CITY OF LANDER

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT & PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, November 06, 2025 at 6:00 PM

City Council Chambers, 240 Lincoln Street

MINUTES

EnterTextHere

Attendance: Chair Zach Mahlum, Members, Tom Russell, Kara Colovich, Mary Greene, Chris Savan, Rob Newsom, and Joe Henry. City Attorney Adam Phillips, Council Liaison Chad Cassady, Anne Even for Recording Secretary RaJean Strube Fossen

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

This meeting is being recorded electronically. All petitioners to the Board of Adjustments will receive a written decision and order within thirty (30) days of this hearing. The decision will be clearly stated with findings of fact and conclusions of law. Anyone wishing to appeal against a decision and order may do so through District Court.

Anyone wishing to speak tonight, must first be recognized, come to the podium, take the oath, and state your name prior to speaking.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES of October 16, 2025

Kara moved to accept the minutes. Seconded by Tom. Motion passed. Chris abstained as he was presenting in the matters of Oct 16th.

3. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - NEW BUSINESS

A. Notice: Applicants have paid in full for this application. If you receive any future invoices for this action please report it as a scam to RaJean and your email provider.

CU 25.12 Short term rental, 625 N 8th, Taufen

Curt Taufen, owner took the oath. He explained that he purchased the property purchased the house for his son's family as they were having trouble finding adequate/appropriate housing in town. The intent is to use this as a short term rental once they have built a home for themselves.

Chris recused himself from the vote as Mr. Taufen is a client of his firm. Zach noted that this was not necessary as he has no direct benefit from the approval but will accept the recusal as a cautionary and transparent action.

Kara confirmed that the maximum amount of guests to be 6-8 persons in a 4 bedroom house.

Tom asked if it would be Airbnb. Owner has not determined the future rental company(ies). There are 6 parking spots on the lot including 2 in the back, a 2-car garage, and the driveway. Tom verified that the guests will be able to use all the off street parking.

Zach noted that there was some negative public comments in the packet.

Joe asked if the rental would be for one individual or multiple bookings. The owner stated that he did have multiple renters for a property in Laramie and will not do that again.

Anne read the City staff letter recommending that the application be approved conditional on receiving the annual fire inspections and collection of WY lodging taxes.

Kara asked if he has talked to any neighbors. The owner has had contact with two neighbors that were positive. Kara asked if he would have a pet policy. The property is fenced but he does not typically allow pets in his rentals.

Tom moved to approve CU 25.12 with the condition of the fire inspections are passed and lodging taxes are collected. Rob seconded. Motion passed with Chris not voting.

The owner asked if the fire inspections need to be done even if his son lives in there for up to two years. RaJean will contact Mr. Taufen directly to answer these questions.

Zach let him know that he will receive a written decision and order and will have the right to appeal if he so choses.

4. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT - OLD BUSINESS

5. PLANNING COMMISSION - NEW BUSINESS

6. PLANNING COMMISSION - OLD BUSINESS

A. Continue discussions on Short term rental approval requirements

Zach briefed the board that he and Chris presented to the City Council and they are waiting for any comments from the constituents by the second week in January. The comments from council will be given to RaJean and then distributed to the Commissioners.

Zach had heard from Janelle Hahn. Council Liaison Chad stated that he had not heard from anyone. Janelle asked about licensing, grandfathering in approvals. RaJean replied that licensing is a concept but the commissioners felt there may be increased accountability. Current CU holders will be notified as the ideas are solidified. Kara agrees that current holders can be contacted by RaJean.

Zach feels that an incremental grandfathering is appropriate if the proposed licensing changes are enacted.

Mary remembered an interim period to current CU holders. Discussions were held on how the public is notified. Zach proposes some outreach by this board in addition to the standard public notices for a new ordinance. Mary suggested Coffee Time type venues also. Open houses, website announcements, and handouts can also be a tool like we did last time.

Tom, Zach, and Chad discussed that Council assist in spreading the word on changes at City Council updates. Chad considers the three readings of the ordinance to be the process for debate. However, communication to constituents early and often is preferred.

Chad noted that if they use the definitions suggested today Mr. Taufen would be affected by the transition period. Chad verified if the commission still was proposing that the Conditional Use holders had to be the owners primary residence.

Joe assumes a license will be a tool to help enforcement and may come with a small annual fee, but it will not be a revenue generating measure.

If the proposed changes for primary residence were in effect then his application would have been denied. Discussions were held on the severity of the change if that were implemented and then the current holders may lose some private property rights. Adam will have to look into that.

Tom restated that the intent is to leave the existing short-term rentals but to curtail the approvals so that we retain affordable housing stock. Chad suggested that the Board clearly define and articulate the problem to be solved in all communications going forward. Past minutes include a problem definition by the members which were cited by Mary and Zach.

The Current proposal for primary residence may encourage the building or purchasing of ADU. Rob noted that the majority of operators would not like to operate a short term rental in their home. All agreed that the licensure proposal will have to be better solidified prior to public presentation.

The Board would like to revisit the administrative changes in the next meetings.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm