

The McClellanville Planning Commission met on the above noted date and time in person. Notice of the meeting was published in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act. Planning Commission members present were Ginny Prevost (Chair), Dan Fifis, Oliver Thames, Scott Youngblood and Adam Freeze. Town Administrator Michelle McClellan and Zoning Administrator Kathryn Basha were present.

Chair Prevost opened the meeting reminding Commissioners that the purpose of the Special Session was to review protocols for conducting public hearings and turned the floor over to the Town Zoning Administrator. The session began with reminders about the importance of public hearing procedures being followed. As an example, Ms. Basha reminded the Commission that comments from the public during a meeting should only be entertained during a public hearing and more specifically during the period when the public hearing is open for public comment. Comments at other meetings do not have to be entertained especially during a meeting. Should the Commission desire, a period for public comment can be added at the end of each agenda.

Ms. Basha shared and reviewed a handout of standard public hearing procedures or the standard progression of discussions during a public hearing. Commission members were given an opportunity to identify areas where clarification or improvements to the procedures were needed.

Ms. Basha opened the floor for discussion on specific public meeting-related topics. She first explained that public comments can be submitted orally during a public hearing or submitted in writing in advance of a public hearing. Time limits for speakers to provide oral input should be established at the beginning of a meeting. Whether this is 3 or 5 minutes per speaker (or longer) can be determined and announced by the Chair at the beginning of the meeting. The time limit may be determined based on the number of people signed up to speak. It was also suggested that when several people are signed up, that the Chair ask for groups with the same comment to designate one person to speak on behalf of the group.

Ms. Basha then reviewed the typical hearing format and structure: Items are introduced then a staff presentation is entertained after which Commission members can ask questions of staff. This is followed by the Chair calling for a motion to open the public hearing. Once opened, the Chair calls on each person signed up in advance to speak. Commission members should hold questions and discussion on the matter until the public hearing is closed. An exception to this is if something a speaker says needs clarification. At the conclusion of signed up speakers, the Chair may ask if anyone else wishes to speak following the same procedure. The Chair calls for a motion to close the public hearing after which no further public comment is to be entertained. Commission members should then discuss the item and make a motion on the item subject to the public hearing.

Chair Prevost asked whether anything additional on general protocols/process needed clarification. The Commission then discussed whether at the upcoming public hearing they wanted to introduce and hold individual public hearings on proposed amendments to each section one at a time, then act whether to recommend or not recommend such amendment as an alternative to taking comments on all the draft amendments in one public hearing prior to taking action.

Ms. Basha offered to clarify the handout based on the Commission discussion and to resend that to Commission members in advance of the next public hearing.

Chair Prevost asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

*Kathryn S Basha*

Kathryn S Basha (Jan 22, 2026 10:40:21 EST)

Kathryn S Basha AICP

Zoning Administrator