

City of Buhl Planning & Zoning Minutes
203 Broadway Ave N
February 21, 2024 Meeting

PRESENT:

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| Barbara Gietzen | Commission Chair |
| Jeff Gabardi | Commission Member |
| Bob VandeWater | Commission Member |
| Reme Pullicar | Commission Member |

STAFF:

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| Karen Drown | City Clerk |
| Pamela McClain | Mayor |
| Jazmine Mills | P & Z Administrator |
| Jason Scott | Public Works Director |

ALSO PRESENT: Concerned Citizens

OPENING — The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM: Jazmine Mills confirmed a quorum.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. January 17, 2024 Minutes Approval: Jeff motioned to approve. Reme seconded. There was no discussion. All voted in favor. The motion passed.
2. January 18, 2024 Minutes Approval: Bob motioned to approve. Maggie seconded. There was no discussion. All voted in favor. The motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Review and Consideration of P & Z Meeting Schedule: Jazmine proposed that the staff and commission meetings be held monthly at 10:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday where regular business would be conducted, P&Z applications would be discussed, and then schedule public hearings at 6:30 p.m. the same day for applications that require one. This would allow the commission members time to gather information and public hearings at an accessible time for community members.

There was a discussion about the Diversion Board’s time slot on the third Wednesday evening meeting and their approval from the Chamber Board to use the Chamber of Commerce building for meetings.

There was a discussion about this schedule change and the Commission’s compliance with the open meeting law.

A discussion was held to determine the optimal time for scheduling public hearings. Jazmine stated the Commission’s recommendations are needed to draft a new ordinance, and then a public hearing before the Commission allowing citizen input can be scheduled. Once the ordinance is in place, the new schedule could be implemented.

Reme moved to hold two monthly meetings on the third Wednesday—a work session at 10:30 a.m. and the other at 6 p.m. for public hearings, and that the evening meeting be canceled if nothing is scheduled. Jeff seconded. There was no discussion. All voted in favor. The motion passed.

Jazmine noted she’ll work with the city clerk on drafting an ordinance.

2. Review and Consideration of P & Z Meeting Procedure: Jazmine stated that both P & Z had previously adopted meeting rules but had strayed over time, and the updated rules will help to organize the Commission's meetings. She presented the updated Buhl City Council meeting rules to the Commission and discussed the changes such as the sign-up sheets for the citizen comment section and the 2-minute comment period.

There was a discussion about the new sign-up sheet format.

Reme noted that public comment at council meetings has been coming from residents who live outside of Buhl and questioned if the comment period should be restricted to only Buhl residents affected by a P&Z agenda item. Jazmine stated she'd research this and get back to them. He related that in Twin Falls County's sign-up sheet if the person signed up isn't in the affected area of the agenda item, their name would be skipped. Reme asked if the sign-up sheet could state that those signing up are property owners in Buhl. Scott cautioned that the Commission should be careful with these types of restrictions and excluding people from comment.

Barbara mentioned that Jerry Mason's seminar on public hearings emphasized the Commission's authority to ask the applicant(s) questions after they have given their testimony. She explained that it becomes difficult to have a conversation with the applicant after a motion has been proposed. Jazmine clarified that the Commission should ask their questions during the open public hearing and not after its conclusion since the discussion period after the hearing is closed is reserved for the Commission members.

A discussion was held about the public hearing P&Z process and clarifying the invitation for Commission members to ask questions before closing the hearing.

There was a discussion about item #8 on the meeting rule sheet regarding what to do when citizens bring their concerns to a Commission member. It was suggested that the Commission member invite the citizen to speak to city staff, voice their concerns during the next scheduled meeting, or have such Commission member bring the concern up during the Commission comments. It was emphasized that citizen-commission member meetings cannot be about future items that would go to a public hearing.

Reme moved to table for additional information regarding public comment restrictions. Bob seconded. There was no discussion. All voted in favor. The motion passed.

3. P & Z Commission Chair Election: Jazmine stated Buhl City Code requires that the Commission Chair be elected annually and failed to have this item on the January 2024 agenda. She explained there isn't a ballot for this type of election, rather, Commission members nominate someone to be the Chair.

Bob moved to nominate Barbara Gietzen for another year as Commission Chair. Reme seconded. There was no discussion. All voted in favor.

COMMISSION COMMENTS — There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENTS — Margaret Gray of Buhl asked the Commission if the area of impact was going to be annexed into city limits. Barbara answered that an individual requesting annexation is how such properties become part of city limits. She also noted the City's sound system wasn't working before asking which law enforcement entity has jurisdiction over the area of impact. Barbara stated the Sheriff primarily does and has a joint agreement with city police. Margaret voiced her concerns and experience with police responses in her neighborhood. There was a discussion about possible police policies in place. Jazmine stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission does not have authority regarding police procedure and that this would be a great question for the police chief to address with her. Margaret also asked the Commission about her sewer bill. Jazmine stated this is a question for the Administration office. Barbara stated Planning and Zoning does not have authority over utility billing.

The Commission members took a moment to test the microphone system after being notified by the Mayor that they should work.

MEETING ADJOURNED — Reme motioned to adjourn. Jeff seconded. All voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.