

City of Ashton Minutes Planning and Zoning Commission

**Thursday, September 12, 2024
7:00 p.m.**

In Attendance: Rosie Owens, Dallas Hill, Audrey Tibbitts, Danya Liebert & Trenna Howell

Also, in Attendance: Planning and Zoning Administrator Sara Bowersox, Deputy Clerk Jan Warnke, Jerry Grebenc and Kevin Angland with Great West Engineering, Mayor Tom Mattingly, Councilmember Nate Finley, City Clerk Cathy Stegelmeier, Sheryl Hill and Administrative Assistant Morgin Lenz.

Chairman Owens welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7:00 pm

1. Approve Minutes from August 15, 2024: ACTION ITEM

Commissioner Liebert made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Tibbitts seconded the motion. The motion passed.

2. Administrator's Report – Sara Bowersox

There has been nothing much going on this month. The office has only received three simple Class I permits.

3. Comprehensive Plan Meet with Great West Engineering (GWE)

Jerry Grebenc, with GWE, introduced himself along with his colleague Kevin Angland. Jerry is out of the Helena Montana office and Kevin is out of the Great Falls office. He told the commission about some of the city's that they were currently working with in Idaho and Montana. Jerry & Kevin are both land use planners. He talked about the approach that they take to complete a Comprehensive Plan update. One of the first steps that they have the cities do is a community review or survey, which the Ashton Planning and Zoning commission has already done. One thing that GWE does is help put together planning documents that help the city upgrade their infrastructure. There are a lot of grants and loan programs to help a city, and the funding agencies want to see that a city is doing proactive planning. GWE approach is to help a city come up with concrete goals, objectives and actions to make it an achievable document. It is great to have big ideas, but it's best to have the goals, objectives and actions that are in the comprehensive plan, achievable in five to seven years. The commission needs to be able to prove to themselves, the City Council and the public that these processes are worth it. GWE recommends limiting the amount of data to a snapshot that tells a story about the community. This information can be an appendix with links to all the data. Mr. Grebenc suggested thinking about the opportunities along with the issues that the city has. That information will be the basis to create goals, objectives and actions. Mr. Grebenc was very pleased that the commission had already completed the community survey. Administrator Bowersox told Mr. Grebenc that some opportunities and issues are in the draft vision document that was put together after and because of the survey. She also informed him that there are members of the community that want to help. Mr. Grebenc suggested having a couple of work meetings with those survey volunteers. He emphasized not to start over from scratch. He will provide the commission with a rough working draft for the commission to give feedback rather than starting from square one. He handed each commissioner a copy of the Roundup, Montana Comprehensive Plan. He asked them to look over that document because that would be the template that Ashton would start with. The commission will have the ability to move things around and change things to make it Ashton's. Idaho Statute requires information that must be in the document. The commission can add to or expand any of the sections that are required by statute. In 2019 the P & Z commission had a couple of

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town hall meetings to get input from the community. At that time the city staff gave the current data that they had for the Comp. Plan to the P & Z Administrator. The administrator will ask the city staff to collect and give her the most recent data. Mr. Grebenc emphasized that the Comp. Plan needs to be an achievable successful document. The commission thinks the current Ashton Comp. Plan is wordy and needs one that is easy to read and understand. They also want an amendable data appendix that can be updated so they don't have to update the entire Comprehensive Plan as often. The next step is to have a rough draft ready by November and to have zoom meetings as much as possible during the winter. In the future there will be major changes to State Highway 20. The commission wants to make sure there is a plan for City expansion for those changes.

4. Association of Idaho Cities P & Z Video Series

At the last meeting the commission was assigned to watch the training video on Rules and Quasi-judicial decisions. The video emphasized the point of making decisions on facts that are in the code. You should never speak to the public about a pending decision that will be made. Also, keep your emotions out of the decision-making process. The commission was asked to watch the video called "how to conduct a successful meeting".

- **Schedule next Meeting**

Commissioner Tibbitts asked if she could speak to the commission about grants at the next meeting. It will be added to next month's agenda. The next Planning and Zoning meeting will be held on Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 7:00 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Jan Warnke