



# Wabash County Plan Commission

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## Wabash County Plan Commission – Meeting Minutes

Board Members: Randy Curless, Jeff Dawes, Sam Hann, Chris Hickman, Doug Rice, Mike Ruse, Geoff Schortgen, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel

Staff: Mark Frantz, Board Attorney; Brian Campbell, Plan Director; Jennifer Hicks, PC Secretary

**Thursday, April 2, 2026**

### 1. Call To Order

The Wabash County Plan Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Randy Curless.

### 2. Roll Call

Mr. Campbell, Plan Director called roll:

- ✓ Randy Curless – *present*
- ✓ Jeff Dawes – *present*
- ✓ Sam Hann – *present*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *absent*
- ✓ Doug Rice – *present*
- ✓ Mike Ruse – *present*
- ✓ Geoff Schortgen – *present*
- ✓ Cheri Slee – *present*
- ✓ Joe Vogel – *present*

Mr. Campbell declared a quorum was present.

### 3. Approval of Meeting Minutes –

Minutes from the March 5, 2026 meeting were presented. Mr. Hann made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Rice seconded the motion.

Mr. Campbell called roll:

- ✓ Randy Curless – *yes*
- ✓ Jeff Dawes – *yes*
- ✓ Sam Hann – *yes*
- ✓ Doug Rice – *yes*
- ✓ Mike Ruse – *yes*
- ✓ Cheri Slee – *abstain*
- ✓ Joe Vogel – *yes*

The motion carried.

### 4. Old Business

#### **Unsafe Premise Order – 25 N. Perch Drive (Mary Chandler)**

This matter remains on hold pending seasonal conditions. The office is waiting for the grass to take hold before the official order can be cleared. No action taken.

### **Ordinance Review**

The Plan Commission received a proposal from Banning Engineering regarding the ordinance amendment review. The proposal included the hourly rates, but not a final project fee. The final project fee will be determined once Banning has an opportunity to coordinate further with staff.

### **Unsafe Premise Order – Ezra & Laura Gahl**

Mr. Campbell deferred the update until next meeting due to needing to conduct a follow-up site visit.

### **BESS / Data Center Draft Ordinance**

Mr. Campbell reported that preliminary work has begun on a draft ordinance for data centers. There was discussion regarding whether to combine the BESS and Data Center ordinance or keep them separate. Office staff will continue to develop the draft ordinance(s).

The Plan Commission discussed placing a moratorium on data centers. Questions were raised as to whether the moratorium should also include Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). Members of the Commission noted that data centers and BESS sites often go “hand in hand” and are usually on the same site, but not always.

Mr. Frantz advised against voting on a combined moratorium because a specific definition for BESS had not yet been established in the proposal language.

The Plan Commission staff is researching other counties within Indiana, and seeing how they are handling data center developments. It was also noted a voter initiative in Ohio is on the ballot regarding a statewide ban on data centers.

It was clarified that a moratorium is considered a form of zoning ordinance and would require it’s own public hearing before it could be sent to the County Commissioners for final approval.

Mr. Hann made a motion to table the moratorium request to allow staff time to add necessary definitions for BESS and combine the language so that both data centers and battery storage systems could be addressed under a single, comprehensive moratorium. Mr. Rice seconded the motion.

Mr. Campbell called roll:

- ✓ Randy Curless – *yes*
- ✓ Jeff Dawes – *yes*
- ✓ Sam Hann – *yes*
- ✓ Doug Rice – *yes*
- ✓ Mike Ruse – *yes*
- ✓ Cheri Slee – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel – *yes*

The motion carried.

## **5. New Business**

### **SE-26-002 – Scott & Jessica Sheahan**

**Location:** 6658 N 150 E, Urbana

**Request:** The petitioners are requesting a special exception to operate a kennel/boarding facility on their property within an existing barn.

Mr. Campbell presented the request. Mr. & Mrs. Sheahan wish to convert a portion of their existing barn into a kennel/boarding facility. Per Chapter 9, kennels can only be approved in an A1 or A2 zoning district with a Special Exception. Mr. Campbell noted the facility meets setback requirements and is located more than 1,320 feet from the nearest off-site residential structure.

Mr. Sheahan confirmed the facility would initially focus on boarding for approximately 12 dogs.

Mr. Hann made a motion to forward a favorable recommendation to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Vogel the motion.

Mr. Campbell called roll:

- ✓ Randy Curless – *yes*
- ✓ Jeff Dawes – *yes*
- ✓ Sam Hann – *yes*
- ✓ Doug Rice – *yes*
- ✓ Mike Ruse – *yes*
- ✓ Cheri Slee – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel – *yes*

The motion carried.

### **Sandy Beach Dumpster Request**

A request was made by a resident of Sandy Beach to have the Plan Commission provide a dumpster for a community clean up at Sandy Beach. The dumpster would be overseen by a local resident and council member.

The Plan Commission discussed the budget availability and past issues with prohibited items being placed in the dumpster while it wasn't being watched. The request did mention involving the Lake Association to distribute a list of prohibited items to residents in the community prior to the dumpsters being delivered.

Discussion was had regarding working with Solid Waste or the Great Community Clean-up in the future for cleaning up the Sandy Beach area. There was also discussion regarding having dumpsters available in other unincorporated communities within the County.

It was also discussed that the funds are currently budgeted from the Unsafe Premise Fund so research would need to be completed to determine what the funds could be used for.

Mr. Dawes made a motion to table the request. Mr. Vogel seconded the motion.

Mr. Campbell called roll:

- ✓ Randy Curless – *yes*
- ✓ Jeff Dawes – *yes*
- ✓ Sam Hann – *yes*
- ✓ Doug Rice – *yes*
- ✓ Mike Ruse – *yes*
- ✓ Cheri Slee – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel – *yes*

The motion carried.

## **6. Staff Reports**

**Monthly Report**

Mr. Campbell noted the March staff report was not available due to Ms. Hicks being out of the office prior to the meeting.

**7. Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

**8. Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Rice made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by all members voting "aye." The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

**(bac)**