.

q. Old Rink Warming Shack Upgrade B. Waters discussed the Centennial Park ice rink warming shack. Waters shared that Aire Care has an infrared heating system that operates on a motion sensor that will allow skaters to warm up in the rink warming shack with heat on an as needed basis. Waters has requested a quote from Aire Care for the unit.

r. Park Bathroom Remodeling B Waters reported that Chris Holmes from UP Engineering reports that all of the equipment has been ordered and is ready to go. The project is projected to be completed by 6/1/2025.

s. X Country Ski Trail Signage A discussion regarding needed signs was held. B. Waters added that the fitness trail needs to be included in the sign project. S. Spahn shared that the Chassell School has a new piece of equipment that is

capable of making the type of signs that the trails require. Steve will follow up with the school about the possibility of utilizing the sign project as a classroom activity at the school.

t. Marina Development All required documents have been signed by the Township and all parties, and the land swap is complete.

11. New Business

a. Mountain Bike Trail/Skills Track/Visit Keweenaw Destination Grant Brett Palosaari gave an update on the proposed bike pump track on property behind the historical museum. Tracks design range from very easy track appropriate for all ages to a beginner track with rollers and corners with a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile loop, to an intermediate track with rollers and a drop. Brett also outlined a 2.1 mile x country style track intermingling with existing ski trail. Brett shared estimated costs of \$17k for skills track and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile loop and \$77k for two mile x country loop. The PC discussed the proposed project. A Visit Keweenaw Destination Grant could be pursued to support some of the costs. B. Waters moved to support the first phase of the project with the caveat that securing the Visit Keweenaw Destination Development Grant funding would be required before moving forward. Phase one includes the skills track and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile loop. C. Cowell seconded. All aye. Motion approved. After the motion passed, the PC discussed different options for meeting the Township required cost share for the grant of 50%.

b. Ice Rink Supervision Schedule The only individuals who signed up to fill a shift to supervise the ice rink during public hours were three planning commission members and two guests who attended the January meeting to participate in the ice rink rule development discussion. Additional security cameras have been installed since the January meeting and the footage covers a larger area now.

c. PC Minutes and Level of Detail A discussion was held regarding different styles of township minutes. It is desired to offer detail for community members to follow, but limit excessive details. The PC determined that the level of detail in the PC minutes will extend beyond only offering bullet points and also offer a brief summary of details.

d. Great Lakes Scuba Diving and Lake Preservation Group Clean Up Project B. Waters shared that the township has been approached by this group regarding a waterway clean up. This group dove to recover a sunken boat at the Federal Dock in Portage Entry. Don Fassbender is a member of the group and reported that the divers discovered a lot of sunken trash under the water at the Federal Dock. The group inquired if the Township would be interested in partnering with the group to do an underwater cleanup during the summer of 2025. The diving group will volunteer their dive time and asked the township to provide person power, trucks and trailers to haul away any trash recovered. The group reports seeing batteries, appliances and tires underwater at the dock site. The PC felt that this was a positive partnership to approve.

NEXT MEETING

April 3, 2025 7 pm Chassell Township Fire Hall

Adjourn B. Waters made a motion to adjourn. R. Smith seconded. All aye. Motion approved. Adjournment at 8:12 pm.