

MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUTLER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD ON June 22, 2021.

With social distancing guidelines being maintained at in-person meetings, an electronic participation option is made available. This complies with Iowa Code section 21.8 that outlines the guidelines to hold an electronic meeting when there are valid concerns that an in-person meeting is "impossible or impractical".

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Chairman Greg Barnett with members Rusty Eddy and Tom Heidenwirth present. Moved by Heidenwirth, second by Eddy to approve the agenda. All ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read. Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to approve the minutes as read. All ayes. Motion carried.

Supervisor Barnett shared a COVID-19 update from Public Health which included a 14-day positivity rate of 1.6%. The total number of positive cases since March 2020 is 1,759 cases in Butler County. Barnett also shared Public Health has stopped scheduled vaccine clinics due to a lack of interest, but they are still offering walk-in clinics if the need arises. They have had 59 different volunteers helping with the clinics this year and Barnett wanted to express thanks to all those that assisted Public Health. Public Health will also be administering vaccine shots at the fair this week from 2-4 pm, Wednesday through Saturday.

Time set for Public Hearing to consider Resolution #987 Alternate Energy Production Facilities Permit. Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to open the public hearing. All ayes. Motion carried. Several taxpayers were present in-person to comment and Barnett offered each of them the opportunity to speak. Brian Benning, Grundy County resident, shared that he is not in favor of wind turbines because they are taking productive farm ground out of use. Barbara Dilly, Shell Rock, shared that she is a retired professor from Creighton University and is currently a board member for the Center for Rural Affairs organization. Dilly feels it is important to have more information available for the general public regarding wind farms and suggested bringing an expert in to share information regarding the health and economic effects with both negative and positive sides of the issue. Dilly explained the Center for Rural Affairs can be used as a free resource and she provided her contact information. Supervisor Heidenwirth clarified today's hearing and resolution are to consider a moratorium on alternate energy facilities permits until our zoning ordinances are completed and that the board is not here today to decide if wind turbines should or should not be in Butler County. Barnett reiterated that our zoning ordinances were already in the process of being updated in 2020, but were stalled due to COVID-19 and today's resolution would extend the time to update those ordinances before considering new alternate energy facility permits. Deb Nieman, Shell Rock, shared her personal story regarding a past wind farm possibility in Black Hawk County, which resulted in neighbors being divided and fighting about the issue and the negative effect it had on the sale of their acreage at that time. Doug Schueler, Allison, shared he is in favor of alternate energy and has a solar panel on his farm, but is against wind turbines. He explained in his frequent travels he has spoke with producers who wish they had never done it because of the constant swishing. Schueler also mentioned a wind turbine cemetery in Ellsworth that results after the wind turbines are no longer in use. Supervisor Eddy shared the wind turbines are only lasting 10 years and with no ability to break down the fiberglass blades, those blades are simply being stacked or buried in landfills. Eddy shared he will always remain against wind turbines in Butler County. Eddy also asked, by show of hands, who in the room was for and/or against wind farms and hog lots in Butler County. Dave Albrecht, Shell Rock, shared he felt hog lots were a business for profit vs. needing subsidies and hog lots also provided local employment, manure, etc. Albrecht shared his personal story of hunting in western Iowa and how much the landscape, roads, creeks, farm tile, etc. were tore up to accommodate wind farm infrastructure. He also described the constant noise that you can not get away from when residing close to a wind turbine. Crystal Klahsen, Aplington, shared her personal experience with the constant blinking because they reside within 8 miles of 8 wind turbines. Klahsen mentioned the Facebook page she started and the interest, information and stories shared from the page. Klahsen stated she is for alternate energy and mentioned a smaller wind turbine option available called a tulip turbine. Barnett commented the he was concerned the wind farm companies did not contact or notify the county regarding their interest or intentions in Butler County. Ted Junker, New Hartford, shared a map with the room showing the area affected and the number of farms/residents that are against the wind farms. Junker also shared they have collected 303 signatures and 150 online signatures in favor of moratorium until ordinances are updated. Junker feels wind farms do not make sense because they are not self-sustaining without subsidies but hog lots are. Junker feels hog lots are not as intrusive on the overall landscape and waste can be reused on crops used to feed the hogs who in turn feed us. Kim Junker, New Hartford, shared stories of a wind farm companies lack of transparency when speaking with land owners and not contacting the local county governments first to provide public information. Junker also shared information regarding the decommissioning part of these farms and how they are being abandoned all over the country. She also commented that current county ordinances across Iowa were originally created to consider building requirements but are now outdated because they were not created to consider 500-600-foot skyscrapers. Ted Junker also shared details regarding the contracts and contract provisions a wind farm company was passing out. Eddy commented that he would like to take the opportunity to address hog sites and the fact that he would also like to consider a moratorium on hog sites in the future in Butler County. Barnett thanked everyone for coming and sharing their opinions regarding the alternate energy facilities permit moratorium. Motioned by Heidenwirth, second by Eddy to close the public hearing. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to adopt Resolution 987 Alternate Energy Production Facilities Permit. All ayes. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION 987 ALTERNATE ENERGY PRODUCTION FACILITIES PERMIT

WHEREAS, the Butler County Planning and Zoning Commission are in the process of amending the Butler County Zoning Ordinance in that the proposed revisions have been drafted and are being reviewed; and

WHEREAS, the County has been made aware of an interest in building one or more alternate energy production facilities; and

WHEREAS, the effects of alternate energy production facilities are not fully known at this time; and

WHEREAS, Butler County desires a consistent application of zoning regulations in order to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Butler County; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Butler County, Iowa, that Butler County now imposes a moratorium, effective immediately for the consideration and approval of any special use permits for alternate energy production facilities. This moratorium shall remain in effect for a period of one-hundred eighty days or until the approval of the amended Butler County Zoning Ordinance, whichever occurs first.

UPON Roll Call and the vote thereon was:

AYES: Tom Heidenwirth
Greg Barnett
Rusty Eddy

NAYS:

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the motion was carried.

WHEREUPON the Resolution was declared duly adopted this 22nd day of June, 2021

Greg Barnett
Chair, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:
Leslie Groen, County Auditor

Moved by Barnett, second by Heidenwirth to approve the Funding Agreement between Butler County and Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging. All ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to approve the Funding Agreement between Butler County and Community Planning Group Visions of Well-Being, Inc. All ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Heidenwirth, second by Eddy to approve the Funding Agreement between Butler County and Crisis Intervention Services. All ayes. Motion carried.

Moved by Barnett, second by Heidenwirth to approve the First Amended and Restated 28E Agreement for County Social Services. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to award the DOT contract 12-C012(114) to Iowa Bridge and Culver and authorize the Chair to sign contract documents. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motioned by Barnett, second by Eddy to approve the Utility Permit for Corn Belt Power Cooperative. All ayes. Motion carried.

Chad Campbell, Campbell-Mellema Insurance, provided the anniversary review of the county's ICAP insurance. Campbell explained a combination of county claims, an increase in pooled severe weather claims from the derecho and a discontinuation of a voucher credit this year all contributed to this year's premium increase. Campbell explained he contacted County Auditor, Leslie Groen, during budgeting and the increased premium was budgeted for in the FY22 budget.

Motioned by Eddy, second by Heidenwirth to approve claims. All ayes. Motion carried.

Board acknowledged receipt of Manure Management Plan Short Forms for Worley Pork #62358.

Motioned by Heidenwirth, second by Eddy to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:26 A.M. to June 30, 2021 at 9:00 A.M. Motion carried.

The above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes and proceedings of a regular adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Butler County, Iowa on June 22, 2021.

Attest: _____
Butler County Auditor

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors