

# **Lewis County Planning Commission**

## **Public Meeting**

In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**June 10, 2025 - Meeting Notes**

**Planning Commissioners Present:** Jason Alves, District 1; Jeff Skutley, District 2; Frank Corbin, District 3; Roger Moore, At-Large; Gretchen Fritsch, District 3; Bob Russell, District 2

**Staff Present:** Mindy Brooks, Director of Community Development; Guilherme Motta, Senior Long-Range Planner; Megan Sathre, Administrative Assistant;

### **Materials Used:**

- Agenda
- Draft Meeting Notes – May 27, 2025
- Staff Report: Energy Code

### **1. Zoom Guidelines**

The clerk dispensed with the Zoom Guidelines.

### **2. Call to Order**

#### **A. Determination of a Quorum**

6 Commissioners were present; there was a quorum.

### **3. Approval of Agenda**

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the agenda for June 10, 2025. Commissioner Russell made the motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Alves. The motion carried unanimously.

### **4. Approval of Meeting Notes**

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes for May 27, 2025. Commissioner Russell made the motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Alves. The motion carried unanimously.

### **5. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

## **6. Workshop - Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Energy Code**

Guilherme Motta, Long Range Planner of Lewis County Community Development, gave a presentation on the Energy Code. *See presentation for details.* The following questions occurred throughout the presentation.

Commissioner Russell noted that in Guilherme's presentation he appreciates the WACs and RCWs provided for the state level requirements, in addition to the additional county regulations being proposed. Russell asks that all of the codes include the state requirements for clarity.

Commissioner Skutley asked if there is a limit to the number of tanks allowed for hydrogen storage. Guilherme responded no, there is not a tank number limit – only a volume tank limit of 15,000 gallons.

The Planning Commissioners expressed the desire for more restrictions regarding where solar farms can be located. Mindy responded that the Planning Commission may recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that solar energy only be allowed in Major Industrial Developing (MID) zoning and not be allowed in RDD-20. The county is designating where it seems most appropriate for solar energy to be located so that the state will not override and allow it in resource lands.

Commissioner Alves would also like to see strong wind farm restrictions. Mindy responded that the intention of the wind farm energy code is to designate where this use is most appropriate in Lewis County in hopes that the state does not override us. The primary focus is the TransAlta IPAT property for wind energy production. Alves asked if there have been jurisdictions that have successfully limited wind farms against the state. Mindy responded no. If there is an economic benefit of putting in an alternative energy source and the county does not have regulations, the state can allow it. The main goal for Lewis County is to protect resource lands. Commissioner Russell recommended changing the small wind farm requirements to only allow wind turbines up to 75 feet.

Commissioner Corbin asked about battery energy storage water setbacks. Mindy responded that standard setbacks from streams and wetlands apply. There are many state and federal regulations as well.

Commissioner Alves asked if any battery energy storage facilities currently exist in the county. Mindy responded no. Alves asked if battery storage is typically used as backup to other energy production sources. Mindy responded yes, there must be another energy production source co-located. The regulations being proposed are for commercial sale, not individual battery storage.

Commissioner Russell expressed concern about the allowances of hydroelectric energy production. Mindy responded that it is very heavily regulated by the state so there isn't the need to have many regulations at the county level. Commissioner Skutley asked what it would look like to have

hydroelectric energy production on 5, 10, and 20 acres. Mindy responded that hydroelectric energy production is allowed where there is water capable of producing energy at a commercial scale, so it is allowed in all RDD zones.

Commissioner Corbin asked if there is a way to stipulate that the power generated in Lewis County stays in Lewis County. Mindy responded not in the zoning code. The Board of County Commissioners can enter into development agreements with specific providers to try to keep some of the power here. TransAlta is aware of the BOCCs desire to pursue this as TransAlta transition to whatever they will be doing next.

## **7. Good of the Order:**

### **A. Staff**

Mindy shared that the next set of materials to review will be quite large, but the staff report will help to clarify what should be focused on. Please provide questions to staff by June 20th to help staff hone the next presentation.

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> there will be community meetings on the UGA small town development regulations being proposed. The meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> will be at the Packwood Community Hall and the meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> will be at the Onalaska Elementary School. Mindy reminded the commissioners that staff are willing to attend community meetings by request.

Tonight is Guilherme's last Planning Commission meeting. He has accepted a new position with the City of Redmond.

### **B. Planning Commissioners**

Commissioner Corbin will be attending the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting via Zoom. Commissioner Russell will be absent on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

## **8. Calendar:**

The next Planning Commission meeting will be on June 24, 2025, and the agenda item will be a workshop on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Development Regulations.

## **9. Adjourn**

Commissioner Moore made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.