

# PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City  
MI 49686

[www.peninsulatownship.com](http://www.peninsulatownship.com)

**Township Board Special Meeting  
October 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m.  
Township Hall  
Minutes**

1. **Call to Order** by Chown at 2:00 p.m.

2. **Pledge**

3. **Roll Call**

Present: Achorn, Sanger, Sanders, Rudolph, Shanafelt, Chown

Absent: Wunsch

4. **Citizen Comments: none**

5. **Approve Agenda**

**Sanders moved to approve the agenda with a second by Sanger. Motion passed by consensus**

6. **Conflict of Interest: none**

7. **Consent Agenda: none**

8. **Business:**

1. Agricultural Advisory Committee Interviews

**Chown nominated Sanders as chair for the meeting with a second by Rudolph. Motion passed by consensus**

**Sanders:** thank you to everybody who applied. For reference, we are forming this committee for the benefit of the township as a whole to improve communication between the township and our agricultural community.

**Shanafelt:** when you come up and tell us about yourself, please convey any experience you have working on any kind of committee. These types of government committees are all about achieving consensus and working together as apposed to driving a particular agenda. We want to understand how you will approach your roll on the committee and how you understand the process of achieving consensus.

**Sanger:** questions have been circulated ahead of time and we have answers from each applicant.

**Sanders:** we have 10 minutes for each applicant to come to the podium. The town board will vote at the end of the interviews so we will know who is on the committee by the end of the meeting.

**Edmondson:** is there time at the end of the meeting if there are more questions from the board?

**Sanders:** I don't see why not. We want to make sure we cover everything.

**Chris Baldyga, 9707 Montague Road:** I've worked predominantly in the beverage industry my whole life. The first experience I had with being part of an industry out here was working in the cellars of Chateau Grand Traverse when I was 19 and seeing the start of how the wineries collaborated. I don't think I understood the amount of work. When you're a cellar worker, it's tough to see the full spectrum of what's gone into creating the wineries and brands and the industry as it was at the time. But after working out in the world, in a lot of corporate jobs in Grand

Rapids and back up here, a lot of construction jobs too, and having started 2 Lads, I see the amount of work that goes into creating and maintaining a coalition of businesses that work with the greater Michigan industry and the national wine industry. I work with the other wineries in the area to try to further the Michigan wine conversation, not only nationally but in the Midwest and in the state as well. I've sat on the marketing committee for the Wineries of Old Mission Peninsula [WOMP] since 2008 and then as an owner on the general committee we have there. I've been the president of WOMP for four and a half years now. I had honestly always dodged it in the past, saying as a small business owner with a lean team, "It's just too much work. I can sit on here, but I can't take any of these leadership roles." The amount of time it takes to create engagement with all the other constituents and individual members, to try to gain consensus at the team level and with the owners, to canvas them to come together as a team, has been very gratifying. The other thing I do is represent the Old Mission Wine Trail on the Michigan Wine Producers Association, which is our group in Lansing that watches for legislative actions and advocates for things for the grape wine industry. I've been our trail lead for six years now. It's been interesting seeing how it works, to actually be in Lansing and meet your senators and advocate for the industry and other grape growers across the state. Same thing, being on a committee and finding a way to work through the adversity and difference of opinions and still get consensus as a group.

**Rudolph:** we hear a lot about agritourism. Can you give me your idea of what that means?

**Baldyga:** agritourism is a wonderful way to create more value on a farm than just the product itself. We are already in a volatile area of Michigan farming. I would say you're either a fool or a hopeless optimist to be a Michigan farmer. In our area, agritourism can help you weather, by having different experiences on the farm, value-added products that you make, the ups and downs of bad weather conditions and market volatility, reduced market access, all those things. If you've got people coming to the farm, they're not just there to buy an apple. They are there to take a ride around the farm, meet the people, form a connection to a piece of land. When they see a bag of apples at the grocery store, that's their connection to it. But when they visit the farm itself, they have a much deeper understanding of the people, the amount of work that goes into it, the beauty, all the things we see every day and sometimes take for granted. They get to connect with that. That's where I think agritourism is really powerful. It creates a chance for people to connect with a farm, experience something fun to do other than just buy the product that came from the farm. That's what agritourism is: a chance for people who are not normally from a farm, and even if they are from the area, to visit a farm and experience it in a kind of tourism sense. Have dinner there, have lunch there, take a pumpkin patch ride on a tractor. Oh, and the winery itself, they get to visit a farm where we make wine and have grown the grapes and they get to taste it, and that is very much classic agritourism as well. I love it. It's the only way my farm works as is.

**Shanafelt:** you are a plaintiff in the WOMP lawsuit against the township?

**Baldyga:** I am.

**Shanafelt:** there's a fundamental conflict of interest in being part of an agricultural committee, creating guidelines for the township. How do you propose getting around that conflict?

**Baldyga:** that's the thing about generally speaking. I don't speak on behalf of WOMP today. I don't speak on behalf of 2 Lads, though I think I'm inexorably tied to 2 Lads. But I'm Chris Baldyga, 9707 Montague. And I have a farm there as well. I probably deal with more grape grower interests in the area than almost anybody. I think I'm a great representative, and I think I would bring a lot of the grape and vineyard interests to bear. The thing about the lawsuit, one of the hard parts about being mid-process with that, is there's no resolution yet. I can speak in general terms for what I want, personally, for the area. With Amendment 139 being terminated, the ordinance under which my winery was started and exists is gone. There aren't any ordinances right now that actually

affect my winery on the books. Amendment 201 doesn't affect me. But I can help the next people and wineries that come along. I personally don't think there are big conflicts of interest there.

**Shanafelt:** interesting answer.

**Baldyga:** I'm an interesting guy.

**Shanafelt:** it's been rather engaging hearing your perspective on things along the way.

**Sanders:** have you read the recently updated master plan?

**Baldyga:** no.

**Sanders:** have you read the last one?

**Baldyga:** the full master plan? I don't think I have, no.

**Sanders:** I'm asking because this committee is extremely important to us overall. Everything that comes out of it and is passed along to either the planning commission [PC] or the board, it all falls under the master plan umbrella to figure out how we make it work best for everybody.

**Baldyga:** I think I've read almost all of the winery ordinances front to back. I know them probably better than almost anybody. I'd be willing to say that on record. A lot of the agricultural ordinances as well that are in the previous master plan. But I have not read the full extent.

**Sanders:** that's fine. It wasn't part of your homework. I was just curious.

**Baldyga:** can I ask a question? One of the questions that was on that questionnaire was, "Do you approve of the legally required way to amend an agricultural ordinance?" Is there any other way?

**Cram:** there is one way to amend the zoning ordinance, and it's defined by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. It needs to go through the PC and the board. I think that question was trying to get at your thoughts about the process and if there were other ways you thought it might be done. But the township does follow the legal process.

**Baldyga:** I thought there was only one way. I thought if there's another way, I don't know of it.

**Jennifer Bramer, 13130 Center Road:** I have served on the master plan steering committee. That's probably my only public committee work. I do think, as a farmer on this committee, I have kind of a unique perspective. All the candidates do, but I was born and raised here, though not in the farm industry. I've worked in the vineyard industry on Old Mission and Leelanau County for 27 years. I've had a roadside stand farm market for 16 years. I'm a first-generation farmer, a woman farmer. I'm interested in promoting and investing in expanding my retail farm market operation. That's why I think I have a unique perspective. I think wholesale farming is not the future. We need to have agritourism and retail opportunities.

**Rudolph:** what's your concept of agritourism?

**Bramer:** agritourism is getting people to the farm. It helps everybody to see where their food comes from. We have people come to our farm all the time who want to know what we're growing and how we do it. They have lots of questions. I think in terms of township ordinances, we need broad ordinances. What I want to do on my farm isn't necessarily what someone else would want to do on their farm or would be best for them. I think value-added products are definitely something we need. It will help with waste as well as increased revenue for farms.

**Shanafelt:** I love the idea that you bring a unique perspective. You made the comment that something that was good for you might not be good for somebody else, and thus a broad ordinance might be the best way to serve that. I could see that being problematic in the sense of, how do you create a broad ordinance that works for everyone, not just farmers but also residents? So besides a broad ordinance, do you have other thoughts about how to approach a workable structure that would lead to successful agritourism that works for the community as a whole?

**Bramer:** are you assuming that residents don't want value-added agriculture?

**Shanafelt:** no, I'm not assuming that at all. I think residents do want agriculture and want you to be

successful. It's more the sense that, instead of just opening everything up, which I don't think will work, what are your thoughts on creative ways to allow things to happen or to achieve some consensus? Not just within the agricultural community but also with the rest of the committee?

**Bramer:** you're saying we don't have consensus on that, right?

**Shanafelt:** I don't think we have consensus on it.

**Bramer:** I think wineries versus farms, there's a bit of a difference. I just run a retail operation. I don't have a tasting room or make alcohol. It's different. I'm able to do that because of wineries, because I have a business that works for wineries. I don't have a good answer other than I think citizens, other than farmers, want added agriculture. All this land has been protected and now I would like to see it be actively farmed.

**Earl David Edmondson, 12414, Center Road:** I've served on the PDR selection committee for several years. Participated in the last agricultural board that [Amendment] 201 came out of, which I disapprove of, along with about 40 other counterparts. I served on many committees previous to that here in the township. I served on the Farm Bureau Agricultural Policy Committee at the state level. Nancy [Heller] can verify that. A funny story about Isaiah's father, who was vice president of Michigan Farm Bureau at that time. He twisted my arm for quite a long time to get on that. It's very satisfying because it gives me a broad perspective from all types of farms throughout Michigan. Back when we were all young punks, a group of farmers out here was called "Yokel Locals." Unfortunately, Jen [Bramer] left, but that was a pun. Other thing that's relevant is I've traveled some, and one really fond experience I remember is being in Sweden. We went to the island of Oland, which was in the Baltic Sea. It's about 60 miles long, two to three miles wide. We were there one week, and they were having a pumpkin festival. It was unbelievably fun. We circled that whole island all day long. You'd stop at every participating farm, and everybody was having a good time, displaying the products, celebrating. I've never forgotten that. It was a good time.

**Rudolph:** your concept of agritourism?

**Edmondson:** sharing your farm with people who come to your facility or some sort of function that you may have created to display your product, hopefully move your product. I've been around for 70 years. When I was 16, I got up on the tractor. Today at 70, I'm still on the tractor. People like to know what's going on in the field. At our fruit stand, you can't believe the joy and enthusiasm, the parents with kids, learning and seeing fruit on the tree, the blossoms, taking pictures of the pumpkins. People really enjoy what we do. You go to the processor, you drive in there, and you better have your helmet on and full armor because you are going to get beaten up. You can have the most beautiful product in the world. They're going to find something wrong with it to pay you less. That's discouraging. We used to grow 200 acres of trees, about two million pounds of cherries. I'm down to 50 acres now. It's way more manageable. I'm going into venues that give me hope. People appreciate my product. Things have changed drastically. We were originally here in the 1880s. Our crops have changed and we've tried to change with them. Back when I was starting to want to take over the farm, we were hand picking. We got money from the government to build buildings for migrant housing. The inspector came in. "Oh, that's not good enough." My dad said, "To hell with that; we're going to go to mechanical harvesting." In my eyes, it was the worst thing that ever happened to our farm. Because now we're flooding the market with kind of an inferior product. You grab hold of the tree and shake the bajebers out of it. How can that be good? In the wine industry, it might be a different story. It's funny though, that happened in the '70s and today, this is the first year in five I've had my \$250,000 cherry harvester out of the barn. Previous four or five years, it's all been hand picked. It's not necessarily that profitable, but it's way better than the other situation, and it has kept the wheels on the deal. The residential community thanks us

constantly for having a fruit stand, for having a u-pick, for having these different opportunities for people to come to the farm. It's not just tourists. It's also locals. A significant amount of the residential community is interested in these venues, and that's good for me. The closer I can stay to that dollar bill, the more I can put in my pocket. The further I get away from it, such as going to the processor, you can wait a year. This year, we took some brine cherries to a processing plant. I called the other day, "Hey, when are we going to get our down payment?" He said, "You're not." Well. How's that work? I guess you could put it back on my shoulders for not making a good enough deal. We're in a situation this year where our product was compromised from insects and pressure from fungus and stuff like that. Traditionally, our chemicals could keep that under control. We couldn't keep it under control this year. That's a bad signal for the future in my eyes. We have to use these tools to get a perfect product to the consumer because they don't accept inferior.

**Shanafelt:** you mentioned in your answers that the greatest threat was over regulation. What do you feel would be an appropriate amount of regulation?

**Edmondson:** I tell you what, our farm is not compliant, so maybe I'm going to see the inspector coming. We can't keep up with it. There's no money to keep up with all the regulations. We all want to bring a perfect product to the user. We're not trying to hurt the food system. Take migrant housing. It's unbelievable. I don't mean it's over regulation from the township.

**Raul Gomez, 16720 Wunsch Road:** I've sat on a lot of committees, a lot of different school boards when I was in college. Currently, I am on the Interlochen Community Advisory Board. I work with a lot of people, different chairs with different projects on that board. Been on a few agricultural boards here and there. Very involved with the Northwest Research Station. I am currently the operations manager for Wunsch Farms, Third Coast Fruit Company. I have been back here full time since 2011. Before that, I taught for a while. I grew up out here. I've been in farming for as long as I can remember. I worked on the main farm with apples and cherries but also some summers and springs I did some work for vineyards and such.

**Rudolph:** what is your concept of agritourism?

**Gomez:** the most important thing is, it's something that's going to directly help you sell your product, market your product. It can be a tool for us. We're doing a u-pick for apples now. With our cherry packing house, what we like to do with the u-pick, is use our branded bags, hoping people who are visiting see the Third Coast label, and when they're in a grocery store, they have that connection and therefore it helps us sell more. People might go to their grocery store and be like, "We visited this farm, Third Coast Fruit Company up in northern Michigan. Why can't we find their cherries here?" It's a straight correlation of how will this increase your revenue? It has to have a direct effect, such as, I have 20,000 pounds of apples to get rid of. Agritourism is going to directly help me do that. If I have a petting zoo and I still don't sell my 20,000 apples, then at that point, having that petting zoo is not helping my farm or my operation.

**Shanafelt:** it will be a role of the committee to figure out communication. One of the comments you made in your written response is that you think a lot of the conflict is a result of miscommunication or not understanding. What are your thoughts on communicating better with surrounding neighbors and really our community as a whole?

