

TOWN OF ERIE

*645 Holbrook Street
Erie, CO 80516*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

6:30 PM

In Person Meeting

To View Meeting Virtually on Zoom: <https://bit.ly/21Jan26PCMtg>

To Sign Up for Public Comment: www.erieco.gov/PublicComment

Council Chambers

Planning Commission

I. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG

Chair Hemphill called the January 21, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting to order at 6:30pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll Call:

- Commissioner Booth - present
- Commissioner Sawusch - present
- Commissioner Dreckman - present
- Commissioner Burns - present
- Commissioner Baham- present
- Vice Chair Braudes - present
- Chair Hemphill - present

A quorum was present.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Booth moved to approve the agenda of the January 21, 2026 Planning Commission meeting. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Dreckman, carried with all voting in favor thereof.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2026-64](#) Approval of the January 7, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [January 7, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes](#)

Vice Chair Braudes moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of the January 7, 2026 Planning Commission meeting. The motion, seconded by Chair Burns, carried with all voting in favor thereof.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were taken.

VI. GENERAL BUSINESS

[2026-45](#) A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the Town of Erie Recommending that the Town Council Adopt an Ordinance Repealing and Reenacting Section 10-6-12 of the Erie Municipal Code and Amending Definitions Related Thereto, All Regarding Sign Regulations

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Staff Presentation](#)
[Resolution P26-02](#)
[Draft Ordinance](#)
[Current Sign Code](#)

Chair Hemphill announced Agenda Item 2026-45: A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the Town of Erie Recommending that the Town Council Adopt an Ordinance Repealing and Reenacting Section 10-6-12 of the Erie Municipal Code and Amending Definitions Related Thereto, All Regarding Sign Regulations.

Chair Hemphill turned it over to staff for a presentation at 6:32pm.

Melinda Helmer, Business Operations Coordinator for the Planning & Development Department provided background on the last sign code update, an overall summary of the sign code changes, and staff's proposed recommendation.

The majority of the sign code amendment focuses on collaboration and transparency by reorganizing much of the current narrative text into a single, cohesive table that is easier to read and apply. The table consolidates sign regulations across all zone districts, bringing together sign area maximums, number of permitted signs, height limits, and other dimensional standards in one location. Updates for temporary signage included display times of up to 120 days per calendar year, with no individual sign displayed for more than 30 consecutive days. A-frame sandwich board signs are exempt from these limits, provided they remain on private property and do not impede pedestrian circulation. Other changes are as follows:

- Change allowable sign copy interval changes from four hours to 30 minutes
- Clarify that signs located within the public right-of-way are prohibited
- Permit ground signs (limited to 6 feet tall)
- Define off-premise signs

Chair Hemphill brought it back to the Commissioners for questions/comments for staff. Some questions/comments included the following:

- The table is a lot easier to read
- Is there a need for a legend on the acronyms for existing zoning districts?
- What was the definition for a 'ground sign'?
- Where do political signs now sit (this was removed back in 2021 with the last update)?
- Former Town Attorney provided interpretation on political signs as far as location and number of signs
- Do we want to bring back to the code that political signs are exempt from the code?
- Did the last update in 2022 go to the Planning Commission or just straight to the Board of Trustees?

Chair Hemphill asked if there was a motion on this agenda item.

Commissioner Sawusch asked if the Commissioner would be willing to consider a recommendation with a condition to exempt political signs from the code.

The Commission held additional discussion regarding political signs, noting that the current code language is unclear as it relates to this type of signage. Discussion focused on the importance of non-regulation of sign content, First Amendment considerations, and whether to introduce (or re-introduce) language that would exempt political signs. Options discussed included allowing one sign per ballot measure or establishing a reasonable number of political signs. During the discussion, Town Attorney Kunal Parikh asked for clarification on what was meant by exempting political signs, specifically whether this referred to exemption from regulation, and raised concerns related to First Amendment protections and

content-based review. Staff clarified that the Town does not regulate sign content and indicated they will further review the questions raised regarding political signs prior to bringing the item before Town Council.

Following this discussion, Commissioner Sawusch's original request for a recommendation with conditions was withdrawn.

Chair Hemphill noted that this was a good discussion and asked if there was a motion regarding this agenda item.

