

Oneida County Planning & Zoning Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: May 6, 2026

Time: 9:00 PM

Location: Oneida County Courthouse

Commissioners Present

- Steve Daniels
- Rich Moore
- Jennifer Brown
- Tallen Boyer
- Travis Hanks
- Bucky Reeder

Commissioners Absent

- Alaina Schrenk – Excused

Staff Present

- Darla Tombaugh
- Tori Richardson

1. Building Permit Review and Approval

Discussion was held regarding a manufactured home placement and associated building permit concerns brought forward by neighboring property owners. Staff clarified that the applicants did possess the necessary approvals and that issues with the foundation dimensions were being corrected. It was noted the matter was primarily cosmetic in nature and did not affect the structural compliance of the home.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the April building permits.

Motion: Approve building permits as presented.

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of April 1, 2026 Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the April 1, 2026 regular meeting.

Motion: Approve the April 1, 2026 meeting minutes.

Seconded: Yes

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion Items

A. Planning and Zoning Assistance Program / Nonprofit Partnership

Staff discussed a newly approved partnership authorized by the Board of County Commissioners with a nonprofit organization based in Pocatello that assists rural communities with planning and zoning administration.

Discussion included:

- Updating and streamlining county applications and procedures
- Utilizing retired planning and development professionals as consultants
- Assistance from a certified Idaho surveyor
- Potential implementation of artificial intelligence tools to help applicants identify proper applications, fee structures, timelines, and processes

The Commission discussed how the system could improve public accessibility and reduce staff workload.

No action was taken.

B. Original Parcel and Contiguous Parcel Interpretation

The Commission held an extensive discussion regarding interpretation of “original parcel” status under county code when contiguous parcels are held under common ownership.

Topics discussed included:

- Whether contiguous parcels under common ownership should be treated as one parcel
- Whether “one-time split” rights extend to each individual tax parcel or only to the contiguous property as a whole
- Concerns regarding increased density in agricultural zones
- Preservation of agricultural land consistent with the Comprehensive Plan
- Ambiguity within current county code language
- The distinction between assessor parcel numbers and land use parcel interpretation

Commission consensus generally supported the interpretation that contiguous parcels under common ownership should be considered one parcel for purposes of one-time split eligibility.

Staff was directed to work with legal counsel to draft proposed clarifying code language for future Commission review.

No formal action was taken.

C. Water Study and Potential Development Restrictions

The Commission discussed preliminary findings from the county water balance study conducted by Great Basin. Staff reported that the study indicates groundwater output currently exceeds recharge rates, even during above-average precipitation years.

Discussion included:

- Potential impacts of continued residential development on groundwater resources
- Idaho Department of Water Resources domestic well limitations
- Possibility of requiring water rights for subdivisions
- Consideration of temporary development moratoriums
- Agricultural recharge impacts associated with piping irrigation systems
- Legal limitations and challenges associated with moratoriums
- Examples from other Idaho communities, including Melba

The Commission discussed several possible approaches, including:

1. Temporary moratorium on building permits
2. Restricting new subdivisions while allowing limited development
3. Taking no immediate action

Staff indicated additional meetings regarding the water study were scheduled and requested the completed study be distributed to Commission members for review.

No action was taken.

4. Planning and Zoning Administrator Report

Darla Tombaugh presented the Planning and Zoning activity report.

Discussion included:

- Increase in subdivision applications
- Anticipated growth in minor and full subdivisions
- One-time split applications
- Variance requests
- Non-compliant Conditional Use Permits
- Ongoing code enforcement cases
- Public hearing scheduling and administrative workload

The Commission acknowledged the increasing workload within the Planning and Zoning Department. Commission members expressed appreciation for staff efforts and recognized the transition from a two-person office to a single administrator position. Discussion included the need to monitor staffing capacity and workload demands moving forward.

No action was taken.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at approximately 9:49 PM.