**Gomez:** it's great that this committee is being put together. If you put a good group of people together, part of the communication is going to have to be, we're not here to demand stuff. We're here to hear an idea. I have no issue going out and talking to farmers. I know a lot of them. What is it that you want? And then let's put that in a plan. How can we achieve that? What is actually possible? Then bring it to the board. Here's an idea, kind of a plan, what can we do, and how do we figure it out? People are saying farmers aren't being heard. This is your opportunity to either be on

this committee or speak to anyone on this committee and voice your opinions, your concerns. We'll bring it to the board and see what's feasible. Let's put something together. Not directly, "This is what you need to do. You're not allowed to do this. You're not doing this." It's "How can we fix that?" This committee, too, there is a lot of talk with all these farmers. There's a large portion of farmers out here that we don't hear from. We need to remove the stigma. Some people won't voice their opinions because "I have contracts to keep. I have people that I want to maintain a relationship with so they don't drop me. I don't want to be blackballed by this person or that person because I say the wrong thing." Bringing people to the table is going to be important. We're here to listen and take back some of your ideas, and I hope you'll give us some of your concerns.

**Chown:** have you read the most recent master plan that was passed not too long ago?

**Gomez:** I have not.

**Chown:** do you have familiarity with the former master plan?

**Gomez:** yeah, I'm somewhat familiar with the former one but not the newer one.

**Sanders:** just because I'm curious, not because it's a selection issue, do you farm for any of the other folks who put their names in for this committee?

**Gomez:** I don't believe so. No.

**Sanders:** any questions for us?

**Gomez:** no. Your list of applicants and what you guys put together, is a very diverse list, which is nice. It represents everyone out here. I guess my question is, how would this committee function for you? Are we coming to you, giving ideas, and then we work together towards a solution? Or is it more you just want to have information to work off of? What will our role be as far as an end product or decision from the board?

**Cram:** our hope is that this advisory committee will help advise the board on matters facing the agricultural community. We will have a regular meeting schedule and meet at least six times a year, maybe every other month, or if summer is the busiest time, during the winter. We would have an agenda driven by board priorities of things we want to tackle. I would create an agenda with questions. The first item we would like to tackle is signage for u-pick operations and farm stands. We know the existing regulations aren't working well. Speed limits are 55 miles per hour [it's too hard to read existing signs at that speed]. We want you to have the flexibility to say what product is being offered, etc. Then we would get into other value-added uses that perhaps could be offered as uses by right as long as certain standards are met, similar to how we tackled farm stands. I will prepare at least one report per year to the board. I believe it would be helpful for this community and board to know exactly what you're all facing. How much does it cost to plant an acre of cherries or apples? What other issues are you facing? We could prepare a report that we work on together to let the board know the dollars and cents of agriculture right now.

**Shanafelt:** as a PC member, what I'm looking for is this group to identify issues and solutions that the PC can use to modernize our ordinances so they work.

**Sanders:** foundation wise, I like how you started. I like how you ran with that. And from the town board perspective, we don't know what the town board will look like in a couple of weeks because of the election. The town board sets the priority. The priority from the town board we share with the planner, and the planner shares it with the PC. Things could look slightly different for how we organize it. Your question was right. Personally, I plan on taking everything from this advisory committee very seriously. It shouldn't be meetings just to have more meetings. This is stakeholder engagement, and it should be how it rolls out to the community and benefits the agricultural community as a whole underneath the scope and umbrella of how it benefits the entire township.

**Chown:** within the parameters or at least the intended vision of the master plan. That's why the master plan keeps coming up. It's important to have familiarity with it.

**Erin Hafeli, 13387 Blue Shore Drive:** I presently serve on the board for the Old Mission Peninsula Education Foundation, the nonprofit entity that owns the real estate for the school. I'm also a mom at OMPS [Old Mission Peninsula School]. I have two kiddos there. I am locally on my beach committee for the association, which has a divergence of opinions on a number of issues, including boats and shoreline. My most applicable experience to dealing with consensus and conflict harkens back to my days as a pension fund advisor. My background is decades in commercial real estate investment advising, where I served as a fiduciary investment advisor for real estate decisions across the country. My clients were mostly in the Midwest, but the assets were across the country. When proposing an investment, you're going to have a number of different perspectives. Real estate is also multivariable analysis, looking at data, soliciting opinions, doing market research, understanding the nature of what's driving that business decision. I'm a hobby gardener and farmer. I'm new to farming. I've been a farmer for 18 months, so I'm very open minded. I have an intellectual curiosity for the industry. I tried to parlay my investment advisor experience into farmland investment management and was really discouraged at what I saw on an institutional scale. Billions of U.S. dollars of agriculture are going to initiatives that I don't consider to be green, forward looking, organic, regenerative, you name the buzzword. I realized it was easier for me to make more of a direct impact by becoming a farmer and understanding from the ground up what the issues are, including climate and everything that impacts agricultural land today.

**Rudolph:** what is your concept of agritourism?

**Hafeli:** I agree with a lot of the candidates today. It's bringing individuals to the farm site. There's a lot of evidence that people are really disconnected from the process. The direct application of selling agricultural products gets to the heart of what we're looking for. I think agritourism can have a lot of different regional differences that speak to the culture of the area. At its foundation, it's directly introducing the person who is potentially the end buyer of your product to the farm site.

**Shanafelt:** I have a specific question about something you wrote. You mentioned "The rejection of uses that are protected by the Michigan Right to Farm Act opens the township to ongoing lawsuits." Are there specific things the township rejected that are actually covered by the Right to Farm Act?

**Hafeli:** one of the initiatives of this agricultural advisory committee is to look at those things that we think might be a common attribute that's protected under the Right to Farm Act, something that's not explicitly provided in the current zoning ordinance. I understand we have permissive zoning. If it's not explicitly stated that you can do those activities, there may need to be updates that state, "Yes, you have the right to do these activities." That's in concert with state law. I understand that MDARD and the GAAMPS and the Right to Farm Act have redlined changes on an annual basis. There needs to be some type of ongoing agenda item on the agricultural advisory committee to make sure that if there's something within our permissive zoning that's not clearly stated [but is allowed], that seems like a logical next step to update, that we have some type of a process to identify what those are and at least capture that low-hanging fruit to avoid litigation.

**Chown:** have you read the master plan?

**Hafeli:** I have. What I found most alarming was the continued pressure of residential on agricultural land. I also think Old Mission Peninsula has even more heightened pressure because of the price per acre of farmland. Especially as a new farmer, it was a choice we made, obviously, to invest here, but it was a big objection that I've had to overcome in the business plan to really substantiate why Old Mission farming versus somewhere else in the Grand Traverse region.

**Nancy R. Heller, 3091 Blue Water Road:** I've lived a lot of years. I've sat on a lot of committees, a lot of boards locally. Farm bureau, boards of directors, promotion, education, policy committee, commodity committee. I sat on the downtown farmers market board for years. I also sold at the downtown market for 20-plus years, and I have been out here that length of time. I'm going to answer Rudy's [Rudolph] question. I agree with the bulk of the responses of the previous applicants. In short, it's sharing your farm experiences and ability to generate additional income. There's nothing we can't grow. Now we have hoop houses and greenhouses, but you have to have money to build these things. Agritourism could possibly add to that income. Income is everything. Paying your bills is everything. I'm going to answer a question I'm probably not going to be asked. As far as regulation, I'm a great believer in mid-ground regulation that is defensible in a court of law. I think that can be achieved without over regulating. I try to come to meetings. I've learned a lot. I was deputy clerk for a lot of years. I attended the MSU Kellogg Center's uniform government accounting system when the accounting system was first started. Now it's a given. I come from a grocery store background. I was raised in the Harbor Springs area, which is similar to this area as far as beauty, limitations, what you can and cannot do.

