

McPherson County Zoning Board and Board of Adjustment
Minutes of Proceedings
April 21st, 2026

Call to Order

The McPherson County Zoning Board was called to order by Chairman Mike Mardian at 10:00 A.M. in the Commissioner's Chambers. Members present included George Hulscher, Logan Heupel, Dan Mettler, and Mike Lapka. Also present was Hunter Heinrich from Zoning Administration, several people from the public, and people on Zoom. The full meeting can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/@McPhersonCountySD>

Agenda

Dan Mettler moved, and Logan Heupel seconded to approve the agenda with the correction that the Jorgenson Mobile Home under the building permit section was from 2012 and not new. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes

George Hulscher moved, and Dan Mettler seconded to approve the April 7th, 2026, meeting minutes as published. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Conflicts of Interest

No Conflicts of Interest were mentioned.

Public Comments

Public Comments were heard from: Adam Barka representing Christensen Farms – Looking to make a proposal for a Swine Farm in McPherson County; Linda Schauer – Several concerns regarding the Leola Data Center including health, water, noise, road, fire, and ecosystem concerns; Gary Schauer – Data Center concerns; Marian Kallas – Data Center concerns; Ray Geffre – Data Center concerns; Jodi Waltman – Data Center concerns; Kenneth Shafer – Data Center concerns; Kristin Schauer – Data Center concerns; Arden Sieh – Data Center concerns.

Board of Adjustment

Dan Mettler moved, and Mike Lapka seconded to go into the Board of Adjustments at 10:14 A.M. All voted in favor. Motion Carried.

Variance hearing was held on 26-V-03 for Anthony Kunz who wants to build a house and garage closer than 150 ft from the right of way line. Glenn Spitzer was present and did not have any concerns with snow buildup. Questions regarding distance and hardship were brought up. Dan Mettler made a motion and Logan Heupel seconded to approve 26-V-03 with the stipulation that they are in charge of removing snow if it becomes an issue. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Conditional Use Permit was held on 26-CUP-01 for Boulder Hutterian Brethren Inc. who want to create a cemetery in the county. Mike Lapka called the surveyor, and the surveyor informed him that the pins are monumented. George Hulscher made a motion and Mike Lapka seconded to approve 26-CUP-01. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Mike Lapka moved and Dan Mettler seconded to move out of the Board of Adjustment at 10:27 A.M. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Plat

1 plat was discussed. This plat was of lots 1-84, Block 1 of Boulder Cemetery Addition. Dan Mettler made a motion and Logan Heupel seconded to make a recommendation of this plat for approval to the County Commission. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

New Business

The comprehensive plan was discussed. Dan Mettler commented that some thought should be put into the goals portion of this plan. This will be discussed at a later meeting. Eric Odenbach sent some information regarding airports. The county and the City of Eureka have overlapping jurisdictions which could cause issues in the future. Hunter was asked to email Eric Odenbach to get more information. George made a motion and Logan seconded to postpone until the July meeting. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Bill Connors was present to discuss the Leola Data Center. Updated renderings were given out by Bill. Proposed liquid cooling being used went from 200,000 gallons to 40,000 gallons. They are planning on using more water and less glycol solutions. They have completed several studies and are waiting for pending reviews for others. Funding for local EMS and nonprofits were discussed. Mike Lapka had a question regarding energy rates. Safety features were also discussed. The data center ordinance was discussed. Dan Mettler brought up a few sections for discussion including fencing, and abandonment. 5:33.05 2E was struck out. Propylene vs. ethaline gas mixtures were discussed. Logan Heupel made a motion and Mike Lapka seconded to hold a public hearing on July 21st at 9:00 AM. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Mike Lapka shared a copy of Brookings County's Easement for use of county road right-of-way with the board for discussion due to liquid manure being pumped through in the county's right-of-way and liability concerns. Mike Lapka stated that he only wants to use certain parts of this as possibly a resolution proposed to the commissioners. A comment was received on how there are state statutes in place regarding certain liabilities for manure and how it can be handled and for water quality. No action was taken; more discussion will be held at a future meeting. Full comments can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/@McPhersonCountySD> No action was taken; more discussion will be held at a future meeting.

Building Permits

Building permits 26-03 – 26-07 were discussed. 26-03 – Ahna Jorgenson – 2012 mobile home; 26-04 – Joseph Erdmann – Grain bins; 26-05 – Grassland Hutterian Brethren Inc. – Pre Fab barn; 26-06 – Jordan Mehlhaff – Pole Building; 26-07 – Sam Aman – Shouse.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 21st, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Adjournment

Logan Heupel moved, and Dan Mettler seconded to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:33 A.M.

Hunter Heinrich
Zoning Administrator

Mike Mardian
Chairman of the Zoning Board

UNAPPROVED