

**Erie Township Board  
Special Meeting  
Erie, Michigan**

November 23, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The special meeting of the Erie Township Board was held on Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at the Erie Township Fire Hall, 2048 Manhattan St. Erie, Michigan. Supervisor Wilmoth called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The roll was called, and the Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Gary Wilmoth, Supervisor	Present
Cindy Wisbon, Treasurer	Present
Kim Cousino, Clerk	Present
Paul Perry, Trustee	Present
Steve Mishka, Trustee	Present

**B. NEW BUSINESS:**

**1) SOLAR ENERGY FIELD DISCUSSION:**

Supervisor Wilmoth asked each guest on the panel to introduce themselves. Present and on the panel were Steve Gauger from National Grid Renewables, Nick Strevel from First Solar and a Monroe County resident, Randy Ellingson Ph. D. Professor of Physics and Astronomy at University of Toledo, Richard Stickmeyer, retired electrical engineer and a Monroe County resident, and Dan Rigato Adjunct Professor at University of Michigan Dearborn.

Erie Township building and zoning official Michael Demski, reviewed the current zoning ordinance for solar, Zoning Ordinance 117 is available on the township website.

Richard Stickmeyer and Dan Rigato, and several residents shared their concerns with large solar plants taking away good farm land, toxic chemicals leaching from the panels over time, developers claiming bankruptcy, solar plants unable to produce sufficient electricity, neighboring properties losing value, and decommissioning of a site. There were also citizen comments in support of renewable energy and development of solar plants/fields.

Steve Gauger is employed by National Grid and oversees Temperance Solar, which is the solar filed located on Sterns Rd. and Dixie Hwy. in Erie Township.

- This field consists of roughly 126 acres, 71,000 panels, and produces 20 MW.
- Steve answered questions regarding the Temperance Solar site, he stated that production from the site has met expectations and that energy is produced on cloudy days, contrary to some statements.
- Mr. Gauger was not aware of any soil sample requirements; that would be up to the township or the property owner if the land is leased.

Nick Strevel from First Solar answered questions regarding the components of the panels and stated that chemicals are not released from the panels over time.

- The semi-conductor is 95% recyclable, the modules are 90% recyclable; most commonly recycled into whiskey bottles, states they are clean, useful products.
- Solar panels can be disposed of in landfills.
- Mr. Strevel did agree with a resident's concern over China using forced labor to produce solar panels; he stated Chinese tied products are being stopped at ports.
- PFAS is not used in solar panels.
- Electromagnetic field exposure is not maximized around solar panels/fields; is no more than we are exposed to from the overhead powerlines.

### **C. ADJOURNMENT:**

Perry moved supported by Wisbon to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Motion carried.

Kimberly Cousino  
Clerk