



**CITY OF ZEELAND
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
21 SOUTH ELM STREET
FEBRUARY 17th, 2026
6:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM

Present: Board Members Linda Mergener, Paul DeBoer, Dave Stegink, Rebecca Perkins and Kevin Streeter.

Absent: Board Members Scott Bartolomei, and Lara Kovacs.

Also Present: Zoning Administrator Timothy Maday, City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, City Planning Consultant Paul LeBlanc and Recording Secretary Nadine Garza

Board members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moved by Mergener, supported by Stegink to excuse absent Board Members Scott Bartolomei, and Lara Kovacs. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Annual Election of Officers

Maday stated that since it was the Board's first meeting of the year, officers for calendar year 2026 must be elected.

City Attorney Donkersloot conducted the annual election of officers.

Motion 2026.01

Moved by Mergener to re-elect the previously elected officers to the Zoning Board of Appeals:

**Chair: Bartolomei
Vice Chair: Stegink
Secretary: Mergener**

Supported by Perkins

**Ayes: Mergener, DeBoer, Stegink, Perkins, and Streeter
Nays: None
Absent: Bartolomei, and Kovacs
Motion Approved.**

-Moved by Mergener, supported by Streeter to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2023 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

-Moved by Stegink, supported by Mergener to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2024 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Consultant Memo

City Planning Consultant Paul LeBlanc reviewed his memorandum, dated February 10, 2026, that is attached to these meeting minutes. The memo outlines the scope, duties, and procedures of

the Zoning Board of Appeals, including the standards and tests applicable to both dimensional and use variances.

LeBlanc provided an overview of the ZBA's authority under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, noting that the Board serves as a quasi-judicial body responsible for ordinance interpretations, administrative appeals, and variance requests. He explained that most matters before the Board involve dimensional variances, while use variances are uncommon. He noted that conditional rezoning has further reduced the frequency of the hearing and granting of use variances.

Maday reminded Commissioners that they may ask for additional information if they have questions regarding an application after reviewing it. He also noted that the Board may request the City Attorney to draft a resolution containing their findings of fact for each of the criteria for later consideration, ensuring clarity and shared understanding of their findings before they take final action on an application.

Mr. LeBlanc stressed that variances should typically be granted only in rare and exceptional circumstances and must strictly meet the standards set forth in the zoning ordinance. He emphasized that decisions must be based on unique physical conditions of the property that create a practical difficulty, rather than on the applicant's personal preferences or financial considerations, and that all required criteria must be satisfied for approval.

LeBlanc reviewed historical and hypothetical variance applications, and discussed the relevant factors for consideration in those situations.

-7:03 Moved by Mergener, supported by Streeter to adjourn. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote

Submitted by,

Nadine Garza
Recording Secretary