

TOWN OF RIVER FALLS
Plan Commission Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 6, 2025

Members present: Terry Kusilek, Marty Ruemmele, Siri Smith, Kurt Leichtle, John Oliver, Pat Single, Kristin Nyquist

Staff: Don Rodewald, Jerome Rodewald

Guests: See attached

The meeting was called to order by Terry at 6:03pm.

Agenda: Siri moved, and Kristin seconded to approve agenda with a change to move public comments to the end. M.C.

Minutes: Pat moved, and John seconded to accept minutes of September 15, 2025. M.C.

Zoning Report: Don provided the zoning administrator report. (attached) Siri moved and Kristin seconded to table the possible expansion of non-conforming use for Marzolf, N8701 County Road W until 10/20/25. Don and Jerome have been reviewing the Farmland Preservation map with Pierce County. Kurt moved and John seconded to move forward with Don's progress on the Farmland Preservation map updates. M.C. Pat moved, and Siri seconded to approve the Zoning report.

Don shared that the Impact Fee Subcommittee has come up with possible recommendations. There will be more discussion before a final recommendation from the subcommittee.

Siri moved and John seconded to move to the joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Town Board. M.C. Move to joint hearing at 6:48pm.

Joint Hearing:

Members present: Terry Kusilek, Marty Ruemmele, Siri Smith, Kurt Leichtle, John Oliver, Pat Single, Kristin Nyquist, Mary Foster, Brad Mogen, Joe Mahoney

Staff: Don Rodewald, Jerome Rodewald

Guests: See attached

The Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation Sub-Committee shared their findings and discussions from their meetings. This committee was tasked with reviewing existing Town Code to assess whether changes or additions were needed in relation to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. The Committee has met several times and discussed existing Town Code, state requirements, resident requests and opinions, and the Town of River Falls comprehensive plan among other topics. As the subcommittee chairperson, Siri shared the group's progress. Currently, the CAFO Committee recommends two actions: First, to add to 17.03, the square footage of a structure at 150,000 square feet and greater requires a Conditional Use Permit. This is to ensure safe practices with fire prevention and safety. Second, is to keep a directory of existing Conditional Use Permits with current contact information.

Public Comments:

Kendra Jaeger, W7086 820th Street, shared her opinion that a CUP is a good start but is not enough. She is asking the Town Board to enact a moratorium on CAFOS. Katie Pata, N7720 State Road 65, has concerns about data centers and large operations like CAFOS. She encouraged the Board to be proactive in protecting water resources and thanks the Board for the steps they've already taken to be proactive. Frank During, W8128 690th Avenue, would like the Board to be cautious about not getting too restrictive. He agrees that water is a precious resource, but farms need to be able to grow in order to succeed. He stated that well water can be contaminated by home sewer systems as well, not just large farms. Jim Harsdorf, N6669 Highway 65, Beldenville, spoke about the history of farming and that the number of farms has gone down while they are still producing the same amount of milk. Alex Theobald, N7157 820th Street, asked the Board to

consider a moratorium on CAFOS and to not be hasty on a decision. He pointed out that allowing CAFOS will affect small farmers too. Wendy DiPeso, W9971 701th Avenue, asked how the discussions and decisions would apply to open feed lots. Roger Peterson, W10322 State Road 29, started with a 50-cow barn and could make a living on that. He shared that you can't make a living on that anymore and asked what will happen in 50 years? He is concerned about what the future looks like, especially because a CUP can be pulled and are not a given. Brian Bergseng, N8821 790th Street, told the Board that he is generally in favor of a CUP application process. He does not think it is a perfect system but makes sense in this situation. Tom Sitz, N8739 County Road W, brought up the cost of starting a CAFO and does not think they are a concern because of the cost.

Siri moved and Brad seconded to close joint meeting and to move back to the Plan Commission meeting. Plan Commission meeting reopened at 6:52pm

Siri made a motion to move the CAFO decision back to the Plan Commission for more discussion and that the topic be tabled to the October 20, 2025, meeting. John seconded the motion. M. C.

Pat moved and John seconded to adjourn Plan Commission meeting. M.C. Meeting adjourned at 6:54pm.

Submitted by Sarah Meyer, Town Clerk.