

**BELLE PLAINE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
FEBRUARY 8, 2016**

OATH OF OFFICE

**Ashby Carter
Catherine Tarbell
Joe Lenz**

Community Development Director Smith Strack administered the Oath of Office to newly-appointed members Ashby Carter, Catherine Tarbell and Joe Lenz.

1. CALL TO ORDER. 1.1. Roll Call.

The Planning and Zoning Commission met in Regular Session on Monday, February 8, 2016 at City Hall, 218 North Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, MN. Chair Nate Hvidsten called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with Commissioners Ashton Pankonin, Anthony Hetzel, Ashby Carter and Alternate Joe Lenz present. Also present were Community Development Director Cynthia Smith-Strack and Council Liaison Henry Pressley. Commissioner Brittney Cotner was not present. Alternate Catherine Tarbell was present as a member of the audience.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION by Commissioner Pankonin, second by Commissioner Lenz, to approve the agenda as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

- 1. Chair**
- 2. Vice Chair**
- 3. Secretary**

Chair Hvidsten turned the gavel over to Vice Chair Hetzel at 6:47 p.m.

Vice Chair Hetzel called to nominations for Chair.

MOTION by Commissioner Pankonin, second by Commissioner Carter, to nominate Nate Hvidsten as Chair, to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote. Commissioner Hvidsten ABSTAINED. ALL OTHERS VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Chair Hvidsten presided for the remainder of the meeting. He called for nominations for the remaining offices.

MOTION by Commissioner Pankonin, second by Commissioner Carter, to nominate Anthony Hetzel as Vice Chair, to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote. Commissioner Hetzel ABSTAINED. ALL OTHERS VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Commissioner Carter, second by Commissioner Hetzel, to nominate Ashton Pankonin as Secretary, to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote. Commissioner Pankonin ABSTAINED. ALL OTHERS VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

4.1. Regular Session Minutes of January 11, 2016.

MOTION by Commissioner Pankonin, second by Commissioner Hetzel, to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 11, 2016 as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None.

6. BUSINESS.

6.1. Solar Energy Standards.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained the Planning Commission and City Council held a joint workshop in January. The workshop purpose was discussion of Solar Energy Systems (SES) as principal uses in the A-2 Rural Residential (RR) District. The Council directed the Planning Commission to continue research to allow SES as principal uses in the RR District. "Principal" use of property means the predominant use of a parcel of land. Since SES are not addressed in the City Code, a code amendment is envisioned. The RR District classification is attached to forty (40) acres of property in the City limits. All 40 acres are owned by the Devine Johnson's and located in a continuous tract west of the westerly terminus of South Street. Included with Community Development Director Smith Strack's memo was a matrix of SES standards from various cities and standards recently approved by Scott County. The concept of an interim use permit (IUP) is similar to a conditional use permit (CUP) the only difference being an IUP can assign a 'sunset date' and doesn't have to 'run with the property' like a CUP. An IUP follows the same issuance process as a CUP including public hearings but the IUP can be tied to a future date, event, or action. Cessation of IUP approval can be coterminous with third party agreements between owners/operators of SES and utility companies. Staff recommends an IUP (as opposed to a CUP) as the authorization mechanism for SES principal. Also recommended was discussion on non-commercial i.e. systems not connected to the grid or roof top systems as accessory uses with certain restrictions.

Commissioner Carter believed it pertinent to include decommissioning regulations and escrow. Commissioner Hetzel concurred and suggested glare regulations. Council Liaison Pressley noted the importance of delineation between a residential structure and an industrial one. The concept of roof mounted solar panels in residential districts as an accessory use was presented and the consensus was to include language. The interim use would apply to ground mounted systems for the A-2, Rural Residential District, which would need to be included in the regulations. Commissioner Pankonin inquired about district regulations. Community Development Director Smith Strack explained that performance standards such as minimum acreage and setback from residential districts could be implemented. Commissioners Pankonin and Carter commented on the need to shield unsightly ground panels from public view. Alternate Tarbell suggested a berm or landscape for the site. It was the consensus of the Commission to proceed with solar energy system regulations as an Interim Use for the A-2, Rural Residential District and also regulations for accessory use in the remaining residential districts. Community Development Director Smith Strack commented that regulations regarding noxious weeds will also be added.

Community Development Director Smith Strack will prepare a draft ordinance for the Commissioners' review at the next meeting.

6.2. Organizational Health Check Follow Up.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained that at the December Planning Commission meeting an organizational health check-up was conducted. One result of the health check-up was consensus that an overview of the Comprehensive Plan would be welcomed. Community Development Director Smith Strack provided a presentation that summarized the Comp Plan. The Comp Plan coordinates all aspects of the City's development/redevelopment activities. The Plan components were explained and maps indicated the different segments were displayed, such as land use, utilities and park search areas.

The Commissioners engaged in conversation on the various components. Council Liaison Pressley commented that the City's role is to orchestrate the development process with land owners.

6.3. 2016 Goals.

The Commissioners discussed potential goals for this year. Commissioner Pankonin commented on the small amount of public input and would like to see more community involvement. Community Development Director Smith Strack noted that regular meetings of the joint boards may be of great assistance. She commented that small groups may be more helpful than generalized public input. The Commissioners have a work list that included the Comp Plan Update, solar energy systems and sign regulations. Commissioner Hvidsten suggested continued review of sections of the Zoning Ordinance for housekeeping issues and compliance with State regulations.

6.4. March 9, 2016 Meet and Greet.

The Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming Meet and Greet of the various commissions and boards for March 9, 2016 starting at 6:00 p.m. Chair Hvidsten will speak on behalf of the Planning Commission , providing an update of recent activities and goals.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

7.1. Commissioner Comments.

There were no further Commissioner comments.

7.2. Director's Report.

Community Development Director Smith Strack provided an overview of recent activity of the various City boards and commissions.

7.3. Upcoming Meetings.

- 1. Destination Belle Plaine 2040, Summit Meeting, 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 9, 2016.**
- 2. Next Regular Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Monday, March 14, 2016.**

The Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming meetings as listed.

8. ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION by Commissioner Pankonin, second by Commissioner Carter, to adjourn at 8:14 p.m. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Krings
Recording Secretary