

**CITY OF SURPRISE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

MEETING MINUTES

May 21, 2026 / 6:00 PM

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
16000 North Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374**

CALL TO ORDER.

Chair Chapman called the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at Surprise City Hall, 16000 North Civic Center Plaza, Surprise, Arizona 85374, on May 21, 2026.

A. ROLL CALL

In attendance were, Commissioner Kevin Perry, Commissioner Jared Holland, Commissioner Jay Leonard, Chair Ken Chapman, Vice Chair Anthony Spata, Commissioner Lisa Everett, and Commissioner Dennis Bash.

STAFF PRESENT:

Jeffrey Murray, City Attorney; Bianca Cortez, Assistant City Attorney; Lloyd Abrams, Assistant City Manager and Director of Community Development; Tiffany Copp, Assistant Director of Community Development; Trever Fleetham, Interim Assistant Director of Community Development; Steven Faracias, Fire Inspector III; Chris Sexton, Senior Planner; Aslesha Basnet, Planner I; Sara Camarillo, Administrative Specialist, Sr. and Michelle Espie, Administrative Specialist.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Councilmember Johnny V. Melton - District 4
- Councilmember Jack Hastings - District 5

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. CURRENT EVENTS REPORT

- None

D. STAFF REPORT

- Trever Fleetham, Interim Assistant Director of Community Development, gave an updated target date of second meeting in June for the presentation of data centers and introduced Aslesha Basnet, Planner I, to the commission.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Item 1 – Consideration and action to approve or disapprove the May 7, 2026, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Bash made a motion to approve the May 7, 2026, Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Leonard seconded the motion. Motion passed with 7 votes in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM – PUBLIC HEARING:

Item 2 – Consideration and action regarding a Conditional Use Permit with Site Plan for ‘vehicle service: minor repair’ use for a Brake Masters facility on a site generally located on the southwest corner of 163rd Avenue and Pat Tillman Boulevard. Case #FS25-1012.

Aslesha Basnet, Planner I, presented item 2 to the Commission.

Chair Chapman opened the public hearing.

- None

Hearing no further requests, Chair Chapman closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the following:

- None

Commissioner Perry moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit with Site Plan for vehicle service: minor repair use for a Brake Masters facility, Case# FS25-1012, subject to stipulations ‘a’ through ‘e’ as outlined in the Staff Report. Commissioner Leonard seconded the motion. Motion passed with 7 votes in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM – NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

Item 3 – Presentation and discussion pertaining to a proposed Zoning Text Amendment ("ZTA") to the Surprise Land Development Ordinances ("LDO") to establish a new Battery (B) overlay zone related to Battery Energy Storage Systems ("BESS"). Case FS23-1041.

Chris Sexton, Senior Planner, presented item 3 to the Commission.

Chair Chapman opened the non-public hearing to members of the community.

- Jeremy Akin, Development Manager with BayWa – expressed support for current zoning text and supports the city moving forward promptly with project.
- James Caulfield, Fire Risk Alliance – gave a brief overview of battery energy storage systems and willingness to provide facts and data if requested.
- Mathew Ragsdale, Key Capture Energy – spoke in opposition to the 1500 feet setback, as outlined in the draft.
- Mike Johnson, landowner in Surprise – recommended a 150-foot setback from residential and 50-foot setback from property lines.
- Autumn Johnson, Arizona Solar Energy Industries Association – expressed concerns regarding the draft ordinance’s lack of clearly defined scope and the restrictive nature of 1500 foot setback. She also recommended noise standard should be revised.
- James Jackson, NextEra Energy Resources – shared that the proposed setback is larger than industry standards.

- Sarah Noe, attorney representing NextEra Energy Resources (NEER) – addressed the approval process proposed.
- Cepand Alizadeh, Arizona Technology Council – expressed support for BESS and addressed the improved efficiency and safety. He requested reconsideration of 1500 foot setback.
- Kristiana Faddoul, Buckeye resident – shared support for BESS, requesting the lowering of the setback proposed, and addressed the potential for increased revenue and jobs within the city.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Acknowledgement of McMicken/ APS facility event
- Improvement of technology since the McMicken/ APS facility event
- Property values
- Overall safety concerns
- Economic impact/tax revenue
- Noise study/noise ordinance
- Lead versus lithium batteries
- Emergency response/evacuation plan
- UL testing of batteries
- Suppression activity/temperature control
- Setback suggestions
- Subjectivity of ordinance
- Industrial/standalone restrictions
- Plume analysis/air monitoring

The Commission’s consensus and direction to staff was to consider a 100-foot separation to existing dwellings in lieu of the presented 1,500 foot.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Chair Chapman opened the call to the public to discuss any items not listed on the agenda.

- None

Chair Chapman closed the call to the public.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- None

ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business, Chair Chapman called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Leonard made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Holland seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

Ken Chapman
Planning and Zoning Commission Chair

The foregoing instrument is a full, true, and correct copy of the original document on file in the office of the City Clerk, City of Surprise, Arizona.

ATTEST BY: _____
Sara Camarillo, Secretary

DATE: _____