

# TAMA COUNTY ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES

## Utility-Scale Solar Ordinance Public Hearing & Wind Ordinance Review

Wednesday Aug 13, 2025

Board members present: Doug Dvorak, Jody Boldt, Carol Meyer, Wade Mitchell, Steve Petersen.

Four community members were present in the room, and one additional individual was present on Teams.

### MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Dvorak, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Petersen, second by Meyer to approve the tentative agenda. All Ayes, motion carried.

Minutes from the previous meeting 7/30/25 were reviewed. Motion by Boldt, second by Mitchell to approve the minutes. All Ayes, motion carried.

Opening remarks were made by Zoning Administrator Laura Wilson, thanking the community members attending for the Utility-Scale Solar Ordinance Draft Hearing, and explaining the order of the meeting.

The Public Hearing opened for comments by those in attendance at 6:04 PM.

Carolyn Adolphs commented that it was really important to get the ordinance done. She liked the section about CSR restrictions, and asked for clarification on the decommissioning section.

Andrea Dvorak and Richard Arp commented to thank the Zoning Commission for the enormous amount of work and effort they have put into this ordinance. Arp also asked the Commission members to consider attending Board of Supervisor meetings to emphasize the importance of the County's zoning laws.

Administrator Wilson clarified that if a recommendation was approved during the meeting, the official recommendation of the Commission would be presented to the Board of Supervisors at their next meeting. She asked Linda Moeller who was attending via Teams if she had any comments, and she responded with a typed comment "Great job by the board". Adolphs asked a question about Bonds included in the ordinance.

Motion by Boldt, second by Meyer to close the Public Hearing. Roll Call vote, all Ayes. Motion carried and public hearing closed at 6:12 PM.

Petersen asked if the ordinance would need to be looked at by legal representation before a recommendation is made to the Supervisors. Wilson responded that the Supervisors would have the option to make changes, so they would need to go through legal after any of their changes are made before going to another public hearing.

Motion by Petersen, second by Mitchell, to submit the Zoning Commission recommendation to the Supervisors at their next meeting, for the draft of the Utility-Scale Solar Ordinance. Roll Call vote, all Ayes, motion carried. Wilson read a statement of recommendation that would be signed after the meeting by Chairman Dvorak and would be presented at the Board of Supervisor's meeting on Monday August 18, 2025.

Dvorak began the discussion for review of the Wind Energy Conversion System (WECS), and asked his board members to provide their initial thoughts. Petersen gave comments that he received about wind energy from other people, and stated that he thinks “if we do build some more wind [projects] in Tama County, that it’s done to the best of our ability...we make sure it’s not using good ground, it’s not doing things that are gonna impact future generations. [...] We need to be very careful what we do with this.”

Mitchell gave his comments, including observations from his recent trip to Ireland and their reactions to wind projects. Mitchell continued with comments on the engineering plans of wind projects.

Boldt gave her comments, including personal experience and sentiment around the Vienna Wind Project that has been in Tama County for many years. She made the comment of the need to look at other people’s property rights besides only the landowners that are putting up the towers.

Meyer gave her comments, starting with her perception changing from these projects being “green energy” to these projects being simply “alternative energy”, stating it takes a lot of fossil fuels to get the projects up and running, and a lot of mining to get solar going. She also states that she “would hate to see Tama County become some kind of energy hub.”

Additional discussion continued among the commission members, and Mitchell state that the county needs “a good solid ordinance, even if the state ends up trying to take over”. Meyer mentioned that she only received 4 statements from Tama County citizens that were in favor of industrial solar, and a countless number of communications from Tama County citizens that were against. She iterated that this board serves the county, and she feels their solar ordinance reflected the public input that had been received and communicated to the Zoning Commission.

Petersen referenced the Worth County ordinance, and specifically called out the portions preventing eminent domain, covering decommissioning requirements, and ambient noise studies. Mitchell mentioned sub-audible noise concerns. Boldt asks about stray electricity (stray voltage). Petersen mentioned the setback categories from the Worth ordinance.

Discussion occurred around the upcoming Public Hearing that the Board of Supervisors had set for a “Development Agreement” with a wind company that had not yet been through the permitting process laid forth in the Tama County Ordinances. Concerns were raised about the point of updating ordinances if the Supervisors bypasses the laws that are adopted for the County. Copies of the Worth County wind ordinance were provided to each Commission member and they began reviewing sections within the document.

Motion to adjourn by Petersen, second by Meyer. All Ayes, Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

***\*\*VIDEO RECORDING OF THE TAMA COUNTY ZONING BOARD MEETING HELD AUGUST 13, 2025 WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE TAMA COUNTY YOUTUBE CHANNEL\*\****

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Wilson