

**CITY OF KNOX PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**KNOX CITY HALL 101 WEST WASHINGTON STREET**  
**KNOX, INDIANA 46534**  
**MEETING MINUTES: FEBRUARY 4, 2025**

***MEMBERSHIP PRESENT: JEFF V. BERG, SHERRY COWEN, JAIME GRUSZCZYNSKI***

***JIM BROWN, DAVE METZ***

***MEMBERSHIP ABSENT: JEFF HOUSTON, RON PARKER***

***STAFF PRESENT: LONNIE BOLEY***

***BOARD ATTORNEY PRESENT: JUSTIN SCHRAMM***

***AUDIENCE: TODD KEEN AND SONS***

**PAGE ONE**

The regular meeting of the Knox Planning Commission was called to order by Jeff V. Berg, president at 6 p.m. A commission quorum recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the January 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes as written with a motion to second by Sherry Cowen, vice president. Approval by commission 5-0. Jeff V. Berg notified members he will be taking notes of the meeting tonight.

**Agenda item Cargo/Storage Containers** for definition, on the January meeting agenda for discussion, was brought forward for discussion. Jeff V. Berg, president, started the discussion stating an intensive definition could be found on Wikipedia but also realizes the city of Knox wishes to enact an ordinance of prohibition regarding such storage trailers within the corporation limits. Jim Brown, commissioner, spoke about **AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING THE MAINTAINING OF PORTABLE TRAILER STORAGE CONTAINERS ON REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF KNOX, INDIANA** and suggesting this ordinance has a lot of definition. Lonnie Boley, staff, and Jeff V. Berg, president, informed the membership during dialogue that this ordinance did not provide adequate definition and therefore was not presented for action before the Knox City Council during February 2024. Justin Schramm, board attorney, was asked if he could email a copy of the Town of Winamac ordinance to Lonnie Boley, staff or Jeff V. Berg, president. Sherry Cowen, vice president, made a motion to table Cargo/Storage Containers until the March meeting with a second from Jim Brown, commissioner. Approval 4-1 with Dave Metz, commissioner, opposing to table the formatted information.

Agenda Dress Code discussion was represented by Jeff V. Berg, president, speaking to the membership of the soon televised meetings and the need to represent our commission with a

professional emphasis of dress standard. In a secondary comment, he also noted that the Knox City Council does not have a written dress code standard; therefore, the planning commission will not be adopting one secondary to the council. Dave Metz, commissioner, asked about a dress code for people attending our meetings. During more pivotal discussion, the membership consensus was all in favor of not adopting a dress code policy for attendees. Jeff V. Berg, president, did note that the Laporte County, Indiana Council has an adopted dress code policy standard for attendees if any member wants to review it.

**TECH review** decision by Jeff V. Berg, president, appointing Sherry Cowen, vice president, and Jim Brown, commissioner to serve as the technical review committee trio for 2025.

**TIME LIMITS/RULES & PROCEDURES review** discussion imposes a three-minute time limit on petitioners or any other speaker in general. A total of fifteen minutes of rebuttal can be authorized.

#### **PAGE TWO**

During the Citizen Comments agenda segment, Jeff V. Berg, president, provides public speaking information copies of interest and recites: February 4, 2025---Some commissions allow public comment on any agenda item at any time during the meeting; others allow such comment only during formal public hearings. There are advantages and disadvantages to both practices. Allowing unrestricted public comment makes the meetings less formal and gives the audience more of an opportunity to participate in the planning process. At the same time, it can unnecessarily drag out the meeting, increase dissension, make meetings less orderly, and diminish the ability of commission members to discuss issues among themselves. Plan commission meetings and hearings can be productive or non-productive, efficient, or a waste of time, orderly or chaotic. The choice is the commissions to make The Citizens Comments section must provide a clear and concise future process. Some commissions will only allow the public to speak after obtaining key information such as name, address, and topic, so the commission is not blindsided by topic. Of course, the President of the Commission does have authority if someone speaks disorderly. Most that speak in front of the commission will be during a public hearing. The section previous can be grievous unto the commission as well noting the public can speak in favor of or in opposition to an agenda item for a period of 3 minutes. With time, the technical review committee will certainly review and address the entirety of the current rules of procedures from October 3, 2017.

In other business, Jim Brown, commissioner, referred lingering questions about the new subdivision wanting answers to Lonnie Boley, staff.

The Commission received copies of **AN ORDINANCE DISCLAIMING AND PROHIBITING RELIANCE PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF PERMIT BY THE CITY OF KNOX, INDIANA**, authored by Justin Schramm, board attorney, for reading and review. A public hearing will be conducted during the March commission meeting with action thereof.

Todd Keen, audience citizen, provided conversation about his appreciation for Lonnie Boley, staff, working with him as he readies a new house near completion on Pacific Avenue.

**ADJOURNMENT** Since there was no further business, the planning commission meeting was adjourned by Jeff V. Berg, president, at 6:52 p.m.

**Jeff V. Berg**  
**President/Recording Secretary**  
**Knox Planning Commission**

