

St. James Township Planning Commission –2023 ANNUAL REPORT

This 2023 Annual Report contains Planning Commission workings for the fiscal 2023/2024 year along with budget and planning recommendations for the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

1. PLANNING COMMISSION 2023 ACTIONS TAKEN

- a. Developed and approved a **Beaver Island Master Plan** – working jointly with the Peaine Township Planning Commission – November 17, 2023.
- b. **2023 Zoning Permit Application Review – 17 Approved: 13 Tabled: 1 Denied: 3**
Harbor: 12 Marine: 2 CSDA: 2 PL&F: 1
- c. Had two members of Commission working as liaison planners with the Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP)
- d. Conducted 13 meetings including a Public Hearing for the Master Plan.
- e. One commissioner – Vic VanDeventer - was assigned to the Zoning Board of Review.
- f. Created a Joint Commission Zoning Ordinance Committee – October, 2023
- g. Passed a resolution to Amend the 2004 Beaver Island Zoning Ordinance
- h. Created a Permit Review work sheet for Commissioners to use in reviewing Zoning Applications
- i. Created a Finding of Fact document and process flow for documenting all Zoning Permit Application Decisions.
- j. The St. James Planning Commission moved from a seven-member board to a five-member board at the stipulation of the St. James Board of Trustees – effective November 17, 2023. Two commissioners exited the board – one through resignation the other through end of term.

2. 2023 ATTENDANCE AND MEETING STIPEND

All Planning Commission meetings – Regular 8, Special: 3

*Joint Planning Commission meetings - Master Plan: 1

*Public Hearing Master Plan: 1

* Master Plan meetings (2) held at same time and location – one stipend.

Note: PC meeting held February 7, 2023: 5 Present Stipend \$ 265 part of 2022/23 Budget.

Commissioners @ \$50/meeting

Recording Secretary @ \$65/meeting

<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Stipend \$</u>
Lori Taylor-Blitz	10	3	500
Mark Englesman	11	2	550
Beth Croswhite	9	4	450
Juli Runberg	12	1	600

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Cynthia Pryor – Recording Secretary

Vic VanDeventer	13	0	650
Paul Cole	9	4	450
Cynthia Pryor	12	0	780
			=====
			\$3,980.00

Meetings yet to be held: January, February, March: **\$795.00**

TOTAL MEETING EXPENSE FORECAST **\$4,775.00**

NOTE: The Planning Commission will begin submitting a Quarterly Report to the Township Clerk for stipend compensations.

3. ANNUAL BUDGET 2023/2024 March 31, 2023 to March 31, 2024

Seven-member Board = 365/meeting

Five-member Board = 265/meeting

Authorized \$15/hour for two representatives to Joint Committee up to \$1,500 2023/4 Fiscal
Zoning Ordinance Joint Meetings: \$405 to date (VanDeventer, Pryor) (Croswhite – Alt)

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Meetings	4,000.00	3,980.00
Transportation	1,000.00	195.55 BC Planning Forum
Professional Development	500.00	0
Misc	500.00	0
	=====	=====
	\$6,000.00	\$4,175.00
		\$ 795.00 Dec-Mar Meetings
2023/24 Budget Projection		\$4,970.00 (\$1,030)

Addition to Planning Commission 2023/4 General Fund Budget

St. James Township Board authorized \$15 hour for Zoning Ordinance Committee members through end of March – fiscal year 2023/24 (SJT Meeting: 11/13/23)

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Zoning Ordinance Project	\$1,500.00	\$ 405.00

4. PROPOSED 2024/5 BUDGET

720 Planning Commission General Fund:

Planning Commission Meetings: 12/year 5-member board	\$3,180	
Transportation	1,000	
Professional Development	500	
Misc	500	

	\$5,180.00	VAR: (820.00)

- Recommendation: Maintain \$6,000 Budget

Zoning Ordinance Amendment Special Project

Joint Planning Meetings: 3/year 5-member board	1,000
Joint Ordinance Committee - Assume 40 hours/member (2)	1,200
Contractor	8,500
	=====
	\$10,700.00
Need township funding for public input sessions	3,000.00

	\$13,700.00

TOTAL PLANNING COMMISSION BUDGET RECOMMENDATION 2024/2025:

Normal Business:	\$ 6,000.00
Zoning Ordinance Amendment	10,700.00
Public Input Sessions/Forum	3,000.00
	=====
	<u>\$19,700.00</u>

5. COMMISSIONER DOWNSIZING TO FIVE-MEMBER COMMISSION

Lori Taylor-Bliz	12/20/25	Juli Runberg	12/20/24	Resigned 12/5/23
Mark Englesman	12/20/25	Beth Croswhite	12/20/23	Term Expired
Cynthia Pryor	12/20/25	Vic VanDeventer	12/20/24	

Future Township Board of Trustee ordinances that affect the workings of the Planning Commission should be brought to the Planning Commission for their comment and approval before action taken.

6. OFFICER ELECTION: December 5, 2023

Chair: Lori Taylor-Blitz

Vice-Chair: Mark Englesman

Recording Secretary: Cynthia Pryor

7. RECOMMENDATIONS to the St. James Township Board – Planning and Development

- a. **Zoning Ordinance Amendment** – The St. James Planning Commission is committed to working with the Peaine Township Planning Commission in the amendment of the 2004 Beaver Island Zoning Ordinance to one codified Beaver Island Zoning Ordinance. If Peaine Township is not willing to participate in a joint ordinance amendment process, the St. James Planning Commission and St. James Township Board will together need to determine the feasibility of a go-it-alone project. An alternative approach would be for the St. James Planning Commission to identify the highest priority of zoning ordinance amendments and work on their own to update/develop new zoning ordinances following the Beaver Island Master Plan as guidance.
- b. **Zoning Permit Issues** – Need to have a full review of all zoning permits so that they are modernized, robust and modified for on-line access to our citizens for on-line input, zoning review and zoning determinations.
- c. **Zoning Ordinance/Planning and Development Focus**
 - Housing Plan
 - Inland Lake and Stream Buffer
 - Shoreline Protection Buffers
 - Outer Island language
 - New list of definitions, eliminating confusing and conflicting explanations
 - Revisit enforcement, clearly layout the steps, giving timing, penalties, and responsibilities
 - Aline zoning districts with the 2023 Beaver Island Master Plan
 - Look into allowing camping on property, smaller home sizes, designating new zoning districts for higher density and smaller homes

- d. **Township Ordinance Documentation** – Need to find and document all Township Ordinances and place them on-line (township website) and incorporate them as needed into the Zoning Ordinance.
- e. **Township Strategic Plans** - The Planning Commission would like to participate with the St. James Township Board of Trustees in the development and on-going review of a 5-year St. James Township Strategic Plan
- f. **Township Capital Improvement Plans** – The Planning Commission would like to participate with the St. James Township Board of Trustees in the development and on-going review of Township Capital Improvement Plans.
- g. **Zoning Administration** – The Planning Commissions would like to see an on-line system that will allow for review of all Zoning Applications and determinations within the Township. The Zoning Administrator will be added to the agenda as a permanent agenda item and will give monthly updates of zoning activities.
- h. **ETIPP Planning** Two of the St. James Planning Commission (Juli Runberg, Beth Croswhite) were appointed liaisons to the Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP), which is through the Department of Energy. Beaver Island was awarded a grant to work with them because of being a remote, and Island community who "seek to transform their energy systems and increase energy resilience". A side group, headed by Tara's Meadow, secured the Energizing Rural Communities Prize (ERCP) (along with other national organizations). This will lead to actual studies done of island businesses (like energy analyses) and hiring of engineers to create an actual plan for moving forward with energy changes on the island. The ERCP group will continue work after ETIPP concludes for 1-2 years. Juli and Beth are members of this group (the Beaver Island Smart Energy Team). The Township needs to continue to support this initiative.
- i. **Township Board Actions that Affect Planning Commission Workings**
Future Township Board of Trustee ordinances that affect the workings of the Planning Commission should be brought to the Planning Commission for their comment and approval before action taken – ie: Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission Downsizing.
- j. **Roles and Responsibilities Review**
The Planning Commission would like a work session with the Township Supervisor and any other Township Board members that wish to participate - in the review of roles and responsibilities and authorities between the Planning Commission and the Township Board. Agenda items could include: Infrastructure Planning, Capital Improvement Plans, Strategic Plans, and any other items that require review and clarification.