

**Winnebago County Board  
Zoning Committee Meeting**  
Winnebago County Administration Building  
404 Elm Street, Room 303,  
Rockford, IL 61101

~Minutes of Tuesday, May 21, 2024 – 5:30 P.M.

**Members Present:**

Jim Webster, Chairman  
Angie Goral (*left at 6:34 pm*)  
Paul Arena  
Dave Tassoni  
Aaron Booker

**Staff Present:**

Troy Krup, Planning & Zoning Officer  
Karl Palmquist, Planner  
Ashley Spohr, RPED Director  
Lafa Vaughan, Chief Assistant State's Attorney  
Sherry Zack, Assistant State's Attorney  
Donna Kelly, Assistant State's Attorney

**Members Absent:**

John Guevara  
Tim Nabors

**Others Present:**

Jim Rodriguez, Attorney  
Hal Sprague, Community Engagement Mgr, Trajectory Energy  
Emmanuel Byarm, Attorney

**AGENDA:**

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Approval of March 27, 2024 Minutes
- D. Public Comment
- E. Agenda Item:
  - 1. TA-01-24: An Ordinance Amending the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Regarding Commercial Wind Power Generating Facilities / Wind Farms (aka Commercial Wind Energy Facilities) and Solar Farms (aka Commercial Solar Energy Facilities)  
**ZBA Recommendation: *APPROVAL with ZBA amendments (7-0)***
- F. Other Matters
- G. Adjournment

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**MINUTES:**

- A. Call to Order

Mr. Webster called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

B. Roll Call was taken; 5 members present at time of roll call (see above for listed specifics).

C. Approval of March 27, 2024 Minutes

**A motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 27, 2024** was made by Ms. Goral, seconded by Mr. Arena. **Motion to approve the March minutes PASSED (5-0)**. Accordingly, the March Zoning Committee *minutes* are approved.

D. Public Comments: The Zoning Committee is a public meeting, not a public hearing. Testimony is given to the Zoning Board of Appeals on the zoning petitions before us tonight. No more testimony will be taken. Committee members may ask questions of petitioners or others present who testified earlier for clarification with the Chairman's consent. The recommendation of the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Zoning Committee go to the full County Board for a decision, Thursday, May 23, 2024. The County Board will lay the petitions over to the June 14, 2024 County Board meeting for a decision. However, the County Board may in certain instances suspend the rules and make a decision, Thursday, May 24, 2024. I can assure that's not going to happen, we are not going to suspend Thursday night. If you have any questions concerning these petitions or the meeting schedule, please call the County Planning and Zoning Office at (815) 319-4350. The rules of the County Board will no longer allow non-County Board Members to address zoning items at the County Board Meetings. With that said, are there any comments that are not with regard to the zoning matter before us tonight?

*No comments from the public were presented to the Committee for consideration.*

E. Agenda Item:

1. TA-01-24: An Ordinance Amending the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Regarding Commercial Wind Power Generating Facilities / Wind Farms (aka Commercial Wind Energy Facilities) and Solar Farms (aka Commercial Solar Energy Facilities)  
**ZBA Recommendation: APPROVAL with ZBA amendments (7-0)**

**Motion to approve TA-01-24** (An Ordinance Amending the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Regarding Commercial Wind Power Generating Facilities / Wind Farms (aka Commercial Wind Energy Facilities) and Solar Farms (aka Commercial Solar Energy Facilities) **with ZBA amendments** was made by Mr. Tassoni, seconded by Mr. Booker. Discussion followed.

**Motion to amend the 4<sup>th</sup> Whereas paragraph** to read as: WHEREAS, the County Board of the County of Winnebago, Illinois has reviewed and considered the testimony presented at the public hearing held by the ZBA and the ZBA's and Zoning Committee's recommendations, and hereby reluctantly agrees to replace their current regulations in the UDO pertaining to commercial wind power generating facilities / wind farms (aka commercial wind energy facilities) and solar farms (aka commercial solar energy facilities) with language -as mandated by the State of Illinois- that is consistent with State Law, 55 ILCS 5/5-12020, hence, effectively **limiting eliminating** the County's ability to self-regulate said land uses was made by Mr. Webster, seconded by Mr. Arena. **Motion to amend PASSED (5-0)**. Accordingly, the ZC recommends the amendment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Whereas as noted.

**Motion to amend Article 17, Sec. 17.1. Purpose of Article** to read as: The regulations set forth in this Article are intended to ~~promote the health, safety, welfare, and morals of the residents of Winnebago County~~ **substantially comply with the State of Illinois' mandate** by establishing specific criteria for the siting, construction, maintenance, and decommissioning of Commercial Wind Energy Facilities and Commercial Solar Energy Facilities, and facilities attendant thereto, consistent with 55 ILCS 5/5-12020. was made by Mr. Arena, seconded by Mr. Tassoni and Mr. Booker. **Motion to amend PASSED (5-0).** Accordingly, the ZC recommends the amendment of the Sec. 17.1 as noted.

**Motion to add a subsection A. to Article 17, Sec. 17.3 Permitted Use** to read as **A. The County values the import of the public's input in matters concerning land use and expressly recognizes that the citizenry of Winnebago County has maintained a long-standing cherished opportunity to be heard at zoning hearings. Accordingly, consonant with the spirit of the public hearing requirement set forth in 55 ILCS 5/5-12020(c), the County Board shall give due consideration to public testimony in making its siting decision. In doing so, the County Board may consider the factors set forth in Article 4, Section 4.3.4(4)(a-f), although no written findings of fact shall be required of the ZBA and/or County Board. Nothing shall prohibit the County Board from considering the transcribed record of the public hearing and the factors set forth in Article 4, Section 4.3.4(4)(a-f), in making its final determination** was made by Mr. Arena, seconded by Mr. Tassoni. **Motion to amend (add) PASSED (5-0).** Accordingly, the ZC recommends the amendment of the Sec. 17.3 as noted.

**Motion to layover TA-01-24 to the next zoning meeting on June 26, 2024** was made by Mr. Tassoni, seconded by Mr. Arena. **Motion to layover TA-01-24 PASSED (4-0).** Accordingly, case TA-01-24 is laid-over to the June 26, 2024 ZC meeting.

G. Other Matters

H. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn** was made by Mr. Booker, seconded by Mr. Tassoni. **Motion to adjourn PASSED (4-0).** Accordingly, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Embry