

Pulaski County Advisory Plan Commission

APC

Special Session

Pulaski County Highway Garage

Winamac, Indiana

Thursday February 6, 2025 5:00 EST

APC Commission members present were Ray Franko, Bob Keller, Tyler Gutwein, Mike Teide, Mike McClure, Breann Wilson, Abby Dickey and alternate member Andrew Fritz with Karla Redweik and Tina Dunn.

Members Todd Schmicker and Megan Korous were absent.

Also present were Jason Kuchmay, Bob Barger, Franna Barger, Nick Dugan, Bev Smith, Bill Smith, Darrel Gudeman, Margarita Bope, Dennis Bope, Linda Fritz, Terry Young, John ?, Brian Young, Terri Hansen, Jerry Locke, Rebecca Johnson, Michael Sehstedt, Butch Sehstedt, Jerry Johnson, Gail Lambert, Larry Lambert, Josh Stamper, Kathy Wright, Jason Fagner, Todd Jansen, Diane Cervenka, Mark Cervenka, Matt Rausch, Cathy Fritz, John Fritz, John Kramer, Chris Brucker, Connie Ehrlich, David Sommers, ? Metzger. Dave Olds, Darlene Olds, Jamie Murry, Mike Craft, Martha Krohn, Tom Thomas, Gery Welker, Logan Wuethrich, Isaiah Tidwell, Dale Chu, Candy Moyer, Ed Cotner, Alan Fritz, Scott Leman, Sherry Fagner, Lynn Darda, Don Darda, Norman Welker, Janice Gudeman, Albert Gutwein, Suzanne Morrow, Brue McDonald, Scott Fritz, Kevin Wyatt, Bryant Larkin, Tim Harmsen, Sara Harmsen, Brandi Larkin, Kevin Larkin, Ron Bischoff, Chuck Rebeck, Breann Smith, Chris Wilson, Nathan Origer and Sheriff Schramm.

Call to order:

Meeting was called to order by Administrator Redweik

Pledge

Organization of the board

Mike McClure nominates Abby Dickey as President, Mike Tiede seconds. Motion carried.

Mike McClure nominates Ray Franko for Vice President, Mike Tiede seconds. Motion carried.

Approval of agenda

Mike Tiede adjusted the agenda-add Nathan to the agenda under old business. Franko motions, McClure seconds. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the minutes

Mike Tiede motions for the approval of the July 22, 2024 minutes. Mike McClure second.
Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Board member reappointments

Extension Board

Reappointed Todd Schmicker
Andrew Fritz selected as alternate

Surveyor

Reappointed Breann Wilson

BZA Appointee

Bob Keller
McClure Motions, Tiede Seconds, motion passed.

2025 Schedule

February 6 5:00 special session

March 3-1

May 19

July 28

September 22

November 24

Mike Tiede motion to approve as presented. Ray Franko seconds, passes
unanimously.

Alternates

Bob asks about Andrew Fritz being on the board because of his association with solar. Karla advises that people need to seek caution if they have any conflict of interest or items that they would vote on. We need alternates for the board.

3 alternates available for commissioner appointed members

Solar Moratorium

Information has been sent to the office concerning a moratorium for a solar, no attorney to offer any guidance for this at this time, first time discussing this topic.

Tyler Gutwein- I think it would be a good idea to look into it.

Old Business

Attorney

The county attorney has agreed to represent the board. 2 others had expressed interest but fees were a concern. Mike Tiede makes a motion to hire Jacob Ahler for the APC attorney position. Mike McClure seconds. Motion passed 8-1 with Breann Wilson voting against.

Nathan Origer

Concerned about the proposed fee changes for solar permitting. We Have already received over 500,000 in economic payments and fines from solar companies.

President Dickey closes the meeting and opens the public hearing at 5:35 pm.

Public Hearing

Ordinance language adjustments (see attachment)

Administrator Redweik goes over the language adjustments.

- *Commercial solar fees

- * Violation Fees

- *Operation & Maintenance, Minimum setbacks, Post construction requirements, application process, safety, design & install standards, notice to the public.

Public Comment

Landscaping changes- the fence only

Connie Ehrlich- is the money we have received from the solar companies so far being put in an escrow to pay for consulting fees? Karla will ask VS engineering about the fees

Todd Janzen-Attorney for some of the farmers signed up for solar. The ordinance changes are a deterrent to future development of solar.

Logan Wuethrich- The developers need to follow the site plan they submit. Any changes they should have to reapply.

Bruce McDonald-Starke County panels are not hooked up. Farmers are only getting maintenance payments. Changes need to be put in to protect the county.

Candy Myer-If tornado comes through and destroys the panels and they go into your yard, who is responsible for the clean up? Will they help relocate animals if they are involved?

Dennis Bope-Has land in the solar development in Starke county. The panels are live and the solar company (Mammoth) has paid him.

