

**BONNER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 16, 2025**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Eric Hidden called the Bonner County Planning Commission meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. in the 1st Floor Conference Room, of the Bonner County Administration Building, 1500 Highway 2, Sandpoint, Idaho, via Zoom webinar, and YouTube live streaming.

PRESENT: Chair Eric Hidden, Commissioner Don Davis, Commissioner Dave Bowman, Commissioner Brendan Mooney

ABSENT: Commissioner Larry Madoski, Commissioner Erik Leavitt, and Commissioner Peter Taylor

ALSO PRESENT: Interim Planning Director, Alex Feyen; Systems Technician, Jeannie Welter

CHANGES IN AGENDA: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Planning Commission reviewed and approved, the minutes for November 18, 2025, with amendments.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Groundwater Source Protection Technical Committee Update: Jack Howard presented an update of what the committee has been doing. He addressed the question of funding stating there will not be any funding requirements from the County for the foreseeable future.

He stated, through Optical Character Reading (OCR) technologies, all of the well driller logs have been processed and the data is now contained in a SQL database. He stated they are now working on 3D modeling the zone. He will update this progress in a month.

Anna Moody manages the drinking water section of the DEQ Regional office in CDA. She is working on the source water protection component. She stated the Sagle Valley aquifer area has been a priority for further assessment and monitoring. She stated the last assessment of the aquifer in this area was 2008. She stated they couldn't find enough domestic wells and wells to be part of the sampling protocol. She said there does not appear to be an issue with meeting the sampling protocol this time.

Commissioner Mooney asked if any AI tools are currently being used and if there are any reviews for bias or inaccuracies that may be produced. Mr. Howard stated there are no analytics at play.

Commissioner Bowman asked about well log data and the actual output of a well. Mr. Howard and Mr. Hall stated there is a complete vetting process for monitoring the wells.

Daniel Sturgis, IDWR CDA, shared that they have been monitoring several wells in this related area and they have been having very good success so far. He stated they are monitoring wells in the Selle Valley, Priest River, Priest Lake, and Schweitzer areas. He further stated this monitoring is in the very early stages and there are only a few data points at this time.

Flint Hall provided further clarification and details regarding several statements from other speakers.

Commissioner Mooney asked about reaching out to the well drillers for additional data regarding existing wells. Mr. Sturgis stated they have a very good relationship with well drillers in the area.

Jason Peppin, PHD Environmental Health Protection Administrator, stated their role is to input actual wastewater flow information into this model using existing septic records. He stated they have records of our area going back to 1950. They are currently working on cleaning up records to get an accurate snapshot of the permits they have issued in the area. They are working on getting an estimate of the residential wastewater component of this model.

Next update from Jack will be in one month. Chair Hidden will provide an update at the next meeting.

Commissioner Hidden and Commissioner Davis stated this is merely phase one of a pilot program and at this point we can't determine where or how far this will go.

The Commission spoke a bit regarding water rights as well.

Review of Title 12, Chapters 3 & 4:

Together, the Commission reviewed "DB Copy of Chapters 3 and 4 Code Sections to Review (8.19.25)" the copy containing edits by Dave Bowman. Commissioner Bowman stated most of his edits were cleanup and removal of redundancies.

Interim Planning Director, Alex Feyen explained to the Commission the Board of County Commissioners as well as their legal counsel, are currently working on a code change pertaining to Title 12-310: Official Zoning District Map, as this section of code has been recognized as a problem. He further explained this change will likely be happening fairly soon. He stated the change may include verbiage such as, "the official zoning map is as shown and maintained by the Bonner County GIS department."

The Commission discussed this issue and questioned how other counties might be handling this. They considered what possible legal ramifications if any might come from this issue. Interim Planning Director, Alex Feyen stated he will invite legal counsel to the workshops so that the Commission can be sure to get the appropriate language into the code.

Commissioner Bowman stated he was going to add a "J", pertaining to current split zoning on a parcel/lot. He stated his intention was to add language i.e., "a landowner can request to make the entire parcel/lot the same zone as the zone that covers greater than 50% of the parcel/lot. He believes this would provide a way for a landowner to address previous mapping errors when a parcel/lot may have been incorrectly split zoned. Interim Director Feyen stated the Planning Department has been working closely with GIS to identify parcels/lots that have inadvertently been split zoned.

Chair Hidden asked about 12-315.I, pertaining to "Planning Director" vs. "Board". Commissioner Mooney asked if there are any foreseeable issues with this being the "Planning Director" rather than the "Board". Interim Director Feyen stated the code has provisions for appealing decisions made by the Planning Director, further stating an appeal of this nature would go directly before the Board for final decision. The Commission agreed to table this discussion until Interim Director Feyen and legal counsel meet to discuss code changes as discussed earlier and include this language for consideration as well.

12-320.2

Discussion regarding Table 3-1, Zoning designations and map symbols.

12-321

Discussion regarding roads and if they should be considered when determining appropriateness of a zone. They also discussed land use, zone changes, and impacts. They talked about purpose statements. They agreed that zone changes should be a rare exception.

12-322

#3. Commissioner Bowman stated this is where he questions the road issue. They discussed emergency response time.

They discussed reviewing the Glossary of Terms and where it can be found. Chair Hidden stated Commissioner Domke has been working on this item.

ACTION ITEMS:

Assessment of the process by which the Planning Commission recommends revisions to the zoning code, including files AM0012-25 and AM0013-25, as well as current and future work on other revisions:

Commissioner Bowman explained, upon review of Title 12, he discovered that not all of the information was included. He stated that there are huge gaps that have not been reviewed or addressed. He stated he believes it was left up to planning staff what to look at. Interim Director Feyen stated, for Chapters 1 and 2 it was brought up to the BOCC by staff and legal counsel to fix some areas that were identified as challenges that were being faced, such as tie votes of the BOCC. He further stated it was not a comprehensive review but more of a review to address pressing issues. He agreed it would be a good idea to go through them with a more comprehensive review to make sure everything was in line with other chapters in Title 12.

The Commission agreed that Commissioner Bowman would go through Chapters 1-2 with Interim Director Feyen and highlight any sections that the Commission may need to review as a whole. The Commission will continue to go through Chapters 3-4 together.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

DISCUSSION

Staff Updates: Jeannie's back in the office from working remotely.

Discussion regarding adding an item to agendas, timeline, etc.

Planning is working with GIS to update the proposed map to show what the Board is proposing in real time.

Discussion/Decision: January 6, 2026, Agenda Items.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Hidden declared the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., January 6, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,



Alex Feyen, Interim Planning Director

The above Minutes are hereby approved this 6th day of January 2026.

Bonner County Planning Commission

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric Hidden', written over a horizontal line.

Eric Hidden, Chair