**Shanafelt:** you commented [in your written answers] that better community relations would be important. I couldn't agree more. Better in what way and with whom? What part of the community are you thinking of?

**Heller:** well, education. When I was contemplating either sitting on this board or being in the audience, I started asking questions of what I call hands-on people. We all have our complaints, our questions, but I'm interested in the fixes. What's the answer? Everyone will come from a different direction. It's been made very clear that we all farm differently. We all have different ideas. It can all be productive. I believe I've said in a lot of meetings, leave your biases at home and listen. There are certain personalities you're going to relate to better than others, but leave your biases at home and just listen and you'll learn.

**Chown:** I know you've read the master plan, Nancy.

**Sanders:** questions for us?

**Heller:** no. I wish you luck. I read the applicant's responses. I think your job is going to be tough. They're all good, qualified applicants.

**Shanafelt moved for a five-minute recess with a second by Sanger. Motion passed by consensus**  
**Meeting resumed at 3:08 p.m.**

**John Kroupa, 2660 Kroupa Road:** as far as committee experience, I don't have a lot. It would all be related to the Wineries of Old Mission Wine Trail. I've been on the marketing committee, the events committee, the general committee, and the owners' board for the existence of the wine trail. I sit now only on the owners' board. Beyond that I really haven't been active on committees or in any sort of political bodies.

**Rudolph:** can you give us your concept of what agritourism means from your perspective?

**Kroupa:** I think agritourism is basically opening up your farm to allow people who otherwise wouldn't get the opportunity to see what goes on on a day-to-day basis to come and see it. I think it could take a lot of different forms. It wouldn't necessarily have to be hayrides and corn mazes. It could be a picnic, a spot where people can come and see the blossoms, or they can come and overlook a vineyard that's getting harvested, things of that nature. I think that any number of things could qualify as agritourism.

**Shanafelt:** you're a plaintiff in the WOMP lawsuit. In some ways that presents a conflict of interest, being part of this committee. I'm curious as to how you are going to manage that conflict?



**Kroupa:** I think the resolution of the lawsuit, however the chips fall, will resolve a lot of conflicts because we're all going to get more clarity. The wineries will get clarity. The town board's going to get clarity. The residents are going to get clarity. From my perspective, the conflicts of interest are going to be resolved. The judge is going to take it out of our hands and say, "Okay, this is legal. This is not. You can do this. You can't do that."

**Shanafelt:** to paraphrase, because we're at this point where it's in the judge's hands, and then X is going to happen, there is no conflict because you no longer have impact on that lawsuit.

**Kroupa:** yeah, I feel that's true. That's a good way to paraphrase it. There's really not a lot that I, as a member of the committee, could do to influence anything. When the judge comes back, and if he says, x, y, and z are not allowed, it won't matter what I say on a committee if the judge has ruled it's not allowed.

**Chown:** do you have familiarity with the master plan, either the former one or the new one?

**Kroupa:** just generally. I've not read the document by any means. I refer to it for specific questions, whether agriculturally related or winery related. I would say [my familiarity] is very high level.

**Shanafelt:** what mechanisms would you see that would lead to a balance between farming and other community desires?

**Kroupa:** I think that's the hardest question on your sheet. I don't think there's any easy answer. It's going to take a lot of work on both sides. It has to be give and take. A good balance is going to be something that neither side is entirely happy with. That's the nuts and bolts of the whole committee. To help get people to a point where this might not be exactly what you want as a resident who retired here, but you have to give a little to keep it how you'd like to see it or else the whole thing isn't going to last.

**Achorn:** I should have asked this of the others. I would think you're considered a large farm with lots of acreage, and there are other farmers who are small acreage. On this committee, how do you see working together to come up with solutions that would benefit both but not be advantageous toward one versus a detriment to the other? Because it has appeared in the past that the non-winery farmers want to have the same benefits as the wineries. This is how the original agricultural committee started as I understand it, so there would some be some type of parity between all the farmers here. How do you see getting through that process so everybody benefits?

**Kroupa:** I think all farmers need as much help as they can to be successful. Does the guy farming 500 acres need more help than the guy farming five acres? I don't know. In my opinion, yes, but maybe because I'm the guy farming a large farm and not the little guy. But I think everybody needs to be considered. You shouldn't only help one segment or the other. I also think it'll come down to what the township's focus is going to be. The commodity growing, the current state of the industry out here, is changing. It's going to change. The cherry industry is going away. The tart cherry industry is in its death throes. Ten years from now, there's not going to be tart cherries to speak of, nothing like what we see now. You're not going to look out at vistas of 100-acre lots of tart cherries anymore or sweet cherries for that matter. Everything is struggling in the large-scale commodity [market]. It's got to be agritourism, the value-added pieces that keep the ship from sinking. There's ample places for the rules to allow creative uses of your farm to keep you afloat so you don't have to be boxed into "All I can do is grow hundreds of thousands of pounds of cherries or pack it in."

**Sanders:** questions for us?

**Kroupa:** the only question I had was how the committee functions. Do you present ideas to the committee and say, "This is in the pipeline. What is a farmer's perspective on these things?" Or are we supposed to come up with ideas and say, "This is what we would like."

**Cram:** the first item we want to tackle is signage for u-pick and farm stands. We currently have a

moratorium, and we want to revise our ordinance so that it supports agriculture but minimizes sign clutter. I hope that every year the committee will prepare one report to the board to let them know what it believes is the priority. I think it's important to talk about the dollars and cents, this is what it costs to plant, this is where the markets are, so that the community, non-farmers and the board, understand what you're all facing so that we can then jump into creative ways we can support value-added uses. I'll be doing research for you. You'll be bringing information back. It'll be a creative and collaborative approach.

**Sanders:** we have the election coming up, so the new board will be able to do strategic planning and provide guidance to our planner, who will then provide it to the PC and also to the agricultural advisory committee so you kind of have a map of what we're looking to tackle. I do not like slow, bureaucratic government, but at the same time, I do not like things that go too fast. I know that once you get together and come up with your top three or five or whatever priorities, those are the items that need to be brought back through the PC or directly to the board so we can start churning through.

**Kroupa:** so for the most part, it's responding to questions you pose to us.

**Sanders:** it should be a two-way street.

**Chown:** you folks who are farming, whether large or small, have to educate us on your needs and challenges. They may not be on our radar if we're not farmers. It's absolutely a two-way street.

**Sanger:** the biggest issue in my mind is the lack of communication with many people. Keep in mind, we're adding more residential people each year. These people come in either with perceived notions or, many times, a lack of information. What they glean may not be accurate. I personally look to this committee to help open up communications throughout the township.

**Jed Hemming, 2455 Nehtawanta Road:** I've lived out here my whole life. I live in the house I was raised in. I just quit farming. If you look at the latest USDA aerial photos, you'll see a lot of brush piles. That puts me in a unique position on this committee because my land is in transition.

**Shanafelt:** what has been your committee experience in general?

**Hemming:** I was on the town board for six years. Town board, planning commission.

**Shanafelt:** so you understand consensus and conflict.

**Hemming:** yes, I don't envy you at all.

**Rudolph:** share with us what you think agritourism means?

**Hemming:** in this community, and this is a tourist community, not just this community, but all of northwest Michigan, it's the integration of agricultural land and products into the tourism industry in the area. In other words, fruit stands would be a small example. Wineries are a perfect example. Once a year, our family has a cider press. We invite a lot of friends. We make 50, 60, 75 gallons of cider. We give everybody some cider. The kids have a ball. Everybody goes home. Agritourism would allow me to commercialize that. I could charge 20 bucks a head extremely easily. That'd be cheap for a day's entertainment. I could have 50 or 100 people there, 3,4,5, times a week for apple season. That's quite a boost in income to help support large amount of acreage in agriculture. It won't use a lot of agricultural product. It's not going to use 5,000 bushels of apples. But it subsidizes, without government, a business that demands profit. So that would be an example of where agritourism would fit into an agricultural, residential mixed area, where large acreage of large volume crops may not be viable anymore.

