

Ashland Planning Board

Special Meeting Minutes – July 2, 2025

Ashland Municipal Building – 6:30 P.M.

I. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Election of Chair for 2025

Tabled for further discussion.

III. Business from the Floor

No formal citizen business was presented.

IV. Consent Items

1. Review of Minutes (December 10, 2024, and June 2, 2025):

- Due to the absence of members and unsigned copies, approval of December minutes was tabled.
- June minutes were also deferred for future review.

V. Old Business

1. Proposed Wind Energy Ordinance

- The Board discussed the town's approach to regulating wind projects.
- Board members raised questions about turbine size, height limits, and whether a moratorium or new regulation was necessary.
- Josh offered to research existing municipal ordinances to provide examples.
- The Board agreed to table discussions until sample ordinances are reviewed.

2. Proposed Food Sovereignty Ordinance

- The Board discussed a draft ordinance submitted by a citizen but with unclear signatures.
- Gretchen and Josh shared perspectives on similar ordinances in other towns, noting concerns about conflicts with existing agricultural freedoms and health codes.
- The Board agreed the matter requires further research.
- Josh will investigate the need and potential benefits of such an ordinance.
- A public hearing will be scheduled once a draft is finalized.

VI. New Business

1. Board Membership Recruitment

- Board members discussed the need for new members and alternates, noting absences on the Board.
- A list of potential candidates (Frank Frost, Preston Pomelo, Kevin Robinson, Chelsea

Stratton, Ruben Karen, Bobby Joe Ridley, Chris Collier) and will reached out to.

2. Administrative Roles and Code Enforcement

- Roles and responsibilities regarding ordinance management were discussed.
- Josh introduced himself as the new Code Enforcement Officer and offered to assist in researching ordinances and clarifying processes.

3. Firearms Business Zoning Discussion

- The Board discussed a firearms retail business seeking to operate in a residential area.
- Gretchen noted a local sporting goods store had moved into a residential location.
- Josh suggested developing a site plan application to review business impacts and ensure compliance with zoning.
- The Board agreed zoning regulations need further clarification.

4. Permit Ordinance Updates

- The board discussed prior attempts to pass updated permit ordinances that were not adopted due to public opposition.
- Also discussion regarding a permit for a residence on church-owned land that remains pending.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at [insert time if available].

Action Items / Next Steps

- Josh to research wind energy ordinances from other towns.
- Josh to investigate the necessity of a food sovereignty ordinance.
- Josh to look into zoning regulations for the Outdoor Extreme firearms business.
- Josh to draft a site plan application form for Board use.
- Gretchen to contact potential new Planning Board members.
- Planning Board to review draft food sovereignty ordinance prior to next meeting.
- Planning Board to schedule a public hearing on food sovereignty once finalized.
- Josh to follow up with Outdoor Extreme for additional information.

Planning Board:

John Wood
