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**PLUMAS COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Minutes of the Meeting of April 4, 2019

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**PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

**Dr. Robert Abbott, Chair (District 1)**  
**Moorea Hoffman Stout, Commissioner (District 2)**  
**Jeff Greening, Commissioner (District 3)**  
**Larry Williams, Commissioner (District 4)**  
**John Olofson, Vice-Chair (District 5)**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice- Chair John Olofson calls the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

**II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**III. ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:** Jeff Greening, Larry Williams, John Olofson  
**Commissioners Absent:** Dr. Robert Abbott, Moorea Hoffman Stout

**Also in attendance (Supervisors and staff)**

Randy Wilson, Planning Director  
Rebecca Herrin, Assistant Planning Director  
Tim Evans, Assistant Planner  
Gretchen Stuhr, Deputy County Counsel III

**IV. CONSENT ITEMS**

*A. There are no changes to the agenda.*

**V. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS/COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Larry Williams notes the recent passing of George Terhune, his neighbor. Terhune served as Chair of the Airport Land Use Commission. Williams states that he was a "brilliant man".

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY**

*There are no public comments.*

**VII. WORKSHOP/DISCUSSION: Draft Backyard Chicken Ordinance**

Associate Planner Tim Evans gives a report on the proposed ordinance to allow backyard chickens in the Single-Family Residential (2-R, 3-R and 7-R) zones. Evans explains that there will be no permits required to keep chickens, but the ordinance contains general requirements for runs and coops that will contain the chickens and for such things as drainage to ensure that there are minimal neighborhood impacts.

There is a definition section at the beginning of the proposed ordinance in Section 9-2.4304(a) through (e).

The maximum allowable number of chickens is proposed to be two chickens per one-seventh acre of parcel area. The maximum number of chickens per parcel is not to exceed twelve.

Evans goes on to explain that there are certain general requirements in the proposed ordinance, such as a requirement that chickens be contained within the coop and/or run at all times and that both the coop and run be constructed to be predator-proof. Standard Environmental Health conditions of Title 6 have been incorporated, such as maintenance of fly-free condition as per PCC 6-10.117. Eggs are to be for domestic use only; not for commercial sale.

Design requirements in the proposed ordinance include requiring that the coop be designed to encompass at least six square feet of area per chicken, excluding the nesting boxes) and to contain the feeders and waterers within the confines of the coop. The chickens should have easy access to the run, with at least ten square feet of area per chicken in the run. The chickens should not be allowed to run free.

The chicken coop and run shall be located on the rear of the property, behind the residence. If the property has two frontages, the coop and run shall be located on the rear portion of the property that is opposite the side providing street access, with a minimum front yard setback of twenty-five feet from the remaining frontage. The coop and run must be located at least twenty feet from the nearest adjoining residence or ten feet from any property line, whichever is greater.

The height of the chicken coop and run shall not exceed seven feet in height.

Prohibited uses include commercial sales of eggs, slaughtering processes, and roosters.

Discussion among the Commissioners takes place regarding fire hazards from electrical cords and lights. Planning Director Wilson suggests that language could be included in the ordinance advising that building permits are required for electrical use. Vice-Chair Olofson expresses concern with public notice for all concerned parties.

Wilson stresses that currently chickens are not allowed in the Single-Family Residential zones, except for 4-H projects with a special use permit. There are problems with allowing roosters. This ordinance will legalize conditions in the event the Planning Department receives complaints. The County will then have standards in place to use for enforcement. The keeping of backyard chickens is similar to backyard cannabis as both can create nuisances and both will be enforced through a complaint-driven process.

Commissioner Greening states that he has never heard any complaints about the chickens in Chester. The Commission discusses parcel size vs. allowable numbers of chickens. Vice-Chair Olofson feels that two chickens per one-seventh acre is unrealistic. Commissioner Greening proposes six chickens per one-seventh acre. Olofson suggests that more than six chickens should require neighbor approval. Wilson suggests perhaps a special use permit could be required for more than six chickens per legal parcel.

Consensus is that each parcel should be allowed six chickens, with twelve chickens permitted on any lot at least twice the minimum parcel size and that language be added to remind applicants that building permits for electrical may be required.

Planning Director Wilson states that Jerry Sipe, Director of Environmental Health, suggested the removal of "as necessary" from Section 9-2.4306(a)(7): *"As necessary, property owner(s) shall be subject to the requirements of Plumas County Code Sec. 6-10.117. Animal Waste".*

Sipe also recommends that in Section 9-2.4306(a)(8) that "domestic uses" be defined or else eliminated. Section 8: *"Backyard chickens and their eggs are to be used for domestic uses only"* is eliminated.

Staff will make changes as recommended to the draft ordinance and schedule a public hearing.

**VIII. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/ON-GOING PROJECT UPDATES:**

Wilson reports that the Board of Supervisors waived the first reading of the Commercial Cannabis Ban ordinance. Nothing further has occurred with the approval of the Telecommunications ordinance. Discussion ensues regarding towers and cellular facilities.

**IX. CORRESPONDENCE:**

*None.*

**X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Zoning code update discussion**

Discussion of tackling one or two simpler zoning ordinances as "low hanging fruit". Williams suggests that item 13 "Department of Defense noise and compatibility code development" should be done prior to Planning Director Wilson's retirement in July. Wilson worked closely with Department of Defense personnel who offered to assist with the ordinance. The Board has directed that cannabis be addressed prior to other issues on the list.

Suggested that child day care and/or accessory unit ordinances be brought forward to the Commission.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:**

*M/S/C: Williams/Greening/3-0 to adjourn the meeting.* The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission will be held on April 18, 2019.



John Olofson, Vice-Chair  
Plumas County Planning Commission



Rebecca Herrin, Assistant Planning Director