

APPROVED MINUTES

Agenda

Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

Erik Pedersen, Chair

January 13, 2026

A. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Read by Ms. Rintala

We would like to acknowledge that the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land, and wish to honor the indigenous people of this land. For more than ten thousand years, Alaska Native people have been and continue to be integral to the well-being of our community. We are grateful to be in this place, a part of this community, and to honor the culture, traditions, and resilience of the Tlingit people. Gunalchéesh!

B. ROLL CALL

Erik Pedersen, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Planning Commission (PC), held in Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, virtually via Zoom Webinar, and telephonically, to order at 6 p.m.

Commissioners present: Commissioners present in Chambers –Erik Pedersen, Chair; Lacey Derr, Vice Chair; Mandy Cole, Clerk; Jessalynn Rintala, Vice Clerk; Douglas Salik; Larry Gamez; Carlee Simon; Keith Koruna; Karinne Wiebold

Commissioners present via video conferencing – None

Commissioners absent:

Staff present: Scott Ciambor, CDD Planning Manager; Forrest Courtney, Senior Planner; Madeline Carse, CDD Administrative Assistant; Nicole Lynch, Attorney III; Emily Wright, Municipal Attorney

Assembly members: None

C. REQUEST FOR AGENDA CHANGES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. November 18, 2025, Draft Minutes, Regular Planning Commission

MOTION: *by Ms. Cole to approve the November 18, 2025 Planning Commission Regular Meeting minutes. The motion passed.*

E. BRIEF REVIEW OF THE RULES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

G. ITEMS FOR RECONSIDERATION

H. CONSENT AGENDA

I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

J. REGULAR AGENDA

K. OTHER BUSINESS

1. CDD Overview

Scott Ciambor, CDD Planning Manager, gave an overview of the Community Development Department. He talked about all the new things they have going on in CDD and the joint meeting they would be having with the Assembly tomorrow. He shared that the biggest and most important project the department worked on for the last year was getting to the point to actively go live on their new permitting software. He went over the organization chart of the CDD, Administration Division, Permit Center Hub (PCH), Building Division, and current Planning Division.

Ms. Derr asked if there was anything the commission could do to help fill the vacancies and help keep positions.

Mr. Ciambor responded that a lot of organizations have difficulties hiring and keeping people. He shared that he has been the Planning Manager for four years and has cycled through 25 planners. He said the best thing anyone in the community can do to help them maintain staff is to be really supportive of the work they do and promote positions if they come available. He expressed that the staff they have now is capable, dynamic, and getting a lot of big projects through that were on the docket for years.

Ms. Rintala thanked staff for implementing the new permit software. She added that she did an email and text blast on the upcoming Comp Plan and interactive activities.

Chair Pedersen asked if the hope of the permit software was to reduce some workload because of the interactive way the information is input.

Mr. Ciambor answered that it will streamline the process on the applicant's side and internally. He stated they still have a lot of work to do regarding closing out or reassign old cases.

Ms. Cole inquired if they envision starting out in the portal or if they still would need to call the office, set up a pre-app conference, and then transition to the portal.

Mr. Ciambor responded that they will be doing everything in the portal.

Mr. Gamez thanked Mr. Ciambor for all the work he has done for their community, especially the development of the IT stuff they are going to be using.

Mr. Ciambor accepted that compliment and deflected it to the staff, as a lot of CDD staff that do not get a lot of visible time do a lot of that work. He expressed that it was Irene Gallion, Senior Planner, last day, and thanked her for how she handled her roles at CDD and in the manager's office, and said he holds her work in high regard.

2. Role of Commission

Mr. Ciambor went over the role of the Planning Commission. He reminded the Commission that their duties are already listed in Title 49 for reference. In regard to the Comprehensive Plan, he said it would be helpful to the planners for the commissioners to pay attention throughout the process by participating and being well-read and well-versed instead of waiting for the final product. He recommended checking in, asking questions at meetings, and asking for regular updates, so they are comfortable enough knowing that the public input, process, and expertise was put in to give them a good product. He also talked about philosophy and approach of the Planning Commission.

3. Annual Commissioner Training

Nicole Lynch, Attorney III, first discussed the Open Meetings Act, which require that all government meetings be open to the public and that the public must have notice of the meetings.

Ms. Cole asked a about proper notice for canceling and rescheduling meetings.

Attorney Lynch responded that it depends on the topic of the meeting. She explained that for Planning Commission Meetings, since they are cases coming before the Commission, the applicant has a right to a 30 days' notice before their hearing, but other meetings, such as a subcommittee meeting, they can sometimes get away with a 24 hours' notice depending on the board. She added that they strive for most of their boards to do a week notice.

Attorney Lynch voiced that under OMA, the public has to be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard at all regular and special meetings, and a meeting considered under OMA is any time there is more than three members together and any time they are discussing an issue that the Board has the authority to act on. She noted that if they do not have a quorum, they cannot have a meeting, and five members must be present to conduct business. She stated that if any action is taken in violation of the OMA, it is voidable and may have to be redone. She expressed that one exception to the OMA is an Executive Session, where the public is excluded. She also shared tips to help keep things in line under the OMA.

Chair Pedersen asked Ms. Lynch to further explain the threshold of three members for what constitutes a meeting versus what does not constitute a meeting.

Attorney Lynch explained that it states if there is more than three, so if there is just three, they are fine; however, when there is more than three, they are then in meeting territory. She urged them to be cognizant of that when having discussions.

Ms. Wiebold asked if any time they are together is considered a meeting.

Attorney Lynch explained technically yes, because they consider perception. She added that the key is to not cluster in groups of more than three and not discuss anything the body would be making decisions on.

Chair Pedersen asked for clarification that if three commissioners discuss one item that is on the agenda, one of those commissioners has the ability to discuss with separate commissioners regarding an additional case.

Attorney Lynch responded that is true. She said the goal is keeping it under three and having those discussions in public.

Attorney Lynch discussed conflict of interest, which states they may not deliberate or vote on any matter in which they have a conflict, focusing on personal or financial gain and the appearance of impropriety. She commented that when it doubt of conflict on an issue, declare it with the board. She noted they can also contact the law department beforehand and ask for guidance on that. She explained that if they indicate they can be fair or impartial, the chair will decide on whether they can participate in the vote, but if any member of the body disagrees with the chair, they

will call for a roll vote. If it is decided they cannot be fair or impartial, they must remove themselves from the dais during that discussion and vote.

Ms. Cole asked if it was necessary to ask if the public has any objections to a person remaining on the dais.

Attorney Lynch answered no.

Ms. Wiebold inquired if they have a conflict but still felt compelled to testify, could they still do so as a member of the public.

Attorney Lynch responded yes, but they would need to state they are presenting their personal opinions and not acting as a commissioner.

4. NFIP Overview for the Planning Commission

Emily Wright, Municipal Attorney, gave an overview of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for the Planning Commission. She expressed that with the increase in the glacier outburst flooding, the Planning Commission has had an increased role. She explained that the CDD Department runs the NFIP Program, and as part of that, they make sure all the land code requirements are followed, but in an emergency there is an exception built into the flood plain program that allows homeowners and the City and Borough of Juneau to come to the Planning Commission and ask for an exception. She shared that as the GLOF has increased and evolved, these exceptions are very common and recommended they focus on the proposed findings to help them make their decision. She added they plan on seeing this every year until they have a solution.

Ms. Cole commented she was under the impression that exceptions, particularly the one they heard last spring, was because of not having enough time to implement according to their version of the NFIP. She asked how exceptions happen year after year if there is a timing element to them.

Attorney Wright responded that they can come to them ahead of time, if there are known exceptions, or they can get exception requests for things that have already happened or happened very rapidly. She said they hope that as they get better modeling for the river, they will have less after-the-fact exception requests.

Mr. Gamez asked for an example of a request from a homeowner.

Attorney Wright answered that a lot of the ones they saw last year had to do with the riprap along the river.

5. Officer Assignments

Ms. Cole shared they had a previous conversation on these, and agreed to nominate Chair Pedersen to remain Chair, Commissioner Derr remain Vice Chair, Ms. Cole to take up the clerk position, and Ms. Rintala take up the Vice Clerk position.

MOTION: *by Ms. Cole to nominate Chair Pedersen to remain Chair, Commissioner Derr remain Vice Chair, Ms. Cole as the Clerk, and Ms. Rintala as the Vice Clerk.*

Ms. Simon asked for an explanation of those positions and their responsibilities for future knowledge.

Ms. Cole explained the Commission Chair, Commission Vice Chair, Clerk, and Vice Clerk roles.

Chair Pedersen encouraged the new commissioners to review Robert's Rules. He added that officer assignments can be changed at any time.

The motion passed.

L. STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Ciambor stated that there will be other sessions available later in the month for the Juneau Futures Meeting tomorrow night for those that cannot make it.

Ms. Cole asked if there would be a moment for a more personal discussion between them and the Assembly like they usually have at tomorrow's meeting or if that would be scheduled at a later date.

Mr. Ciambor understood that the focus would be the Juneau Futures Workshop, but they can schedule another meeting to discuss goals and expectations for the year.

M. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Pedersen reported that the Title 49 Rewrite Committee met last week, but did not make any decisions at the meeting.

N. LIAISON REPORTS

O. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

P. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Q. EXECUTIVE SESSION

R. **ADJOURNMENT**

The January 13, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.