**Chown:** you mentioned you just quit farming. You also mentioned in your answers that your farm is in transition. Is there a possibility that you'll stay in farming and just don't know what you're going to plant next? Or have you truly quit farming?

**Hemming:** I've retired. Where the land is going to go, I don't know. It won't be me. I've talked to

some local people, some local agencies, about potentially putting it back into hardwoods, natural hardwoods. I couldn't believe they suggested solar panels. I don't want anything to do with that. I expected a different mental attitude from those people. The next owner is going to have to make that decision. That will be mostly based on, I believe, township policy. Some things won't be allowed; some things will be allowed. Without economic viability, how many people can take on 235 acres as a hobby?

**Chown:** is any of it in PDR?

**Hemming:** not in Peninsula Township. At the state level.

**Chown:** state level PDR? How many acres?

**Hemming:** all of it.

**Sanger:** to clarify, is it in PDR or not?

**Chown:** development rights have been sold through the state, not the township's PDR program.

**Hemming:** in my discussions with other people in agriculture, I think it's important to know that this community is not in a unique position. This conflict goes on all over the country. I was in the Upper Peninsula at a resort a couple of years ago, and there was a woman there, an MSU professor of agriculture, who bought a house just outside of Lansing in a dairy area, and she couldn't believe she had to smell cow manure. She's going to the township, township's trying to deal with it because there's other people moving in. That's an extreme example, but this is not unique. Maybe we need to look outside the community for some ideas. I think it's larger than we realize, and I think we need to accept that residential is rapidly becoming extremely dominant out here. In other areas there is PDR land that agriculture is not viable on, and the owners can no longer afford to own it anymore, and there's no sale for it. I think we have a problem, and we need to work together to solve that.

**Bern Kroupa, 3183 Shore Wood:** I've served on government and nonprofits. K through 12 prep school, a large cherry cooperative, things like that. Strategic planning mission there. Peninsula Township was involved in the '70s and into the '80s. Then I was recruited to a position in St. Paul. I vowed never to return to politics. We retired from the corporate world here 30 years ago, but then I got involved in the PC for quite a few years and sat next to Dave [Sanger]. In one way or another, I've been involved in at least two master plans. Tough to tell where one ends and another begins, another one's past due and another one's still churning. But yes, I've been involved in that sort of thing as well as industry committees. About to be involved in another one apparently.

**Rudolph:** what does agritourism mean to you?

**B. Kroupa:** it's easy for me because we travel quite a bit. Ironically, it's the agricultural areas we tend to seek out, whether in southern Europe, wineries, and so forth. Now it's to Australia for our second full year. We migrate to those areas because we like to be part of that experience. When you can have a stay on site and dine in the morning and dine in the evening on site, it's even better. But to go beyond that here, what I would see, is that people come to enjoy what we're doing here, and we try to keep our frontage presentable at least. Obviously, the wineries are the big draw, and they've all done beautiful jobs. Now we have flowers. Now we have God knows what next. One of our business partners now pretty much oversees our whole juice operation in Utah. They're large growers of several stone fruits and cherries and apples. They were here for a meeting in the spring, and we were driving through Leelanau County to a meeting and passed a large event tent on one of the wineries over there. He said, "Stop for a minute. That's kind of like ours." So on their farm, three years ago, they developed an event center. It was all about weddings. Now in Utah, I suppose we could say maybe there would be large family weddings. Their goal now is to do 45 said events. Not necessarily weddings. You start putting some numbers to it, that is about the

gross of an awful lot of farms in Peninsula Township. It's a pleasant place to come. I think of things like the scenic turnout at Chateau Grand Traverse. That was quite a battle. I remember being part of that. Where are we going to put the power lines? Consumers Energy was blocking and then they finally got that done. What a treasure. Hasn't really seemed to be a traffic issue yet. I see people crossing the road to take photos on the other side. That's a little hair raising, but so far so good.

**Shanafelt:** you wrote, "However, passage of Amendment 201 continues as a stain on the process and abuse of power." I'm curious why it's a stain and where the abuse of power came from?

**B. Kroupa:** because it moved all the way through. That's not my opinion alone, but I voice it. Look at the background. A lawsuit was going on between the township and WOMP. And from there, we had that god awful meeting at St Joe's. We sat next to people who really didn't know why they were there. They were upset about everything, 2:00 a.m. nightclubs and everything else. On the heels of that was formed the committee. Obviously WOMP wasn't going to join the committee in the middle of the lawsuit and the rest of us involved in agriculture weren't either. A few did, and it moved ahead. Then in the spring of that year, we had the opportunity to meet Jenn [Cram] but also had the executive summary of what we're moving to. And after all the work done back in 2001, now we see everything is upside down. But [the township said], "Don't panic. We're going to put some more people on the board." Three of us volunteered. Then three weeks later, we received an email that said the group is no longer going to meet. Oh, okay, that's probably wise. Except that Amendment 201 was on the agenda for every meeting from then until December, when it finally passed. I hate coming to this podium for those kind of things, but I did because I said, "This is being done in a vacuum. Ignoring all this going on in agriculture." But it moved on anyway. Those are my words, but they're not my words alone.

**Sanders:** I appreciate your honesty.

**Chown:** something you wrote in your answers regarding PDR support. You mentioned that you didn't and don't support the most recent phase of the PDR millage vote because "it's not needed." Could you please elaborate on that?

**B. Kroupa:** go all the way back to 1994. I wasn't a voter here. I'm not sure I would have voted for it. But when we returned to the farm, of course there was PDR. A mentor said, "We're not big enough to make all the rules, but let's figure out what they are and play by them." We were making an acquisition at that time, so we used PDR. Then we used it again. The opposite side of the road for a farmer who wanted to bail out. Well, that time he used it, and we bought the residuals. I voted for the second one. It was 2004 or so. I don't really like property taxes. It's the most unfair tax there is. But at that time, it had become such a factor in the marketplace that if you pulled that out, then what happens? So I voted for it. But then we went on. To do it yet again is, number one, an expense. It's another line item on our tax bill. Number two, I didn't think we needed it. Properties were buying and selling. We bought some property during that period. Number three, as I said at the podium one night, "Who would sell their development rights when forces have demonstrated they will, in fact, change the rules once you shed your development rights and what you can do with the residual?" For that reason, I thought it was highly ill advised. But it goes on.

**Sanderson** any questions for us?

**B. Kroupa:** I don't think so. I realize we have to do some handiwork and so forth, some sign design. That's housekeeping. But I'm hoping this opportunity, once and for all, is a real strategic process. We look backwards a little bit, look sideways, see what's going on externally, internally. Finally get to a point of doing some visioning. Because we've got a lot of visioning to do. It's going to be a whole lot of change from here north. Stems from that white paper we presented here in the town hall in April of 2001. Dave was here. I don't think anyone else was here. We talked about things. Talked about tree fruit, talked about wine grapes. Some of those very things you wanted to know

about, numbers, revenue, etc. That's the kind of thing we need to think about again. We need more visioning, to take the blinders off. We did a lot of that with our agricultural preservation league in that same time. What might the future look like? What might we have? Small inns, things like that. Hospitality. Because it's not all going to be what we grew up with.

