

**LOUISBURG BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY MAY 28, 2025**

The Board of Zoning Appeals of the City of Louisburg, Kansas met at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers with Chairperson Thorvald McKiernan presiding and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE:

Commission Members:	Michael Sharp, Justin Burk and Kirk Shaffer attended by virtual means
City Council:	Donna Cook
City Administrator:	Nathan Law
Staff:	Jean Carder

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Chairperson McKiernan asked that election of officers be added to the agenda. The motion was seconded by Jason Burk. Motion passed 4-0. Jason Burk moved, seconded by Michael Sharp and carried 4-0, to approve the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Sharp moved, seconded by Burk and carried 4-0, to approve the minutes of the Nov. 30, 2022, meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

McKiernan opened the public hearing for a variance for the height of ball field lights at proposed new softball and baseball fields at the middle/high school complex.

Lori Scott, Louisburg resident who lives in the school vicinity, said she hopes this item is voted down. She is opposed to the lights and said the lights will light up the entire east side of town from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. She asked who will pay for the fields. She asked who will monitor the fields when they are not in use by the district and LRC. She asked who pays the liability and workmen's comp on the property. She asked if this will be a burden to police to monitor the fields when they are not in use. She asked if the board could provide any answers. McKiernan said the regulations call for light foot candles to be near or at zero at the property line. With new LED lighting there is very little or zero light pollution past the property line. She asked who is responsible for the roads and said two buses can't turn the corners at the same time in that neighborhood. She said Wildcat Drive should be closed. McKiernan said the parking for the fields will be at the middle school parking lot and in the staff parking area between the middle and high school so the majority of traffic should be using Amity/K-68. She asked what will happen during tournaments with the traffic and if the land is zoned commercial. McKiernan said the land is zoned residential and

schools are allowed to build in residentially zoned areas. Scott asked who benefits if the fields are rented out for a tournament. McKiernan said she would need to ask the school as the City is not involved in the rental of the fields. She asked who made this decision to put the fields in this location. McKiernan said that is a school board question. Scott asked why the City didn't vote the fields down. McKiernan said the use is allowed and the only question is the height of the light poles. Scott said the lights will be detrimental to the enjoyment of backyards in that neighborhood. City Administrator Law said our zoning regulations do allow for a variance for height. McKiernan said this is part of that variance request.

Marcus Moreland, a 20-year resident of Louisburg, said he has coached many youth sporting teams and was involved with LARA. He was the baseball/softball commissioner for that volunteer group. He said lack of fields has presented problems for teams. He said kids who are involved in sports tend to be better students, from his observation. He said from having attending multiple tournaments parking lots are dark as the field lights stop at the fields with little light spillage. He said the practice baseball/softball fields and soccer field are not fenced and this will be more secure with a fence. He also said the high school baseball/softball season starts in March and finishes by Memorial Day. Lights just won't be on year-round, he said. He said generally games are over by 9:30 so lights should not be on at midnight. He is concerned with misinformation. He said the KC metro is building many multi-complex fields. The school's single baseball and softball field will not turn into a tournament mecca with some many multi-field complexes close by.

McKiernan closed the public hearing.

McKiernan said the BZA's focus is only on the height of the poles. He said taller poles will provide better control of light spread. He said shorter poles do present a safety issue for players.

McKiernan asked the BZA for comments. Sharp said he read the information provided and it appears they are using as efficient and less intrusive lighting as possible.

Burk said he would not comment as there could be a conflict of interest as he lives across the street from the fields and is recusing himself from the conversation.

Shaffer said he read the information and has no additional questions or comments.

McKiernan said staff received an email, which he read, on the variance request from residents who live in that area:

The below undersigned are long-time residents of South Countryside Drive in Louisburg. Regarding the proposal for the baseball field to the East of our properties, we highly hope you will consider the adverse effect this proposal would have on the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The increased traffic, noise, and lights shining onto our properties are all serious issues that these ball fields will have to our neighborhoods. As we all know, there are many locations that could be considered that would not have such an adverse effect on long time as well as new residents in the surrounding area. We already are exposed to lights and noise that has increased over the years from the football

and soccer stadiums. At times I can feel my home practically vibrating with the extreme noise from continuously louder speakers from the football and soccer stadiums. This is typically seasonal currently, but with the addition of the proposed ball fields and the additional issues that would be created at that location, there would be increased and continuous year round noise, traffic, and light pollution to our properties.

Unfortunately, we will be unable to attend tonight's meeting, but I hope you sincerely consider the issue from all aspects and what is truly in the best interest of surrounding residents.

Richard and Lauri Beckman

Daniel and Diane Mathia

McKiernan led BZA members through the eight Golden factors with Law reading the applicant's response to each factor. The BZA didn't find any issues with these factors. Shaffer moved, seconded by Sharp and carried 3-0-1 (Burk) to approve the variance request.

Law said this will now move to the City Council for final approval.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

McKiernan said the board needs to elect a chair, vice chair and secretary. Sharp nominated McKiernan as the chair, seconded by Burk and carried 3-0-1 (McKiernan).

Burk nominated Shaffer as vice chair, seconded by McKiernan and carried 3-0-1 (Shaffer).

McKiernan nominated Burk as secretary, seconded by Sharp and carried 3-0-1 (Burk).

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:26 p.m., Sharp moved, seconded by Burk and carried 4-0, to adjourn the meeting.