

# Minutes - Woodbury County Board of Adjustment Meeting – October 5, 2020

The Board of Adjustment meeting convened on the 5th of October 2020 at 6:00 PM via teleconference due to the social distancing recommendations as a result of the COVID-19 virus.

BA Members Present (Telephone): Tom Thiesen, Bob Brouillette, Ashley Christensen  
County Staff Present (Board Room): David Gleiser, Dan Priestley, Andy Pietz  
Public Present (Telephone): Matt Ott, Adam Jablonski, Kyle Specketer

## Call to Order

Vice Chair Tom Thiesen formally called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

## Public Comment on Matters Not on the Agenda

No public comment for non-agenda items.

## Approval of Minutes

The June 1, 2020 minutes were approved. Motion by Brouillette to approve; second by Christensen. Motion passed 3-0.

## Election of Chair and/or Vice Chair

Due to Chair Dwight Rorholm's resignation from the board, Tom Thiesen progressed to the role of Chair. The role of Vice Chair is to be filled. Motion by Brouillette to elect Ashley Christensen Vice Chair; second by Thiesen. Motion passed 3-0.

## Conditional Use Permit Public Hearing

### Electrical Energy Generation for a Photovoltaic Solar Electricity Generating System

Priestley delivered the staff report for MidAmerican Energy's conditional use permit application for electrical energy generation (not including wind) for the installation and operation of a photovoltaic solar electricity generating system on their property located on Parcel #874720300006 in T87N R47W (Liberty Township), Section 20, NW ¼ of the SW ¼ and the SW ¼ of the SW ¼. The property is located in the General Industrial (GI) Zoning District and not located in the floodplain. The Zoning Commission at their meeting on Monday, September 28, 2020 reviewed this request and voted to recommend approval to the Board of Adjustment contingent that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provide a permissible determination for the project to proceed. On September 30, 2020, the FAA provided the permissible determination. The staff found this proposal to meet the conditional use permit criteria as the FAA determination has been received. Brouillette requested that Matt Ott from MidAmerican Energy provide a narrative about the project. Ott discussed that this would be one of MidAmerican's first solar projects and selected this site as it is near their existing facility. Construction would begin early next Spring. Ott also provided background on the level of energy production in comparison with other mediums. A motion was made by Brouillette to close the public hearing; second by Christensen. Motion passed 3-0.

A motion was made by Ashley Christensen to approve this conditional use permit; second by Thiesen. Brouillette inquired if there was any additional information and if there was validity to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) statement about color of the panels. Matt Ott indicated that their design effectively could meet IDNR's concerns. Motion passed 3-0.

## Public Comment on Matters Not on the Agenda

No public comment for non-agenda items.

## Commissioner Comment or Inquiry

Director Gleiser offered a status update about the county comprehensive plan. Over the last three years, the Community & Economic Development (CED) department and the Board of Supervisors have been working with cities in the county to update each individual city's comprehensive plan. As of June 2020, the city plans are complete, and the county is now at a level of readiness to update its comprehensive plan. Information can be obtained from the city plans including their future land use maps and then overlaid over the zoning map which will enable the county to examine areas where zoning districts might need to be changed. SIMPCO, the regional council of governments, was awarded \$400,000 from the US Economic Development Administration for planning projects within their service region. Woodbury County submitted an application to SIMPCO for \$100,000 to update the county comprehensive plan. SIMPCO notified the county they would be able to provide \$50,000. The Board of Supervisors will fund the remaining \$50,000. The project will likely begin this fiscal year. Brouillette inquired about the comprehensive plans for the cities. Gleiser provided background about the relationship between the county and the cities through that respective process.

## Adjourn

Motion by Brouillette to adjourn; second by Christensen. Motion passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.