

Piatt County
Zoning Board of Appeals

January 22, 2026

Minutes

The Piatt County Zoning Board of Appeals met at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 22, 2026 in Room 104 of the Piatt County Courthouse. Chairperson Loyd Wax called the meeting to order. The roll was read. Dan Larson, Jim Harrington, Robert Chambers and Keri Nusbaum attended. County Board members in attendance: Jerry Edwards, Gail Jones.

The ZBA reviewed the minutes for December 18, 2025.

MOTION: Harrington made motion, seconded by Chambers, to approve the minutes from December 18, 2025 as written. On voice vote, all in favor and the minutes were approved

Public Comments:

Jan Myers – read her previously submitted letter opposing solar farms.

Jessica Culp –referenced the Spring Lake solar farm. State laws make people feel hopeless and apathetic.

Jim Payne – landowner. All the land is not removed from production and negligible or no impact to the aquifer.

New Business

East Monticello Solar 1 LLC applied for a Special Use Permit for a 4.2 Mw Commercial Solar Energy Facility to be located on land owned by Jim and Mare Payne at 1018 E 1500 North Road, Monticello IL. Steve Long, representing Sol Source, was sworn in. He said the facility will be located on twenty-three acres of the leased parcel. There will be minimum grading required. The site is situated to avoid the wetland area. When asked about traffic generated, he said after construction is complete someone visits the site approximately once per month to check equipment. In the summer, it would be mowed at least twice, in July and October. The additional road shown on the site plan on the West side of the parcel would be a gravel strip fifteen feet wide. Wires from the connection point would be underground. Up to eight hundred subscribers would be allowed to subscribe to the energy produced by the solar facility, which would give them 10% credit on their bill. There is an agreement with the landowner and tenant to allow them to continue farming around the facility. There would be training for the local fire department, but usually the only cause of a fire would be lightning strikes. The lease is for 25 years with possibility of extensions, and the panels can be expected to last approximately 25 years.

Mike Wileaver was sworn in. He owns a residence on land adjoining the subject property. He would like the project to be moved to the northeast corner of the property. He says the property has water issues. He has seen ducks on the water ponding. He is concerned about vegetation control and what will happen if the company declares bankruptcy. He asks the ZBA to table the issue.

Joe Lieb was sworn in. He owns a residence on land adjoining the subject property. He also believes the project would be better placed in the northeast corner of the property and away from the farmed wetland. He asks that the issue be tabled until there is six months of watershed data, and appraisal data regarding the home values near the project. He is concerned about glare from the solar panels.

Long responded that panels installed on trackers do not cause glare to surrounding properties. Lieb also said he had heard about power outages around solar farms. His wife works at home and needs reliable power.

Gary Warner was sworn in. He also lives nearby. He shared past work experiences he believes relevant to the subject. He is concerned about toxins in the solar panels. Forever chemicals from broken panels could be spread by wind and into the soil by rain. He is against solar projects. He is angry with the state government for mandating green energy.

At 2:45 p.m. the meeting went into a 10-minute recess to allow a break for attendees to move their cars to avoid parking tickets.

Upon return from recess, roll was called and there was no quorum. The meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Keri Nusbaum
Piatt County Zoning Officer