

MEETING MINUTES

BROOKS COUNTY SOLAR ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Date: January 9, 2025

Time: 3:00 PM

Meeting called to order by: Lee Larko

IN ATTENDANCE

Lee Larko, Patrick Folsom, Larry Cunningham, Linda Troutman, Stuart Chappell, Justin Goodman, Zurich DeShazor, and Peg Howard. Absent: Kyle Swamm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Prior Minutes from December 2024 meeting approved. Motion and. Seconded, unanimously approved.

Resource Information was provided for review/ study by committee and was reference in the meeting at time to refer to.

Sample current updated Solar Ordinances from Thomas County and Lee County.
Current Brooks County Solar Ordinance. Georgia Recommended Siting for Solar

DISCUSSION. These categories will reflect an informal meeting with conversations on relevant subjects and concerns to individual and the committee as it relates to creating recommendation to the BOC for a stronger Solar Ordinance. No formal actions are being taken minutes shall help the committee identify the subject matter more extensively as the areas of specificity are identified as conversations continue to define parameters. These categories will continue through each set of minutes and be built on at each meeting to allow an area for review of progress and areas to further discuss.

The committee continues to have open back and forth as we explore and expound on the concerns and needs to define those concerns within a n updated ordinance.

Decommissioning-there was no further discussion of this topic and it will be addressed in the future

Setbacks- Should be considered from each property line- should this be residence only or all adjoining- further discussion is warranted. Accommodation of future growth should be considered. Amounts discussed have been from 500 up to 1,000 feet. These are measured from right of way.

Size and Scale- The committer will continue to explore limiting the size by acreage or megawatts and should be sensitive to advancing technology and if a project would come back and place more mw power in a smaller foot print.

Visual buffers- No earth berms are allowed. Continued conversation will be had to better define the details of this category.

Noise barriers/ Inverter and transformer placement- Unbiased studies suggest central location of inverters and transformer. It is being suggested additional sound barriers be placed at time of construction by a company approved by the county.

Lease Option Filed – no further discussion on this matter.

Escrow Account- Further agreement this would be beneficial to add to the ordinance.

Tax Abatements- no abatements to be offered for future Solar facilities is agreed to stay in place.

Fees- continue to agree fees should be increased to allow a better capture of the time and efforts it take to enforce and maintain future enforcement from application to possible annual fees.

Land Disturbance- Issuing authority and fees associated with this. Currently EPD. At one time- Brooks County was issuing authority- Jason will research would it would take to reinstate that.

Maintenance logs- continue to be a tool to define non- compliance.

Wording and enforceability of next ordinance- this continues to help us define the goal to of the contents

Battery Energy Storage Systems. - we will initiate a standalone ban of battery energy storage facility for a stand-alone ordinance to initiate as soon as possible

Glare- No discussion on this category

Water / Land Samples-Should we explore to create a baseline existing and future was a topic of discussion. Can we request samples from Quitman Solar 1 and 2- Industrial Authority could request samples. Investigate this option

Zoning classification- what can adjoin if this classification is changed from a needing a Special Exception. Discussion of changing to a solar zoning class on its own. Jame Horton was invited to the next meeting for further discussion. This would involve the amendment of the zoning ordinance in addition the updating of the solar ordinance.

MOTIONS

No formal motions were presented at this meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting was scheduled for February 7, 2025, 2025 3:00 Pm

Motion to Adjourn / Seconded