

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
KEWEENAW COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
July 26, 2024

The special meeting of the Keweenaw County Board of Commissioners held on July 26, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at the Keweenaw County Courthouse, Eagle River, MI, opened with the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioners present: Robert DeMarois, Randy Eckloff, Del Rajala, Jim Vivian and Don Piche.

The special meeting was posted on the door of the Courthouse and on the Website.

Motion by Rajala supported by DeMarois and unanimously carried to approve the Agenda.

Chairman, Don Piche started the meeting by apologizing for the misunderstanding where resident's concerns were coming from regarding the possible elimination of the County's Zoning, during Wednesday's meeting.

Time was allowed for Public Comment.

There was more discussion about possible solutions to the zoning issues and amending the Zoning Ordinance. Piche stated that these things take time, and we do not have a Zoning Administrator.

Eric Hermanson, Keweenaw County Treasurer discussed financials related to zoning. Hermanson said with operating expenses creeping up and revenues dropping, we can't afford to hire a full-time Zoning Administrator. He went on to say that the County needs a millage. He believes that 1 mil would be the target to keep the zoning going.

Time was allowed for Public Comment.

John Kern suggested that the County should charge license fees for short-term rentals. He believes we need a millage and license fees. Kern also stated that fees for short-term and long-term rentals and annual fees could fund the zoning department and would support safety for the people.

John Parsons suggested reaching out to other agencies for help, such as WUPPDR, MSU Extension, as the zoning position will not be easy to fill.

Gina Nicholas stated that she would help the County with some ideas to back up zoning and the sheriff's office.

Comments and concerns were also discussed by the public.

Motion by Rajala supported by DeMarois and unanimously carried to get with Charles Miller, County Attorney and Jaikob Djerf, Equalization Director to put together the verbiage for 1 mil specifically for zoning and zoning administration, to be put on the ballot for this year's election.

Motion by Eckloff supported by Rajala and unanimously carried to keep Sara Heikkila on one day a week to help train and compile zoning permits.

Motion by DeMarois supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to ask Rebecca Patterson to work four days a week instead of three, so that the office can be open every day.

Motion by DeMarois supported by Eckloff and unanimously carried to have Rajala and Piche work with Sara Heikkila on a future job description for Zoning Administrator. This will be a true job description with salary amount. Piche says we must be careful and cannot hire until after November's Election to see if the millage passes.

There being no further business motion by DeMarois supported by Rajala to adjourn at 10:27 a.m. Meeting adjourned sine die.

Donald Piche, Chairman

Roxanne Billing, Deputy Clerk