**Mark Santucci, 11789 Center Road:** I've worked on more committees than I can remember. I spent 15 years in the federal and state government. I think 90 percent of my time was in committees. One of the committees that probably had the most impact on me was the United States Trade Representative's Office. The USTR was responsible for coordinating government policy with respect to trade. On each committee there was someone from the State Department, Treasury Department, Commerce Department, Labor Department. Depending on the issue, you may have had someone from the Defense Department or Interior Department. But those four were the primary members. And I can tell you, I don't care who was president, those departments never agreed on anything. When we tried to develop U.S. policy, it was my job, and many of my compadres at USTR, depending on issues they were working on, to develop a consensus. I know what it's like to have people with opposite views and what it takes to come to a consensus. With respect to agritourism, I've been a big proponent of that. Those of you who've been on the board over the last, say, eight years, have heard me in three-minute increments, talking about what we should do with respect to farming. I don't know if you were listening or not, but I've been very vocal on the fact that we need agritourism. I used to be a part owner and a member of the board of a company called Earthy Delights, which was then bought out by the same fellow who owned Cherry Capital Foods. I took several trips to Italy to look at different products for us to import into the U.S. Spent a lot of time talking with the people there who own these various companies about agritourism. To me, agritourism means looking at your farm, not just to grow products, but to market your farm. I'm not talking about having a half acre, an acre, and doing a bed and breakfast, or growing a few vegetables and selling them in front. I'm talking about marketing your farm for more than farm products. That's what I consider agritourism. It could be like, I have a pick-your-own, and my wife makes jams. That has given us a lot more revenue than the traditional way of cherry farming. It could be having farm stays. It's basically taking advantage of your farm to earn an income or earn a partial income. Which means the farm is important. People don't come if you have a lousy farm. They come because you have something to offer them. To me, when you look at agritourism, you can say it's this or this, but it's everything. It's something we haven't even thought of yet. That's the thing I've heard all the speakers say. One of the points they're trying to drive here in this opportunity of having the 10 minutes is, things change. To some, farming seems to be the same, but it's not the same over the years. It's constantly changing. The way to continue farming changes. Dave [Edmondson] talked about the fact that they used to hand pick the cherries, and then the mechanical harvest came in. Well, now we're faced with competition from Eastern Europe, Turkey, and other places. That's changing the nature of how to be profitable in farming. This peninsula, when I first bought the farm in 1987, was a farming community with a few wealthy retirees on it. It's now a wealthy retirement community with a few farms on it. You and the people who live here are going to have to decide, do you want the farms and what comes with it to be profitable, or do you want it to be just a large suburban community? I would have loved it if my kids had come up and taken over the farm. They don't want to because they can't make enough money doing it. I have a daughter and son-in-law who own a restaurant in the Lansing area. They would have loved to have something up here as part of the farm that would allow them to make money, but the ordinance wouldn't allow it. Your zoning regulations wouldn't allow it. So, instead, they stay down there and operate a great restaurant.

Ultimately, I will probably end up selling the farm to someone who's going to put 10 houses there because that's what I'm allowed to do on that farm. It's short sightedness on the part of those who want to maintain the farms, but you're going to lose the farms, and that's just the way it is.

**Chown:** do you have familiarity with the recently passed master plan?

**Santucci:** I have familiarity only to the extent that I've seen on YouTube Marty Lagina complaining about how it was passed with changes without any input from others. I was familiar with the old master plan from the late '80s, early '90s because they sent around questionnaires to all the landowners as to what they would like to see in a master plan. But the way I look at it, with respect to this committee, is I'm sure we're going to hear from those who work for the township what the master plan says currently. Even though we've just passed the master plan, I see our role as telling you how the master plan should be amended, or 10 or 15 years from now, what the master plan should look like. So am I familiar with every little thing in the master plan? No. But I'm familiar with the Right to Farm Act. I'm familiar with the GAAMPS. I know them inside out and upside down because I've been involved with that type of activity.

**Sanders:** I should have said this earlier. We keep asking about the master plan, and I reiterate that we'll have a new board in place in November. Then the next iteration of the community survey is this spring. This advisory committee will be up and running, and it would be great to have their participation as far as getting the questions done for the next community survey. Do you have any questions for us?

**Santucci:** last year at this time, we passed the winery ordinance. A lot of farmers expressed their concern that there was nothing in the ordinances that would facilitate small farmers who want to do small processing. We were told at that time, in October, that was something you were going to look at next and that in early spring, you would have proposals. It's now October, and there's no proposals. My question is, why wasn't that a priority for you?

**Cram:** after Amendment 201 was passed, we moved quickly to Amendment 203 to make sure our farm stand ordinance was aligned with the Right to Farm Act. Staff has had limited capacity. The shoreline regulations took priority because of the number of conflicts that we're dealing with. In an effort to prioritize and get a group working together to look at those value-added uses, I suggested that we form this committee so we have a working committee to vet those. We have been moving forward with other priorities, and looking at value-added agriculture is a priority this committee will help to move forward.

**Santucci:** your actions say it's not a priority because it's now October. It's going to take months before something's even introduced.

**Shanafelt:** there are many different perspectives in the community and what might be your highest priority may not in the scheme of things –

**Santucci:** I agree. I just said it's not yours.

**Sanders:** any other questions?

**Shanafelt:** I think at one meeting you said you're only here part time. You didn't really specify when you'd be available in person?

**Santucci:** I can be here in person anytime between May and November. Then I can be on Zoom anytime. I no longer have a lot of other responsibilities, so I can spend the time on this.

**Lew Seibold, 3195 Cherry Hill Road:** I don't have much of a statement. I'd like to take more questions, I guess, than anything, because you saw in my written answers some of the basic things that you're concerned about. I've been involved with agriculture in some form or another for pretty much my whole lifetime. My father and my grandfather and who knows beyond that were also farmers. Not here, but elsewhere in the Midwest, in North Dakota. We had a good life. It was

hard sometimes; that's the way it is. And things change. Things changed there. They change here. I've seen in my 30 years here that things have changed substantially from what they were when we first moved here and raised our family. That was the best decision we made in our lifetime, I feel, because we could raise our children working on the farm, and they say so as well. So there's a way of life that's farming that's quickly going by the wayside. I have no illusions that it may have passed. I hope there's opportunities to do that. I'm probably a little more biased towards small farms, but I know very large farming on the scale of 4,000 to 5,000 acres at a time. The way of life is really important, and that may be romantic or sentimental, but it was important for our family. Some of my children, my daughter and son-in-law, are attempting to do something with that, and they're actually doing quite well. They've probably done better than I have at cherry farming, financially. So it doesn't mean you need a lot of acreage. It doesn't mean necessarily that you need to consolidate or vertically integrate, as some people indicate. You just need to be creative and flexible. My big thing is, any zoning regulation should be equally applied to everybody. There should be no singling out of a group for special favors or incentives. I dislike government involvement in farming, especially at the federal level. As it gets closer to the scale like this, I feel more confident about it because everybody can see what's going on. When we're farming for federal insurance purposes, something's wrong. That's what I felt I was doing in the last couple years, raising cherries. So you have to move on. You have to do something different or something else. While I was farming, I did have other income, so it was a little different for me. I was a professor of architecture at Andrews University and was the director of the program for a while. I've had my share of committee meetings at a university level. I'm glad I'm done with that.

