

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES – May 26, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rod Lowe, Robin Scully, Phil Bontrager, Victor Senk (acting secretary)
Members Absent: Paul Williams, Walt Mixon and Christine Lundquist.

AGENDA: The agenda was approved on a motion by Phil with support by Rod.

MINUTES: The minutes of April 28, 2026 were reviewed and approved by Phil, with support from Victor.

OLD BUSINESS:

Zoning Ordinance is under review with the Township Board.

Harbor Master Plan and Save the West Bay is under review with the Township Board.

Burt Township Recreation Plan has been turned over to the Burt Township Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No comments were offered at this time, but two Grand Marais residents were present (Bill Egerer and Bob Thompson) who participated during the meeting giving the Planning Commission valuable information concerning the “Save the West Bay”.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION: None Received prior to this meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:

Planning Commission discussed the frequency of the PC Meetings, and it was decided that the June PC Meeting will be canceled, the next meeting will be moved to July.

Planning Commission meeting dates moving forward have been changed to the second Tuesday of the month. Next meeting will be held July 14, 2026 at 6:00PM

Rod discussed, talking with Ryan with UPEA, regarding the Harbor Master Plan and the needed dredging of the West Bay and Marina currently identified within Phase 3. The phasing of the work is identified as independent of each other. Ryan has indicated that delaying or not pursuing Phase 3 would be detrimental to the scopes of Phase 1 and 2 since those scopes of work are reliant to the dredging requirements needed to maintain access to the bay in traversing from the Lake to the Marina. Dredging the Marina and Bay need to be reexamined and the expense required to correctly dredge the water ways.

The group discussed the need to have Township Elected Official author a letter to be sent to Elected State Officials to gain their support in funding the needs of our community in saving the Bay.

Bill and Bob elaborated on the need to have a current sounding map of the Marina and the West Bay to have current data that informs the community of the actual conditions of the Bay and the Marina and supply current information to the engineer working on the scope of work to be completed. This current sounding map when compared to the previous sounding map will also identify where and how the sand secretion rate is affecting our Bay.

Phil said we need to see current data about the bay etc. that substantiates the feasibility of his plan. Otherwise, the plan has no real basis other than hopes.

The consensus is that the Township should request more information in order to receive a complete scope of work that will correspond to the value of the grant being requested.

Rod mentioned that Burt Township Marina Master Plan is under review. As previously mentioned, each Phase is independent of the other but the relevance of Phase 3 completion not happening correctly will affect how efficient Phase 1 and 2 operate in the future.

Bill mentioned that no one is watching or tracking the West Bay. This is a paramount undertaking to be pushed into action. Keeping this in front and center moving forward needs to be put in place to avert a situation in the future that could damage Grand Marais future business opportunities.

Bill and Rod mentioned that a letter is needed with the Township Board in agreement with requesting a current sounding map, and other studies producing useful data and be sent to an Elected Official of the state, to make him aware and help Grand Marais to get these studies started.

Phil mentioned that his past experience dealing with Elected Officials was positive and that they told him that they need to hear from us in order to know what their constituent's needs are.

Bob mentioned that when these studies are done, they are usually done in three locations in order to understand what the trends are. Area for example would be Whitefish, Indian and Grand Marais.

Rod mentioned the Data Center is in the Townships Boards court.

Rod mentioned starting on the next July meeting, we will begin the meeting with a Pledge of Allegiance.

Rod mentioned that the Township Board will be opening up discussions regarding the Zoning Ordinance in July.

Robin mentioned STR limits and how they are counted within Commercial Zoned areas. Rod mentioned that the new Zoning Ordinance covers how STR will be permitted and controlled by Zoning, also that the taxes on STR are taxed as commercial properties.

OTHER: It was agreed the next meeting will be on July 14, 2026 at 6:00pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No comments received.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:35PM on a motion by Phil and supported by Rod.