

The Wahoo Planning Commission met in regular session and in accordance with agenda posted at City Hall, Post Office, and First Bank of Nebraska with each board member being notified of the agenda prior to the meeting. Meeting was called to order by Chair Glen Wilcox at 7:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chair advised the public of the posted information regarding State Open Meetings Act and Title VI. The following board members were present answering to roll call: Cady, Houfek, Pfligler, and Nielson. Absent were: Libal, Blum, Meyer, and Vculek. Melissa Harrell, City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer, was also present.

Wilcox offered a statement about the public hearing that was on the agenda indicating the purpose of the public hearing was to address concerns about the current zoning regulations regarding pole signs in certain zoned areas. The public hearing was declared open by Wilcox at 7:03 p.m. Wilcox called for any public comments on said regulations and none were presented. A motion was made by Cady, seconded by Nielson to close the public hearing at 7:04 p.m. Roll call vote: Cady, yes; Nielson, yes; Houfek, yes; Pfligler, yes; and Wilcox, yes. Absent and not voting: Libal, Blum, Meyer, and Vculek. Motion carried.

Harrell informed the Planning Commission members of the issues with pole signs in specific zoned areas and shared some of the discussions held by the City Council at a recent work session. Houfek specifically asked why the City would not want to have pole signs in these areas and Harrell indicated the Planning Commission and City Council, during an upgrade to zoning regulations and the comprehensive plan, determined it would be in the best interests of the community to not have large, confusing, and unmaintained pole signs along the main thoroughfares in Wahoo. At the time they specifically looked at Hwy 30 through Columbus as something they did not want to model after.

Vculek entered the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Cady indicated that at the time the sign regulations were put in place it was not the intent of the Planning Commission to put an economic development hardship on businesses. The intent was to eliminate pole signs. Much discussion was held on what the proper language should be in the zoning regulations. Members agreed that a pole sign should be allowed to be maintained, with the maintenance including changing out sign faces, painting, or minor maintenance, but should not include replacement of poles, enlargement of the sign face, increasing the sign height, etc. Various language changes were discussed, including maintenance definitions from other communities, and the possibility of changing wording to Section 7.09.06 to discuss mechanical design vs. aesthetic design. Members also agreed that if a non-conforming sign was damaged, no matter how the damage was done, beyond 50% of the value of the sign, the sign would need to be removed and replaced with a legal sign. Members again emphasized that they felt it was important for the City to follow through on removal of non-conforming signs, but also felt it was important to balance this with economic development and not create an unnecessary financial burden.

Discussion was also held on when sign permits should be required. All members agreed permits should be required for ANY type of work being done on a sign so as to have record of the sign, the maintenance, and any change in business use of the sign.

A motion was made by Nielson to table any action on the sign regulations to allow time for staff to prepare the proposed changes to the language, motion seconded by Houfek. Roll call vote: Nielson, yes;

Houfek, yes; Cady, yes; Vculek, yes; Pfligler, yes; and Wilcox, yes. Absent and not voting: Libal, Blum and Meyer. Motion carried.

There were no projects to report on. Receipt of the monthly permits report was acknowledged.

A motion was made by Nielson to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2014 meeting as presented, motion seconded by Cady. Roll call vote: Nielson, yes; Cady, yes; Vculek, yes; Pfligler, yes; and Wilcox, yes. Absent and not voting: Libal, Blum, and Meyer. Motion carried.

Wilcox adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Melissa Harrell,
City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer