



ELBERT COUNTY, COLORADO
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES
Special Meeting Held in the BOCC Meeting Room
May 15, 2025 at 10:00 AM

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Rhonda Braun Recorder, Elbert County, Co



CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The continuation of Land Use Hearing opened at 10:00 AM

LAND USE HEARINGS 10:00 A.M.

Sundance Solar - 1041-2024-1310 and SUR-2024-0028

Public Comment Continuation:

Kerry Jiblets – 19656 Wedemeyer Rd - Voiced concerns about how often the panels will be washed, water usage, hail damage possibilities and the threat to prairie ecosystems.

Beverly Durant – 40968 CR 53 – Ms. Durant requested the Commissioners deny the application.

Tammy Richter – 37210 Sky View Cir – Ms. Richter noted her neighbor has a pacemaker and inquired if this project will restrict his activities.

Elizabeth Patton – 36543 Happiness Trail – Ms. Patton was in a car accident 20 years ago and still has effects from the smoke to her lungs, voicing concerns about fires.

Public Comment Closed

The Commissioners and Applicants discussed 4 major concerns regarding the public comment:

- 1) Fire Safety
- 2) Decommissioning
- 3) Property Value Concerns
- 4) Location of Project

Commissioner McDaniel called a recess at 11:06 AM and reconvened at 11:25 AM

Commissioner McDaniel asked the applicants if they would agree to build a secondary road for emergency evacuations and an aesthetically pleasing barrier. The applicants agreed.

Motion: Approve Sundance Solar – 1041-2024-1310

Commissioner Schroeder made a motion to Approve Sundance Solar – 1041-2024-1310. Commissioner McDaniel seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Mike Buck – Nay

Dallas Schroeder – Aye

Byron McDaniel – Aye

Motion: Approve Sundance Solar – SUR-2024-0028

Commissioner Schroeder made a motion to Approve Sundance Solar – SUR-2024-0028. Commissioner McDaniel seconded the motion.

Aye – Dallas Schroeder, Byron McDaniel
Nay – Mike Buck

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Commissioner Schroeder apologized to the Ehmanns for the personal attack in yesterday's meeting. Regardless of the outcome, personal attacks should not be tolerated. Mr. Schroeder stated they are a quasi-judicial board and the board must make decisions based on facts, putting personal thoughts and feelings aside. There is a renewable energy mandate from the state. It is a requirement for all electrical providers to reach a certain standard of renewable energy by 2030. Mr. Schroeder is a proponent of property rights and that the individual property owner can have the best use of their property as they see fit. Our role is to work with a landowner in any application to help them accomplish what they'd like to do with their property. Staff works tirelessly with the applicant before being reviewed by the Planning Commission, and finally to the BOCC. Mr. Schroeder's reasoning for supporting the project is extensive. The applicant did everything that was required of them to get this project approved and all criteria were met. It aligns with our Comp Plan and the direction the County needs to go. The economic impact for many entities is tremendous and the commitment made by Cypress Solar to be good community partners in many areas is commendable. We rely on the expertise of referral agencies to approve or recommend denial. Referral agencies had no concerns, and this facility can act as a fire break. This will be an overall benefit to the county in many ways. Mr. Schroeder would fight for the rights of any landowner to use their property as they see fit if they meet all the rules and regulations.

Roll Call Vote:
Mike Buck – Nay
Dallas Schroeder – Aye
Byron McDaniel – Aye

Commissioner McDaniel voted in favor also as he felt his hands were tied because of the state mandates. Mr. McDaniels echoed Mr. Schroeder's comments about property rights and the benefits to the county from this facility. This facility will be a source of power for the county and a backup in the event of blackouts.

Commissioner Buck voted nay stating that the Planning Commission voted 7-2 against the project. The PC is representative of the entire community, with 3 members from each district. He feels the project isn't compatible for the surrounding area, and it will devalue the properties and quoted SUR guidelines.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Adjourn

Commissioner Schroeder made a motion to Adjourn. Commissioner Buck seconded the motion.

Aye – Dallas Schroeder, Mike Buck, Byron McDaniel
Nay - None



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ELBERT COUNTY, COLORADO

BYRON MCDANIEL, Chair, COMMISSIONER District 3

DALLAS SCHROEDER, COMMISSIONER District 2

MIKE BUCK, Vice Chair, COMMISSIONER District 1

ATTEST: ~~Emily Backhus Irwin~~ *COREY JOHNSTON*

Deputy Clerk

BY:

Deputy Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners