

Town of Liberty Grove
Minutes of the Plan Commission meeting on May 13, 2026

Agenda:

1. Call to order
2. Declaration of Quorum
3. Approve Agenda
4. Approve minutes from 4/22/26
5. Public input
6. Continue work on Dark Sky Ordinance
7. Consider exploring Town Zoning Administration
8. Correspondence
9. Future meeting date(s)
10. Adjourn

Chairman Ward called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Commissioners Ann Miller, Nancy Goss, Paul Bokelmann, Cheryl Culver, and Dan Watts were present. Bill Surbaugh was excused. Clerk/Treasurer Pamela Donart-Welcome and Administrator Lee Buckingham were also in attendance along with 5 members of the public.

Chairman Ward asked that the agenda be amended to flip the order of items 6 and 7.

Miller moved, Ward seconded to approve the agenda as amended. **Carried 6 - 0**

Miller moved, Ward seconded to approve the 4/22/26 minutes as presented.
Carried 5 – 0. Goss abstained.

Public Input: Cathy Ward reminded the commissioners that this time of year we ask Committee and Commission members of their interest in staying on or exploring other opportunities. Additional item-specific public input is noted by each item below.

Regarding **Consideration of exploring Town Zoning Administration**, Chairman Ward summarized the history of the Town exploring the idea after Wisconsin Senate Bill 826, which passed into law in March of 2024 as *2023 Wisconsin Act 264*, created a procedure for Wisconsin towns to withdraw from county zoning and land division ordinances. Commissioner Watts pointed out the County Land Use Services Department has gone through staffing changes in the past few years that have resulted in a backlog of zoning permits and inspections. Commissioner Nancy Goss clarified that the Town would have to hire a zoning administrator, but the permit fees collected now by the County would be collected by the Town to cover administration costs. Commissioner Ann Miller commented on how enforcement would have to be addressed. **Public input** on this subject included Town Board Supervisor Janet Johnson who shared some of the history of the Town's interest in looking at future options. Tom Tuttle of Old Orchard Rd (also a representative for both Door County Habitat for Humanity and the Door County Housing Partnership) added his comments on the slowness and backlog of the current zoning administration the County provides. Bradley Simenz of County Road Q wanted clarification on the driving force(s) behind the Town's desire to consider taking over zoning administration and

recalled his experiences with the process of two unsuccessful attempts to change HL-10 zoning. Commissioner Cheryl Culver suggested that the Town could consider ways to collaborate with the County on a shared zoning administration & enforcement option. The Commissioners ended the discussion in agreement that the topic needs more consideration, and that Town Board will ultimately decide how to proceed.

Regarding the **Continuation of work on a Dark Sky Ordinance**, Nancy Goss shared her view that when considering the creation of any guidelines or ordinances to help protect and maintain the International DarkSky designation, educating the public should have priority, because “people cannot be forced to protect something they don't understand and appreciate.” The Commissioners looked at the Town’s recently adopted Resolution 1-26 and discussed steps that can be taken prior to continuing work on a Dark sky Ordinance, including addressing Town owned streetlights & parking lot lights, as well as approaching businesses and residents in the community with education and options for adjusting their lighting fixtures to be more DarkSky friendly. The Commissioners stated their support for helping maintain the Dark Sky designation awarded to Newport Park, and plan to insert some guidelines into a Site Plan Review Ordinance they are working on.

Miller moved, Ward seconded to table Dark Sky Ordinance work at this time. **Carried 6 - 0**

Correspondence: none

Future Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for June 10, 2026 at 7:00pm.

Miller moved, Culver seconded to adjourn at 8:12pm. **Carried 6 - 0**

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Donart-Welcome, Clerk/Treasurer
Approved on 6/24/26