

**ELMORE COUNTY
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 18 at 7:00 pm

Chairperson Osborn called the meeting to order. Members of the Elmore County Planning and Zoning Commission present were Vice Chairperson K.C. Duerig, Betty Van Gheluwe, Sue Fish, Shane Zenner, Jeff Blanksma, and Ed Oppedyk. Also present were Attorney of Record Phillip Miller, Director Alan Christy and staff members Beth Bresnahan and Kacey Ramsauer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC MEETING

Sage Grouse Work Session

Christy stated that Jeff Lord made a request to speak at a public hearing regarding sage grouse in Idaho.

Jeff Lord is with the Mountain Home Sage Grouse Working Group. He provided a PowerPoint presentation. He stated that he would like to speak about the endangered species act and what sage grouse local working groups are. He stated that sage grouse have been a concern for a long time for many in the west and one of the solutions to this is to get local input. He stated that Idaho has designated management areas and Mountain Home was one of those areas. He stated that these local working groups were formed to come up with a conservation plan to hopefully prevent the sage grouse from being placed on the endangered species list. He stated that the group has done research and studies but no one has ever done research on the effect a country music concert can have on the birds so it makes this group unique. He stated that in this area wildfire is the biggest threat to the sage grouse.

Christy asked what happens if the bird gets listed.

Lord stated that if it is listed then they have so much time to identify critical habitat. He stated that if you are in that critical habitat any decision that affects either destroying or degrading the habitat or affecting the actual life of the bird will be a federal take which is illegal. He stated that for ranchers it's a huge issue because all of their permits are based on a federal decision.

Miller asked how many birds were in our area.

Lord stated that in Idaho they don't give out numbers. He stated that there are about 20,000 birds in our subset.

Christy asked what the process was for tracking and collaring the birds.

Scott Bodle is a wildlife biologist and the U.S. Forest Service representative to the local working group. He discussed amounts of birds in the different leks throughout this area. He stated that when they do the counts you typically only see the males because they are up displaying and females are a lot harder to see. He stated that his local working group does everything by foot when they are trapping. He stated that one person has a light and binoculars and the light is shined back and forth on the area to look for the eye shine of the birds. He stated once a bird is spotted they approach with very loud music playing on the radio and that covers the noise made

as they are approaching the birds. He stated they then turn the spotlight to strobe which blinds and almost paralyzes them and then capture them with modified nets. He stated that once they are caught they are held like a football. He stated one person will place a radio collar on them and another will place an ankle bracelet with a number that identifies the individual bird and links it to that particular bird.

The group went on to discuss population trends of the birds and impacts on the bird from development. They also discussed the sage brush treatments and controlled burns and how it affects the sage grouse.

Christy thanked the group for coming to this meeting and providing the information to the commission as it is very useful and will be good to provide the county commissioners with this as well. He stated that this group is a major stakeholder in the county and some polices definitely need to be adopted in the comprehensive plan like the mapping data, radio collar and tagging data, so that when proposals do come up it will be addressed through an analysis of the comprehensive plan.

Ordinance Work Session

Christy stated that he has sent out emails regarding chapters 5 and 6. He stated he's also sent out questions regarding the use of a hearing examiner should the need arise.

Minutes

Minutes from 02-18-15

Van Gheluwe move to approve.

Oppedyk seconded.

Motion carried

INFORMATION ITEMS

Upcoming P & Z Schedule.

Christy recommended canceling the April 1, 2015 meeting as there are no agenda items.

Commission consensus was to cancel.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2015.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Approved

Approved

Patti Osborn

4/15/15

Patti Osborn, Chairperson

Date:

Attest: *Alan Christy*

4-15-15

Alan Christy, Director

Date: