

Chassell Township Planning Commission

MINUTES

02 April 2026/ 7:00 PM / Chassell Fire Hall

ATTENDEES

Brian Waters, Keith Meyers, Doug Hamar, Molly Ploe, Rich Smith, Cindy Cowell, Lynn Gierke Also see public sign in sheet for 4/2/26 meeting

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order** 7:06 pm

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Approval of the Agenda** B Waters moved to approve the agenda. D Hamar support. All aye. M/C

4. **Reading and Approval of Minutes** K Meyers moved to approve the March minutes as written. B Waters second. All aye. M/C

5. **Public Comments** A Zoom presentation was made by Joe Reini of Quincy Materials (QM) regarding stamp sand removal and processing in the Keweenaw. Reini introduced himself as being raised in the area and still caring about the area. Reini gave stats on the volume of mining waste left in the area. He described QM work where stamp sand can be processed to remove organics and metals leaving a cementitious material that can be used in concrete. Reini indicated that his presentation at the PC meeting was to gauge Chassell's appetite for a facility at the South Entry Federal Dock to process the stamp sand. Reini described the process as a water and gravity closed system using no chemicals with very minimal discharge of water. Reini described Chassell's role as a paperwork conduit and maybe some rezoning. **K Meyers** responded that the area is zoned rural, and rezoning requires a public comment session and present at the meeting tonight are members of the public, the Planning Commission and Township Board Members. **R. Smith** pointed out that a long section of the federal quay is residential. What section does QM propose to use? Smith asked about moving tons of material on the roadways and the less than quality condition of the township road ways. **Reini** responded that less than 1/3 of the quay would be used, leaving 2/3 for recreation and KBIC fishing boats. Reini also indicated the material would be moved on the water and not over the roads. **Public:** inquired about the nature of the material being moved in relation to blowing sand or dust. **Reini:** described a trommel process removing organic material and extracting copper-possible iron ore too. The balance material is a fine grind of rock. **Public:**asked about the process intended to remove the copper. **Reini:** talked about the weight of copper and the gravimetric process with added water in a closed loop. The copper drops to the bottom for removal. The remaining material is dried in a centrifuge and shipped out. **Public:** inquired about the noise level of the plant. **Reini:**

indicated that the noise level was low about 1000 hp-the system is driven mostly by water. **Public:** inquired about the other locations being considered for the facility. **Reini:** said many sites considered including elsewhere along the canal or the L'Anse Industrial area. **Public:** inquired if federal money is needed for the project. **Reini:** replied that federal money isn't needed but would definitely assist the project. Reini indicated that the state of MI has a cost of 2 billion to clean up the sands in Gay alone. Other alternatives are being looked at. **Public:** asked about the repair of roads after removal equipment is hauled into Gay. **Reini:** indicated that removal equipment would be brought in by barge. **Public:** asked if Reini has been in contact with the Corp of Engineers? **Reini:** indicated that he has. He added that he wanted to have conversations with the community before proceeding with the Corp of Engineers. Reini stated that he has great respect for the community. **Public:** indicated that they have property ¼ mile from the quay and they have both a professional and personal response to the proposed project. The member asked Reini if he was familiar with the final Buffalo Reef Task Force decision. **Reini:** Yes. **Public:** asked if Reini was familiar with the jetty envisioned with that decision; why not use that jetty? **Reini:** replied that he doesn't see that work being done in the near future. **Public:** asked about the Coal Dock area jetty due to a harbor. **Reini:** spoke about landfilling the stamp sand and the risk of movement and monitoring required. **Public:** stated that the BR Task Force has already determined that there is no beneficial reuse of the material. **Reini:** replied that his company has been working for 4-5 years behind the scenes with creating cementitious material. Former studies only explored roofing shingles and rebar. **Public:** asked if Reini has studied the economics of the project. **Reini:** indicated that extensive modeling has been done and the project is viable due to the use of material for cement. **Public:** Is this plant the first of its type beside a test plant? **Reini:** No, but it's different than what I've done for 30 years because of scale of operations. **Public:** Is there one in operation now? **Reini:** No, but it is being piloted now in other countries. **Public:** Are pilot plants being run to produce this material? **Reini:** three constituents are interested in this material. For years supplementary cementitious materials were comprised of glass and fly ash. The SCM made from this material is less impactful. **Public:** Have you looked at the Gay stamp sands for the processing plant? **Reini:** Yes. In Gay there is no 3 phase power and water and sewer are limited. We are looking at a number of potential sites. **Public:** Chassell doesn't have any of the infrastructure that is missing in Gay. Is the Chassell dock being considered due to available grants? **Reini:** Any time existing infrastructure can be used it's a good alternative. **Public:** Shipping the material is a good option. Make no mistake, this is a mining operation-material removal, even over water, is mining. **Public:** If the project will make 100 million, why not build on state land and start the project? **Reini:** If there isn't an appetite in Chassell for the project QM can build-it's a long process with permitting, etc and will leave sand on the shore during that process. **Public:** Can you get the material out of the proposed stamp sand landfill in Gay after the pier in Gay is built? **Reini:** Not in the proposed project. **Public:** The proposed project places mining in a residential area on one of the four area boat launches in a public park. **Public:** I want the PC to dispel the project. **Public:** Is KBIC involved in the project? **Reini:** we have had conversations with KBIC. **Public:** Put the project on KBIC land. **Public:** Well, KBIC has had their land taken advantage of. **R SMith:** What is the size of the proposed ships? The pier is not deep. Is the channel navigable? **Reini:** we are not talking 1000 foot ships. The canal is navigable. **R Smith:** The narrow channel can not accommodate multiple boats. **Public:** My family immigrated to Fisherman's lane from Finland. This whole project is very insulting. **Reini:** This meeting has brought up great concerns. We are here to listen to the community. If this

conversation dies tonight-we appreciate all of your time. **Public:** Is anyone here in favor of the project? 1 **Public:** I am not opposed or in favor. I need to learn more about the harm that the stamp sand is causing. Is there more harm in moving it? Asked about chemical reaction when material is injected into concrete. Gave example of Highland Park concrete that had to be ripped out due to chemical reaction. Commented that community is a quaint community that does not lend itself to an industrial process. **Reini:** Good points. Gave example of slag and blast furnaces. Shared that this process completely different. Said SCM is simply crushed rock. Reini discussed the stamp sand migration into Buffalo Reef. **Public:** have you done cost modeling with each of the proposed locations? **Reini:** There are pro/con at every site. Gay has challenges. A 2 billion dollar clean up is on the state of MI plate right now. This meeting is intended as a dialogue more than anything. **Public:** Is Chassell the best location due to money? **Reini:** the short answer is yes. Less money to get up and running. Long term it will cost more due to being rural. **Public:** If the federal grants were taken out of the model, would Chassell still be cost effective? **Reini:** no. **Public:** What other sites are being looked at? **Reini:** L'anse, additional canal sites; they contain a big lift to get ready. **Public:** (multiple comments in response) **Public:** The Chassell pier can be used for cheap, use the Lily Pond site. **Reini:** Chassell is centrally located, the Lily Pond is the furthest away from Gay and is a restricted area for moving in and out. **R Smith:** There is a useful asset further down the road, the power plant in L'Anse; I believe you can get 3 phase power there. **Reini:** I appreciate all of your time. I am gaining insights. **Public:** Who determined that Gay sands are doing harm? **Public:** multiple responses explaining the many known harms coming from the Gay sands. **Public:** the idea is not a horrible idea, it just does not belong in Chassell. **Public:** When was the last time that Chassell added 40 jobs? Project would double the jobs of the largest employer in Chassell. **Public:** 40 people traveling to and from work every day on the Portage Entry Road will cause damage and a disruption to the area residents. The project has merit and member hopes it works out well-just not in Chassell. **Public:** the pier area is the most densely populated area in the township outside of the town of Chassell-it's not a good fit. **Public:** Chassell can offer a letter of support for the project-just not located here. **Reini:** I deeply respect that. I believe in the value of the project. I will close the night respecting what I heard tonight which is this is not the time or the place, but the leeching out of sand materials does need to be addressed. **B Waters:** the QM link will be put on the Chassell Township website. **K Meyers:** This was a conversation. QM just approached the PC this week and PC invited QM to address the PC. Meyers discussed the zoning barriers to the project discussed. Meyers continued by saying his sense is that the conversation is finished. **Public:** You're not going to entertain the project? **Meyers:** Every zoning request requires the collection of public comment. **Public:** we found out about this proposed project at 2 pm today. **Meyers:** The presentation came up fast. PC invited the Township Board to attend and word got out quickly. **Public:** Do we have assurance from the PC that they will not pursue this project? A discussion followed between PC and public about land needs and property access. **K Meyers** asked the PC members to indicate if they were in favor or opposed to the project. All PC members in attendance verbally indicated that they are opposed to the project. **Public:** Pointed out that MI owns 80 acres in the area of the s. Entry dock. Could they sell the property? **Public:** Is proposed material shipping water or intermodal? **Reini:** Gave information on material movement possibilities. **Public:** Stated are sensitive to economic boon that project could bring to township. **R Smith** outlined potential impacts that locating the plant at quay could bring. **Public:** pointed out that the dock area is location of multiple eagle nests. **Public:** How address months of ice on lake? **Public:** inquired

about all stamp sand located in area and inquired about years to collect all stamp sand. **Reini:** Thanked attendees for time and assured that this meeting was only a conversation and to gauge if the township has an appetite for the project.

6. Road Commission Report and 5-year Road Plan Discussion no report

7. Zoning No report **8. Capital Improvement Committee Report** No report

9. Recreation Committee Report D Hamar thanked Supervisor Gierke for sharing the link to the budgeting webinar.

10. Recreation Facility Issues No report

11. Old Business

a. Chassell Mercantile and Old Holy Trinity Church Update No report

b. Snowmobile Trail Update No report

c. Centennial Park Engineering Study/Marina Development K Meyers reported that he met with Chris Holmes regarding the study and requested some edits to be completed before May.

d. Sturgeon River Launch Improvements No report

e. Keweenaw Water Trail No report

f. Baraga/Chassell Trail Project Collaboration No report

g. Hamar Creek Restoration Project No report

h. Cemetery Landscaping No report

i. Rail Trail/ Pike River Bridge No report

j. Mountain Bike Trail/Skills Track K Meyers reported that a grant application for the project was submitted to Visit Keweenaw. Awards will be announced in May 2026. The proposal included the beginners trail and skills track.

K. Misslitz Field Improvements No report

l. Max and Evan Eagle Scout and Steve Szyszkoski Recognition B Waters reported that he was unable to get recognition gift cards from Krist. L Gierke will follow up with Szyszkoski regarding a desired station gas card gift.

m. Tree Identification on the Fitness Trail Signs/MTU Sierra Williams No report

n. Dumping on the end of Hancock Street No report

o. Sale of Greenlight Property No report

11. New Business

a. Action Item Tracker/Action Item List-Cindy Cowell C Cowell explained an administrative use action item tracker for PC use after monthly meetings. Cowell will create monthly. B Waters moved to start creating monthly action item tracker. R. Smith second. All aye. M/C

b. Congressionally Directed Funding K Meyers shared that he worked with L Gierke and submitted a Congressionally Directed Funding request for the township to Senator Slotkins office on March 31. The CDS request was for 2 million dollars to add additional water and sewage capacity. Five letters of support were included. A CDS was submitted two years ago and not funded. The ask is more compelling at this time. There was no decision date included in the guidelines.

c. Donation signage/Size and Location Meyers reports that the \$5 donation suggestion sign for the boat launch is finished. A 24x20 sign will be erected at the launch and a smaller sign installed at the fish cleaning station. Meyers inquired about additional signs at recreational locations and a discussion followed.

d. Keweenaw Community Foundation Grant Ski Trail Signage K Meyers reported that he is working on a grant for signage due to the Keweenaw Community Foundation on April 10 2026. The proposal includes two updated trailhead maps and smaller signs out on the trails.

NEXT MEETING

May 7, 2026 7 pm Chassell Township Fire Hall

Motion to Adjourn B Waters moved to adjourn at 853 pm.