**Rudolph:** what does agritourism mean to you?

**Seibold:** it's really about the farm and what your product is and do people want to come and see and participate and buy and all that sort of thing. I feel the general culture is becoming more distant from agriculture. They sort of romanticize it. I suppose, on one hand, that's okay. It's going to be what it's going to be. They'd like to see us in overalls with a straw coming out of our mouth or something like that. But that's not the way it's going to be. Agritourism serves a purpose in that it really gets us closer to the people who really have nothing to do with it anymore. And I think that's true even on the peninsula. There are probably people who romanticize it and think it's something that it isn't. It's tough work. There's no doubt about that, but that's what you enjoy about it too. And that's what's good for your family as well. You get dirty, stay up late, you have some off time, have some really intense time. It's a crazy life, but that's what it is. If somebody wants to participate in that and provide a source of revenue, I think that's good. I think our big thing here on the peninsula is not just land use, which goes along with what I'm going to say, but transportation, pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, tractors, semi trucks, moving product on and off the peninsula. That's probably the thing that concerns me most. How the peninsula handles that is going to determine the quality of life going forward on this little piece of ground we've been blessed with. We've got one basic corridor, and we've got to somehow come to grips with that. I don't know what that means. Quite frankly, I don't, but I think we have to deal with it.

**Chown:** does that mean to you that agritourism out here, by definition, is a problem? Given our geography on this peninsula and the transportation issues we have that you just articulated?

**Seibold:** that's a good point. Certainly that's true. I don't know if you charge a big fee coming in so you just get some people coming in. That's probably not the way of doing it. I don't know what you do. I think you try to make it as safe as possible. That's the first thing. That's going to involve some engineering work and some design work to accomplish that. Safety is probably my biggest concern. If I have to wait like I just did out here at the corner for cars to go past, that's fine. That's a minute or two out of my day. Sometimes five during heavy seasons. But I realize I'm old enough now to

know that I don't have to get somewhere right away. I can wait.

**Achorn:** you commented [in your answers] that you may have trouble attending the meetings?

**Seibold:** yes, I wanted to be transparent about that. My elderly mother, who is 93, is having some medical issues so I have to attend to that. I may be away for times. I just came back from North Dakota. They have a once-in-a-lifetime harvest. It's dry. The yield is good. But the prices are awful. You can never win. Some of you feel that way farming. It's just the way it is. We also did purchase a home in the panhandle of Florida. I'll be gone some of the year but not all of it.

**Chown:** where in North Dakota?

**Seibold:** Sykes Carrington area. I just rode on a plane with a group of guys from South Carolina. I was sitting by this guy, and he says, "Yeah, I'm from South Carolina." I said, "I know your area. It's Beaufort, Charleston, yeah?" And he said, "Yeah, we're going out to Sykes and 10 miles south. There's a jog in the road." I said, "Yeah, that's where I used to live." They're going duck hunting. I can't believe you meet somebody who knows the exact location where you grew up, only they're duck hunting. My cousin said to me, "This land may be worth more doing other things than farming at some point." Who knows what it's going to be? But we can vision and we can plan ahead, try to move things in a direction that might be positive. I say positive because everybody has a different view of what's going to be positive. I think the big thing is, one needs to be civil in our discourse. We need to understand that a lot of people have different viewpoints about that, including the farmers and the citizens. We're all citizens. It doesn't matter how long you've been here; we're still citizens of this place. And I feel blessed to live here. I can't think of another place, except for maybe a few months out of the winter.

**Sanders:** questions for us?

**Seibold:** no, I don't think so.

**Cram:** with regard to thinking about all the different modes of transportation, we will be embarking on a planning exercise and issuing a request for proposals to hire a consultant to help us with a non-motorized plan. We have been blessed to receive two grants, one from DALMAC and one from the Health and Wellness Foundation. We have more than \$70,000 to put toward our transportation issues. That RFP will be going out soon.

**Seibold:** since that's a non-motorized plan, is it going to be integrated with the motorized plan?

**Cram:** absolutely. Understanding the dynamics of our community with the farmers and the trucks needing to get on and off the peninsula is a huge part of what we'll be looking at to make it safer for everybody out here. The farmers getting their products to town and off the peninsula, visitors coming out, people trying to get home from work. We have to give a huge thank you to Susie Shipman, who spearheaded the grant writing and is helping manage the work. We do have a non-motorized study group that has been meeting on an ad hoc basis since the master plan survey showed people were interested in that. There's lots more to come on non-motorized transportation in the coming months.

**Sanders:** we have 11 applicants. Let's take some time to discuss how and if we want to proceed with seven or possibly more members for this committee.

**Sanger:** I'm impressed with the diversity of experience and qualifications. I saw opposing views, and that's healthy. I can't think of one I would disqualify. Is there anything magic about this committee being six or nine or 10 or 11? If someone wants to come forward and help this township and they're qualified, we should accept that. I ask the board to consider the appointment of all 11 to this committee.

**Rudolph:** I echo Dave's comments. We have large farmers and small farmers and farmers geared to dealing directly with the public. We've got farmers in the throes of trying to cope with the changes



in the wholesale markets for commodity products. It's incredible to me, the diversity of this group. I appreciate that they all have different concepts about what agriculture is, what agritourism is. Any one or all of them would add to the committee. I don't know if there's a reason to keep this to fewer than 11 people? Another solution might be to have nine and two alternates.

**Chown:** my concern with 11 is it's a very large group and perhaps cumbersome. I also want to mention that typically the township does not allow committee or board members to use Zoom. The only people who come in on Zoom are the attorney at the start of the meeting, who then typically doesn't participate beyond that. And then the occasional presentation from somebody like the columbarium people recently who were in Minnesota and unable to be present. But we don't normally have people on a working committee participating via Zoom. I like the idea of alternates. Depending on when meetings are scheduled, if certain individuals can't attend, the alternates could do so.

**Cram:** I was asked if this committee would receive the same per diem as other boards and committees. I don't know if there are budgetary considerations. I have no idea what that per diem is. You generally want to have an odd number for reaching consensus. The parks committee has seven members, the PC has seven members, and the board has seven members.

**Shanafelt:** what I found impressive was the diversity of opinions and approach. Clearly, some people think the township has done a terrible job and some people think the township has done a reasonable job. My ask of everyone who applied is that, regardless of how you think the township has done, in this committee, you try to do the right thing. It's not about an opinion; it's about achieving consensus. And that gets to the number issue. General best practice, at least from my experience, is that five- or seven-member boards are the most convenient. In this case, because of the wide disparity of positions across the farming community, having more on the board will be helpful. Also more of a challenge. But that gets back to my first statement, asking everyone to work for consensus as opposed to working for a particular view. I propose we consider making it 11. Lew and Mark, when you're here, be here. I know zoom works for meetings. It's my preferred way to meet. I don't know if we're set up to do that effectively, so that's my only consideration. It may not work as well when you're on Zoom, and that's just something to accept. I do think this committee is going to be more effective in person because of the disparity and diversity of opinions. But that's my argument for 11. The complexity is such that it needs complexity going into it.

**Sanders:** I don't disagree that it's complex. I do agree that the more you have, the harder it is to get to consensus. The problem I potentially see is that the more people you have, the longer the process to get anything achieved drags on, and I know the agricultural committee is hot to get things on the agenda and moved along to help influence what's going on in the township with respect to agriculture. I think 11 is too many. I like seven with two alternates. I'll address the Zoom piece. The township does not allow anyone to vote remotely. If you're part of the committee, you're welcome to be on Zoom if you're out of town, but you wouldn't get a vote in what's being decided that day at the meeting.

