

COMMUNITY & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION

215 Comanche Street, Public Hearing Room – 2nd Floor, Kiowa, CO 80117

DATE: November 12, 2024 TIME: 7:00 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:05 PM - Chair Willcox
2. **PRAYER:** 7:06 PM - Chair Willcox
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** 7:06 PM - Led by Chair Willcox
4. **ROLL CALL:** 7:07 PM – Recording Secretary
Commissioners Present: Chair Danny Willcox, Van Sands, Mike Buck, Dede Schott-Grace, Robert Poletiek, John Gresham, Jon Waller.
Commissioners Absent: Vice Chair Kevin Kirkwood.
Vacant Seat(s): One.
Meeting Staff: Jennifer Jones, Planning Manager; Eric Larson, Economic Development Specialist; Wendy Doyle, PC Recording Secretary; Carrie Seubert, Planning Technician.
5. **REMINDER TO TURN OFF CELL PHONES:** 7:07 PM - Chair Willcox
6. **STAFF REPORT:** 7:07 PM – Jennifer Jones reported Planning Commissioner terms will expire at the end of 2024 for Jon Waller, Mike Buck, and Danny Willcox; Board of County Commissioners October 23, 2024 meeting actions: Approved Elora Final Plat, Space X Special Use by Review, and set the hearing date of November 13, 2024 for EC East Metropolitan Districts; Board of County Commissioners October 24, 2024 meeting actions: Approved EC East PUD and Preliminary Plat.
7. **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:** 7:09 PM None – Jennifer Jones
8. **CITIZEN COMMENTS** - Unrelated to public hearings: 7:09 PM None – Chair Willcox
9. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:** 7:10 PM
Commissioner Sands: I move to approve the **October 1, 2024**, Planning Commission meeting minutes as presented.
Commissioner Schott-Grace seconded the motion. **Motion Passed 7 – 0.**
10. **PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS:** 7:11 PM - Chair Willcox
Process and order of business statements omitted due to continuance of public hearing.
11. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** 7:11 PM
 1. Ingalls Rezone RZ-2024-2599.
 2. Elbert County Water Master Plan.

PUBLIC HEARING #1, INGALLS REZONE RZ-2024-2599 7:12 PM

Staff Presentation: Jennifer Jones, Planning Manager – presented application was properly noticed for this evening’s meeting; continuance requested to the date and time certain, December 3, 2024.

Call for Motion – Chair Willcox

Commissioner Schott-Grace: I move for a continuance of the Ingalls Rezone RZ-2024-2599 public hearing to the date and time certain, December 3, 2024, the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission.

*Commissioner Waller seconded the motion. **Motion Passed 7 – 0.***

PUBLIC HEARING #1, INGALLS REZONE RZ-2024-2599 CLOSED 7:14 PM

PUBLIC HEARING #2, ELBERT COUNTY WATER MASTER PLAN 7:15 PM

Staff Presentation: Eric Larson, Economic Development Specialist – presented the initial application for a Water Master Plan was submitted to the Colorado Water Conservation Board in the Spring of 2023 and was awarded a grant for \$45,000. Elbert County matched the grant along with approximately \$5,000 to fund the 2-year water study. The study is not a plan or policy; however, the process created a report, and the responsibility is with the County to give staff guidance to do the work to make it policy and into regulations, making it enforceable. Mr. Larson extended appreciation to Elbert County community members for actively completing surveys, contributing feedback, and steering committee participation. The Colorado Water Conservation Board and the South Platte River Basin will receive the report presenting where Elbert County fits into the grand scheme of Colorado water as solely an aquifer user. County staff is seeking a recommendation from the Planning Commission to the Board of County Commissioners to accept the Water Master Plan researched and compiled by Forsgren Associates Inc., contracted by Elbert County.

Consultant Presentation: Will Koger, Forsgren Associates Inc./Bill Fronczak, LRE Water – reviewed overview slides: Master Plan Goals; Public Engagement; Water Demands; Groundwater Analysis; Water Management Strategies; Recommendations. Goals: Engage with the public/Understand future water demands/Analyze groundwater supplies/Review water management practices/Recommend policies based on analysis of water supplies and demands. Focuses: Growing Population/Projected Water Demands/Elbert County Water Supplies/Groundwater Analysis–Denver Basin (DB)/Wells Constructed in Elbert County, 2018-2023/Total DB Groundwater Use, 2018-2023/Individual Lot Wells/Change in DB Groundwater in Storage, 2018-2050/Groundwater Analysis Conclusions/Best Management Practices–Conservation/Water Management–Reuse/Water Management–Conjunctive Use, Aquifer Storage & Recovery/Recommended Policies (12).

Staff Proposed Topics for Consideration: Eric Larson – presented 1. Creation of a Citizen Water Advisory Panel modeled on the Noxious Weed Advisory Board. 2. Draft policies - i.e., drill wells deeper, promote recycle/reuse. 3. Technologies/conservation for large developments. 4. New developments consider existing system interconnections. 5. Engage with regional partners. 6. Fund USGS (US Geological Survey) monitoring/enhancements to aquifer resolution available for planning. 7. Enhance planner ability to use and interpret water data (educate/hire). 8. Consider monitoring and enforcement options. 9. Consider “worst case” rotating loan fund or grants to assist citizens in drilling new wells for provable interference - i.e., In 1972, drilling company did not drill a “deep” well. Moving forward, staff will draft recommended policies and regulations, based upon the data in the Water Master Plan, for Planning Commission consideration.

Public Testimony: None – Chair Willcox

Board Only Discussion Opened: Chair Willcox

Brief discussions between Commissioners, Staff, and Consultants included steering committee composition and role; study projection years and numbers; Elbert County and neighboring counties’ water use; water calculations and rights; aquifer storage and recovery; proposed water conservation committee; prioritization of staff recommended policies; depths of independent lot wells; dry wells not dry aquifers; well permits and re-drilling permits; water sources and retention options; public awareness; funding options for re-drilling; Elbert County’s 300-year water rule; Elbert County requested and funded

Water Master Plan study (scope did not include other counties) to include recommended policies; shared water restrictions and collaboration; property water belonging to property owner; conditions of approval discussions.

Board Only Discussion Closed: Chair Willcox

Call for Motion – Chair Willcox

Commissioner Willcox: *I move that the Board of County Commissioners consider accepting the Water Master Plan with the inclusion of three (3) Conditions of Approval: 1. In the future, analyze water use from other counties and how it compares to water use in Elbert County; 2. Clean up the specifics that are stated as far as population projections and citizen involvement in the Steering Committees; 3. Evaluate other introductions of water into Elbert County.*

Commissioner Schott-Grace seconded the motion. **Motion Passed 7 – 0.**

PUBLIC HEARING #2, ELBERT COUNTY WATER MASTER PLAN CLOSED 9:20 PM

12. ADJOURNMENT: 9:21 PM

Call for Motion – Chair Willcox

Commissioner Poletiek: *I move to adjourn the November 12, 2024, meeting of the Planning Commission.*

Commissioner Schott-Grace seconded the motion. **Motion Passed 7 - 0.**