



PRESQUE ISLE TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission Minutes
May 4, 2026 - 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

6:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge was recited.

Roll Call

Present: Chair Lisa Larkin, Vice Chair Stacy Holmén, Secretary Cynthia Paavola, Board Liaison Jennifer Wiczorkowski, and members Michael Cermak, Richard Lefevre and Tom Ludwig. Township Supervisor and Zoning Administrator Steve Lang was also in attendance.
Absent: None.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Lefevre, supported by Paavola, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of 4/6/26 Minutes

A motion was made by Paavola, supported by Ludwig, to approve the 4/6/26 meeting minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Comments from the Audience (3-min. limit):

The Commission heard from two (2) audience members.

1. **Rick Kurkechian, 7335 McCreery Drive, Presque Isle, MI 49777**, addressed the Commission regarding potential updates to nonconforming structure regulations. He encouraged the Commission to adopt policies that support property improvements and avoid restrictions that may discourage property owners from updating their structures. He further suggested that while nonconforming structures should not be allowed to expand closer to the water, reasonable increases in size should be permitted.
2. **Jane Neis, 13728 Parallel Avenue, Alpena, MI 49707**, requested clarification of meeting rules and procedures and inquired about the process for becoming a member of a board or committee.



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Larkin provided an explanation of meeting procedures and referenced the public hearing rules governed by the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Lang stated that individuals interested in joining a board or committee may submit their résumé to him. He also noted that all non-elected board and committee members are appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Correspondence:

None.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Accessory Structures**
- b. Tree Ordinance**

Accessory Structures: Larkin reported that Denise Cline, Deputy Director and Chief Planner of the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG), is currently revising the accessory structure ordinance to incorporate the changes discussed at the April meeting. She also noted that the updated ordinance would be reviewed at next month's meeting.

The Commission next reviewed a chart submitted by Ludwig illustrating how percentage-based limits of 15%, 20%, 25%, and 30% would apply to accessory structures on lots measuring 80×300, 100×200, one acre, and five acres. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Ludwig for the submission and suggested changes. Ludwig agreed to present an updated chart at the next meeting.

Holmén expressed concerns about removing design standards, greenbelt requirements, and sidewall height limits from the ordinance, citing potential impacts on neighborhood character and property values. Larkin noted that these issues would be revisited at the next meeting.

Tree Ordinance: Discussion was held regarding a proposed tree ordinance and the Township's plan to seek a Tree City USA designation. It was noted that the initiative had been approved by the Board of Trustees following a recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Committee.



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Members questioned the benefits of the designation and expressed concerns that the ordinance would impose restrictions on private trees. Holmén and Tree Committee representative Jan Lefevre emphasized that the ordinance will focus primarily on education, celebration, and stewardship rather than enforcement. It was also explained that the creation of the ordinance and the Tree Committee are necessary to meet Tree City USA program criteria. Members were encouraged to visit the Arbor Day Foundation website for further information.

The Commissioners noted that the most recent draft of the ordinance had not been circulated and requested that it be distributed for review prior to the next meeting.

Lang added that Tree City USA participation includes an annual financial commitment of approximately \$2.00 per capita, and that the Township has budgeted \$4,500 to meet program requirements.

New Business:

- a. **Bubblers in Inland Lakes**
- b. **Outdoor Lighting (Dark Sky) Ordinance**

Bubblers in Inland Lakes: The Commission discussed the negative impacts of bubblers in inland lakes, including disturbances to the lake bottom and the development of thin ice. Consideration was also given as to whether the Township should regulate the operation of bubblers, with discussion of potentially limiting their use to marinas only. At the Commission's request, Lang agreed to contact the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) regarding its current restrictions on bubblers and to consult with NEMCOG.

Outdoor Lighting: The Commission discussed the 2009 Outdoor Lighting Ordinance addressing the direction, shielding, and nighttime operation of outdoor lighting within the Township. At the Commission's request, Lang agreed to obtain more recent examples of outdoor lighting ordinances from NEMCOG for review.



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Reports:

- a. **Zoning Administrator – S. Lang**
 - b. **Board Liaison – J. Wiczorkowski**
 - c. **ZBA Liaison – C. Paavola**
- a. A written report was submitted by Lang and reviewed by the Commission. A concern was raised regarding a lakefront property where vehicles and boats have been stored in the yard. Lang indicated he would investigate the matter.
 - b. A written report was submitted and summarized by Wiczorkowski, who noted that the Presque Isle Township Fire Department is celebrating its 10-year anniversary and will hold an open house with additional details to follow.
 - c. A written report was submitted by Paavola and reviewed by the Commission. It was also noted that the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Commission will hold a joint meeting to discuss accessory and nonconforming structure regulations once a date is confirmed.

Adjournment:

6:51 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, 6/1/26, at 6:00 p.m.