**Achorn:** I think seven is good. If someone finds they're unable to attend on a regular basis, then we can look back at this list and the committee or the board can get people.

**Cram:** when we established the ZBA and the PC, we staggered the terms. It's something to think about. I will tackle drafting bylaws for this committee that are similar to our other committees. Thinking about the staggered terms, we could start everybody at three years, or we could draw straws for three and two.

**Sanders:** or we can let the committee decide internally. My goal here is to get the committee up and running. Even if the bylaws aren't ready, at least get them in a room to start having conversations as soon as possible.

**Shanafelt:** I can vote for seven if I have to. Given your statement that everyone who wants to be on this committee wants to get something done, they're incentivized to come to a consensus as quickly as possible. I would suggest we start with 11. If that doesn't work, then we address that two meetings in, say, and drop it to seven plus four alternates. I know it's not ideal, but I really hate losing... Frankly, there's some positions here I didn't like, but I think that positively influences how the final outcome looks.

**Sanger:** to vote today to not include one person is going to be interpreted as either not liking that person or not liking that person's position. I can't make that decision today. We have so much information we've heard in the last two hours. So much lack of communication and understanding in this community. I cannot vote today for anything less than these people. If they were nine people or 15 people, it wouldn't make a difference. I think we should appoint these 11 people. Let them get to work, and revisit this matter in six months. People are going to drop off. Take these 11 who have been open and honest with us today and give them a chance to get to work.

**Sanger moved to appoint all 11 to the committee.**

**Shanafelt:** I am interested in the opinions of potential committee members?

**Mark Santucci:** seven would be best. I volunteer not to be on it to get it down to seven. I don't think you'll accomplish a lot with 11 people wanting to say something.

**Jed Hemming:** I think with the age of most of us, there will be maybe 11 on the committee but to get seven or nine to show up at a time might be a problem. I also believe there will be some drop offs. I don't have any problem with 11.

**Heller:** I would ask the planner to express her opinion because the shoreline committee started out with 12. How did it work?

**Cram:** the shoreline regulation study group started with 14 or 15, but about seven participated regularly. I came up with this idea because I was the staff liaison to the Agricultural Advisory Board for Larimer County in Colorado. I worked with farmers who had thousands of acres, ranchers, dairy farms, feed lots, down to a two-and-a-half-acre farm. That board had 11 to 13 members, and we were constantly struggling to get everybody there. We ended up having about seven to nine members who showed up regularly. They also wanted diverse representation of different farming operations and sizes of farms. But we struggled to get everybody there. Nancy's right.

**Seibold:** is the agenda for these meetings determined by the township board or planner or is it determined by the committee itself?

**Sanders:** the first meeting will be determined by the planning department. From that, we're hoping to get a consensus about their top priorities and run with that going forward.

**Seibold:** is the purpose to develop proposals that are independent of the board or issues the board feels are important?

**Sanders:** it's a two-way street. Some of it will be things that the board and/or the PC or planning department feel are important to the community as a whole. And some of it's going to be coming straight out of the agricultural committee, similar to how the PC works.

**Cram:** I think it will evolve. This committee will help to educate the board on what the priorities should be, and the board then has to consider limited staff resources and how much the planning and zoning administrators can work on things.

**Sanders:** there's strategic planning that will be open for the public just like we did this last winter, and Armen led it.

**Sanger:** I need to leave in five minutes. I made a motion. If there's no second, then I suggest you move on.

**Edmondson:** I would support seven members and two alternates. The original plan was to have seven or nine. Stick to your plan and go from there. To Lew's [Seibold] question, I think you're

going to get some input on general needs from maybe the board. But I think, as always, committees of citizens can have something on the agenda. It's pretty wide open.

**Sanger withdrew his motion.**

**Chown moved to appoint seven members and two alternates with a second by Rudolph. Motion passed by consensus**

**Sanders:** before we vote on who to appoint, I promised Mr. Edmondson that if there were any other comments, applicants could come up. You're not an applicant, Fred, but go ahead.

**Fred Woodruff:** how are you going to manage the process of voting?

**Sanders:** slips of paper. Our names are not on there.

**Cram:** we will appoint the seven members first. Then we'll do two alternates.

**Sanger:** if I could leave, please?

**Chown:** could you vote quickly?

**Sanger:** I don't want to vote in haste.

**Sanders:** you're excused. Board, take a quick couple minutes to get your votes in.

**Cram:** we might have to go through this a few times, tally the votes, do a process of elimination.

**Cram collected the votes.**

**Shanafelt:** how are you going to do this?

**Cram:** I'm going to use tick marks to see how many votes each person got.

**Shanafelt:** so to pick seven you need all five of us to support all seven, or a majority?

**Cram:** I'll look at it and figure that out.

**Achorn:** regarding the issue of per diems, this is a long-standing committee, similar to the parks?

**Cram:** yes, so I would look at them apples to apples with regard to how we compensate.

**Achorn:** if it is similar to parks, I think they should be getting their per diem.

**Chown:** I think so too, especially if there are bylaws and terms.

**Sanders:** we can look at a budget amendment.

**Cram:** two seats are confirmed based on this first round of voting, Raul Gomez and Nancy Heller. Cross those names off and cast your votes again. The next greatest number of votes we could seat are Jennifer Bramer, Dave Edmondson, and John Kroupa.

**Sanders:** so Raul and Nancy got the top votes and the next closest are Jenn, Dave, and John.

**Cram:** so we have five.

**Chown:** how many do you want us to vote for?

**Cram:** select two. Chris Baldyga, Erin Hafeli, Jed Hemming, Bern Kroupa, Mark Santucci, and Lew Seibold [remain].

**Cram collected votes.**

**Cram:** you've added Erin Hafeli and Jed Hemming. Now vote on two alternates. Chris Baldyga, Lew Seibold, Mark Santucci, and Bern Kroupa [are left].

**Cram collected votes.**

**Cram:** Lew Seibold is one alternate. We have a tie between Mark and Chris.

**Santucci:** take Chris.

**Sanders:** everyone okay with that?

**Board agreed and thanked Santucci.**

**Cram:** the seven-member agricultural advisory committee includes Jennifer Bramer, Dave Edmondson, Raul Gomez, Nancy Heller, John Kroupa, Erin Hafeli, and Jed Hemming. The two alternates are Chris Baldyga and Lew Seibold. These meetings will be broadcast via YouTube and will be open to public comment. At our first meeting, we'll establish terms. I'll be working to set a meeting date. I would like to poll the committee to see what their availability is to get a meeting in before the end of the year.

**9. Citizen Comments:**

**Nancy Heller:** members should know there will be a representative from the PC and from the town board [attending the meetings].

**Sanders:** I will be the representative from the board and Jenn, our planner, will be at these meetings.

**Cram:** Kevin Beard will be the representative from the PC. Representatives are non-voting members there to listen and take information back.

**Sanders:** the new agricultural advisory committee will set up its own internal structure and run its own meetings. If they need help from us, we'll be there, but it will be up to them.

**10. Board Comments:**

**Shanafelt:** given all the different agritourism comments, it struck me that one of the things the committee needs to do is identify a viable definition that can translate into a functional set of ordinances.

**Chown:** I want to thank everyone for applying and for taking the time to come here today. I greatly appreciate it and think you are doing a tremendous service to our community.

**11. Adjournment**

**Rudolph moved to adjourn with a second by Shanafelt.  
Adjourned at 4:43 p.m.**

**Motion approved by consensus**