Bob Barger-We need to have a stop somewhere. We have enough land in solar with 29,000 acres.

Chris Brucker-Showed a map with acreage signed up with solar. The ordinances that the APC agreed on should move forward or we will have a mess in the county.

John Kramer-For the people that want to have the ordinances to stay local and for the ones that want them to come from down state, I have worked with the state, they are very unorganized and have no common sense. Their concepts cannot work at a local level.

Gail Lambert-Need the fees increased. We need the solar companies to notify neighbors about solar projects in their area.

Rebecca Johnson-Flooding around the areas with solar in Starke County.

Margarita Bope-Property values around solar cannot be compared to other areas of the county. Recent studies show that property values are not affected. Farmers should have a choice on how to use their land.

Gery Welker-We need to be careful on how we do the changes in the ordinances. It's about revenue generation and if we change too much we will drive away other potential solar projects.

Isaiah Tidwell-Property values

Jerry Johnson-Anything that you vote on that affects my property 1%, I have a problem with.

Matt Rausch-We need to limit the acreage for the next generation.

David Sommers-Fulton County commissioner willing to share their ordinances that they have in place.

Board members vote on Ordinance changes:

*Violation Fees

Mike Tiede makes a motion to approve, Mike McClure seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

*Language adjustments to UDO

Tyler Gutwein motions, Bob Keller Seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

*Pulaski County Development Fee Schedule C.5

Tyler Gutwein motion to approve, Bob Keller seconds. Motion passes 7-1 with Mike Tiede opposing.

APC meeting closed @ 6:33 pm

Special Session

Public Hearing

Battery Storage Moratorium (see attachment)

Public Comment

Jason Kuchmay-Shared information and examples on the dangers of BESS

Beverly Smith-Green energy and climate change is a hoax

Darrel Gudeman-Where will the battery storage areas be located? How many acres has been signed up for solar? Is there a maximum number of acres that will be set? I don't want to hear rumors, I want facts. Has anyone toured a battery storage farm? What about the people that own less than 10 acres? Do you think they want to be surrounded by these things? We need a moratorium until we get things figured out.

John Kramer-Fire a big concern.

Rebecca Johnson-Insurance concerns

Jerry Johnson-Insurance, fire department in the area

Gail Lambert-Heavy metals in soils after BESS fire in California.

Kathy Wyatt-Fire concerns, toxic fumes, water purity, invasive plants coming into crops

Todd Jazsen-Use common sense, a storage battery for a person's home could be considered a BESS. Could run out potential revenue for the county.

Logan Wuethrich-Solar companies need to have their own fire department. The county doesn't need to be all farmland but it shouldn't be all solar either.

Don Darda-Worried about natural resources and aquafilter.

Bruce McDonald-California battery storage facility largest in the world. 3 to 5 year moratorium

Brandi Larkin-Wants an impact study done on BESS.

Terry Young-14% of the county is solar. Get more information and facts.

Tyler Gutwein- We need more time to look into this, we don't want to jump into something we have no idea about. I want an 18 month moratorium.

Mike McClure- Do we have anyone wanting to put in battery storage?

Karla-No

Mike McClure-I think we shouldn't do anything until we get someone wanting to put battery storage in.

Breann Wilson- We need to be prepared before they want to put it in.

Bob Keller- I agree with Tyler on the 18 month moratorium

Mike Teide-When we talked about it before it was 12 months, now it is 18 and 24 months because it was changed in the legal notice. Did we ever discuss the 18 and 24 months? I just don't want to get into a lawsuit over it because we never discussed the 18 or 24 month ones before.

Ray Franko-If we put on this moratorium we are not stopping solar right? Just the BESS? Can't they just put the batteries across the state lines? They are already shipping it over there. They can store it over there. We didn't discuss 24 but I think we did for 12 and 18 months.

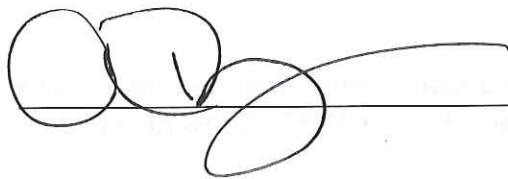
Abby Dickey-I think the confusion is because someone went and changed our legal note, so that is where the confusion is. Even if we said a year, can't we add 6 months or even a year to it then.

Tyler Gutwein Motions for a 18 month moratorium. Bob Keller seconds. Motion passes 7-0. Andrew Fritz abstained

Motion to adjourn by Mike McClure. Ray Frank seconds. Motion passed unanimously at 7:47 pm.

Next regular meeting will be March 31st at the Pulaski county Highway garage at 7 est.

President Abby Dickey

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Abby Dickey', written over a horizontal line.

Vice President Ray Franko

A horizontal line for a signature.

Karla Redweik Administration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Karla Redweik', written over a horizontal line.