Commissioner Dreckman moved to approve Resolution P26-02, a Resolution of the Planning Commission of the Town of Erie Recommending that the Town Council Adopt an Ordinance Repealing and Reenacting Section 10-6-12 of the Erie Municipal Code and Amending Definitions Related Thereto, All Regarding Sign Regulations. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Burns, carried with all present voting in favor thereof.

Chair Hemphill stated the motion passes unanimously.

[2026-66](#)

Planning Commission Appointments

Chair Hemphill announced Agenda Item 2026-66: Discussion of Planning Commission Appointments.

Chair Hemphill requested that staff add this agenda item regarding the upcoming Planning Commission appointments, noting that three seats are set to expire. Chair Hemphill reported that he had spoken with the affected Planning Commissioners and that two of three Commissioners expressed interest in continuing to serve.

Chair Hemphill asked the Commissioners for a discussion on whether they would like to provide a recommendation to the Town Council regarding any of the Commissioner appointments, and if they (the Commission) would like to provide direction to staff on drafting a resolution for the Commission to review and vote on at the February 18, 2026 meeting.

The Commission had a discussion and a question came up on whether making a recommendation is part of the normal process. It was noted by Commissioner Sawusch that this has not occurred previously and that appointments are made at the discretion of Town Council. Commissioner Burns noted that a previous process included a discussion with the Commissioner's whose seats were expiring if they were interested in serving, their seats were renewed, and those Commissioners continued to serve.

Vice Chair Braudes clarified that appointments are different for other boards and commissions. Vice Chair Braudes asked if a resolution would be required or can the Commission send a letter including their vote and request to be involved in the appointment process.

Town Attorney, Kunal Parikh noted that a resolution would be the best practice.

Commissioner Sawusch asked for clarification as to whether or not this is within the Commission's powers or responsibility to make this type of recommendation to the Town Council to which Town Attorney Parikh added that we can interpret (the code) that the Planning Commission can make this type of recommendation.

Chair Hemphill stated that Commissioner Baham would not be seeking reappointment. Commissioners Booth and Burns wish to continue serving, and Chair Hemphill proposed the Commission consider making a recommendation to Town Council supporting their reappointment.

Commissioner Sawusch added that he doesn't disagree but doesn't fully agree with the intent of the resolution request. This hasn't been done previously.

Chair Hemphill added that previous discussions included the expansion of the Commission's roles and responsibilities - one of them being to interview Planning Commissioners, making a recommendation to Town Council, which would ultimately help with time and efficiency in the process. Commissioner Booth asked if this process would help to alleviate the Council's need to interview the existing Commissioners.

In the end, the choice to conduct an interview of current Commissioners is up to the Town Council. The application deadline is February 20, 2026.

The Commission generally agreed and directed staff/Town Attorney to draft a resolution making a recommendation to Town Council supporting the current Planning Commission members in terms of reappointments and would ask for clarification on the application process/timeline for existing Commissioners. Discussion of this drafted resolution would occur at the February 18, 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

Chris LaRue, Principal Planner noted that the Commission should have received an email from IT to start the mandatory security training which is due on March 12, 2026.

Mr. LaRue stated that there are no agenda items scheduled for the February 4, 2026 Planning Commission meeting and staff recommends cancelling this meeting. Chair Hemphill will not be available for this meeting.

Commissioner Sawusch asked what date the Commission has planned to meet with Town Council. Chair Hemphill stated that the meeting will be after the Planning Commission appointments which would be set for mid-April. There will be one meeting with the new Commissioner's before the Commission meets with Town Council.

Commissioner Booth asked if we have something on the February 18th, and what is the potential for March. Chair Hemphill noted that discussion could begin at the February 18th meeting and he could potentially move the discussion on Robert's Rules of Orders to another date to include the new Commissioners. The March 4, 2026 has no agenda items.

Chair Hemphill stated that we will cancel the February 4, 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

VIII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Commissioner Sawusch stated "Good Luck, Broncos!"

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Booth moved to adjourn the January 21, 2026 Planning Commission meeting. The motion, seconded by Commissioner Dreckman, carried with all present voting in favor thereof.

Chair Hemphill adjourned the January 21, 2026 Planning Commission meeting at 7:15pm.