



AITKIN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026	GOVERNMENT CENTER BOARD ROOM
1. CALL TO ORDER	
The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.	

2. ROLL CALL					
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT		Dave Lange <i>Vice-chair</i>	Michael Kearney <i>Chair</i>	Steve Kulifaj	Dennise Sonnee
BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT	Charlie Christensen				
STAFF PRESENT	Environmental Services Director, Andrew Carlstrom Planning Commission Secretary, Shannon Wiebusch County Attorney, Jim Ratz				

3. APPROVE AGENDA					
MOTION TO:		APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		APPROVE AS AMENDED <input type="checkbox"/>	
1ST	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input type="checkbox"/>
2ND	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input type="checkbox"/>
VOTE TO APPROVE AGENDA	YES <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lange <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sonnee	NO <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input type="checkbox"/> Lange <input type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/> Sonnee			
RESULT:	APPROVED 4.0				

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2026	
CHAIRPERSON	Dennise Sonnee nominated Michael Kearney for Chair. There were no other nominations. All members voted unanimously for Michael Kearney. Michael is Chair.
RESULT:	MICHAEL KEARNEY IS CHAIR.
VICE CHAIR	Dennise Sonnee nominated Dave Lange for Vice Chair. There were no other nominations. All members voted unanimously for Dave Lange. David Lange is Vice Chair.
RESULT:	DAVE LANGE IS CHAIR.

SECRETARY:	Dennise Sonnee nominated Shannon Wiebusch for Secretary. There were no other nominations. All members voted unanimously for Shannon Wiebusch as Secretary.
RESULT:	SHANNON WIEBUSCH IS SECRETARY.

NEW BUSINESS					
5. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APP# 2025-001060					
APPLICANT/ REPRESENTATIVE	David Edwin Burgstaler of Smokey Oak Properties LLC, 27253 Burgstaler Rd, Aitkin, MN 56431				
CORRESPONDENCE	35 notices were sent; no comments were received.				
STAFF REPORT & DISCUSSION	<p>Carlstrom read the staff inspection by Zoning Officer Brock Anderson and proposed conditions.</p> <p>David Burgstaler was present. Discussion about parking on Hwy 210. Parking on 210 must be in accordance to the laws of the road authority. Discussion on condition for operating hours; weekends and evenings as necessary for business operations.</p>				
PUBLIC COMMENT	<p>Terry Betley, Chairman of Aitkin Town Board, spoke in support of the business. Discussed concerns about access from Hwy 210 and its location near a bypass lane.</p> <p>John Lundquist, 311 1st St SE, spoke in favor.</p>				
BOARD DISCUSSION	Condition #6 added: Applicant will need to comply with any road requirements from MNDOT.				
FINDINGS OF FACT	Christensen	Lange	Kearney	Kulifaj	Sonnee
<i>1. The proposed use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of the environment or of other property in the immediate vicinity, nor impair property values within the surrounding neighborhood.</i>	Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES
<i>2. The proposed use will not increase local or state expenditures in relation to costs of servicing or maintaining neighboring properties.</i>	Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES
<i>3. The location and character of the proposed use are considered to be consistent with a desirable pattern of development for the locality in general.</i>	Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES
<i>4. The proposed use conforms to the comprehensive land use for the County.</i>	Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES

5. Proper notice has been given to those people required under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 394, of the proposed use and of the hearing before the Planning Commission.		Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES
6. That other applicable requirements of this ordinance, or other ordinances of the County have been met.		Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES
7. The proposed use is not injurious to the public health, safety and general welfare.		Absent	YES	YES	YES	YES
MOTION TO:		APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		DENY <input type="checkbox"/>	TABLE <input type="checkbox"/>	
1ST	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input type="checkbox"/>	
2ND	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
VOTE:		YES <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lange <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sonnee	NO <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input type="checkbox"/> Lange <input type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/> Sonnee			
RESULT:		APPROVED WITH 6 CONDITIONS, 4.0				

6. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES					
MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2025			APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		APPROVE AS AMENDED <input type="checkbox"/>
1ST	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input type="checkbox"/>
2ND	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VOTE:		YES <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lange <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sonnee	NO <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input type="checkbox"/> Lange <input type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/> Sonnee		
RESULT:		APPROVED 4.0			

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN MADE AT 4:42 PM					
1ST	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input type="checkbox"/>
2ND	Charlie Christensen <input type="checkbox"/>	Dave Lange <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Kearney <input type="checkbox"/>	Steve Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/>	Dennise Sonnee <input type="checkbox"/>
VOTE TO ADJOURN:		YES <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lange <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sonnee	NO <input type="checkbox"/> Christensen <input type="checkbox"/> Lange <input type="checkbox"/> Kearney <input type="checkbox"/> Kulifaj <input type="checkbox"/> Sonnee		

<i>Shannon Wiebusch</i>	2/23/2026
Shannon Wiebusch, Planning Commission Secretary	DATE APPROVED

- DRAFT
- FINAL