

ZONING AND PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 16, 2025, Zoning & Planning Board meeting was called to order at 6:30PM at City Hall, located at 206 S. Main Street, Three Forks, MT.

Zoning Members present were Matt Jones, Kelly Smith, Jacob Sebens, Reagan Hooton, Niki Griffis and Racheal Tollison. Amy Laban was excused. City Planner Randy Carpenter and Lee Nellis (consultant for Zoning/Subdivision Regulation rewrite) attended in person at City Hall. (Zoom is a virtual meeting tool allowing people to attend remotely, which started as an option during the COVID-19 pandemic and the City has continued to offer for meetings. No one attended via Zoom.) There was a quorum with the attendance of six Zoning Board members. The minutes were completed by City Clerk Crystal Turner.

Matt Jones called the meeting to order. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being recorded.

Public Present: There was no public present.

PUBLIC COMMENT (items not on the agenda): There were no comments for items not on the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

There was no consent agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Mock Training Session for Performance Zoning

Lee Nellis stated that tonight we will talk about how you apply the new code of the Southeast chapter to a new development request. "Was anyone here last Tuesday night? It was interesting, and you have all been in public hearings when the conversation strays from the topic. Sometimes meetings are messy, get personal, and I want to show the Board how a meeting can be held that serves a good purpose for the community. I want to demonstrate how to have a productive hearing, as well as to be more defensible later on if needed. All of you have probably seen cases that start out with *What are the rules?* and issues get mixed up. Sometimes we get caught up between '*My family has been here since the 1880s*' and then '*I don't like apartment buildings*' so what I want to teach tonight is a hearing procedure of what I like to call "Decision Hygiene". Start with clarity and purpose, and then ask whether or not the application complies with the rules. If your rule is too vague or confusing it will be difficult for you to answer the question. First thing, for whoever is facilitating the meeting, is to state the purpose of the hearing. Then have a step-by-step guideline for the public on the process of how the Board will address the application through the hearing."

Lee explained the process of a mock subdivision application in the Southeast Zoning District, and how the hearing would be held. Lee recommended a Q&A session first before going through the checklist (essentially the public comment portion would be done in the question-and-answer session). "Once you go through the whole checklist and negotiate any staff-recommended conditions, you could make a motion for it," Lee said. He stated for each item that does not

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adhere to the standard, discuss it and make a motion to amend, condition, whatever, and that way the discussion for all those types of issues/concessions are already made well ahead of any motion to formally approve, approve with conditions, or deny.

Lee provided a sample motion to incorporate any other previous motions to amend the application/conditions which were all discussed, then vote on that to move it forward.

Randy Carpenter asked the Board if they thought it would be helpful to go through this process with a former application, something already heard in Three Forks, so that they could play out a hearing? They discussed former applications, and thought the work/live (as a subdivision not a Planned Unit Development) may work as a better mock meeting. Randy and Lee asked what dates work for the Board and if it would like to continue with two meetings per month. Matt Jones said he would rather get the chapters done and move on. "I'm kind of meeting'd out," he said.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEXT CHAPTER(S) TO COME TO THE BOARD & ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING OCTOBER 22:

Chapter 12 – Agricultural District as a final read to forward on to the City Council.

Chapter 17 – Residential District

Chapter 21 – Home Businesses

Reminder that Racheal Tollison will not be in attendance on the 22nd..

All pretty much moved to adjourn at once. Racheal Tollison seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.