

**SAN JUAN COUNTY
ORDINANCE #2020-03A**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE #2020-03 AMENDING THE RULES,
PROCEDURES, AND BYLAWS FOR THE SAN JUAN COUNTY PLANNING
COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, the San Juan County Planning Commission is authorized by the Utah Code Annotated 17-27a-301 and 17-27a-302 and by San Juan County Zoning Ordinance (2011), Chapter 2.1. The Planning Commission exercises authority and assumes responsibilities delegated to it under these authorities; and

WHEREAS, the San Juan County Planning Commission, hereinafter referred to as "the Commission," shall be governed by State statutes and County ordinances and policies, including the following:

- a. State statutes applying generally to public boards, members, and officials;
- b. State statutes governing the activities of County Planning Commissions;
- c. San Juan County Ordinances and Resolutions;
- d. San Juan County Land Use Code; and
- e. The bylaws of San Juan County Planning Commission as set forth herein. They are advisory guidelines only. Consequently, should the Commission waive, suspend, or otherwise deviate from these bylaws during the course of a meeting, such deviation shall not be grounds for invalidating a hearing held during such meeting or any decisions made at such meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that San Juan County does hereby establish the following rules, procedures and bylaws for the San Juan County Planning Commission as follows:

**ARTICLE I
General Provisions**

- 1.1. Familiarity with State Statutes, County, Ordinance and Resolutions, and Rules Affecting the Commission. Upon taking office, all members of the Commission shall familiarize themselves with applicable statutes and county ordinances, and resolutions, and while in office, shall maintain such knowledge, including knowledge of amendments and additions, and shall be strictly governed thereby in the conduct of Commission affairs.

**ARTICLE II
Officers and Election**

- II.1. Officers. The Officers of the Commission shall be a Chairperson and a Vice-chairperson.

- II.2. Election. The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting of the year after the Board of County Commissioners appoints vacant seats. They shall serve for a term of one (1) year or until their successors are elected. Their term shall start the meeting they are elected. If the office of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson becomes vacant, the Commission shall elect a successor from its membership who shall serve the unexpired term of the predecessor. Nominations shall be by oral motion. In the case of nominations, the Commission shall vote by voice vote from the name nominated for the office. If requested by the Chair, written ballots may be used for voting purposes.
- II.3. Chair. Chairperson has the following duties:
- a. The Chairperson presides at all meetings of the Planning Commission maintaining order and decorum and ensures that the procedures prescribed in the San Juan County Land Use Code, Utah State Code, and policies stated herein are followed.
 - b. The Chairperson may call special meetings at any time and in accordance with applicable state and County codes.
 - c. The Chairperson may appoint up to three Commission members to serve on a committee as needed.
- II.4. Vice-chair. The Vice-chair performs the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson, or duties as delegated by the Chairperson. In the event of temporary absence of the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson, the remaining members present shall elect an acting Chairperson for that meeting.

ARTICLE III

Members, Term of Office, Vacancies, Candidate Interest, Interviews, and Voting

- III.1. Members. To guarantee balanced input from across the County in areas where the County has jurisdiction over land use decisions and the impacts of those decisions on adjacent population areas, the Commission shall consist of seven (7) members who shall be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners from the following areas of the County: One (1) member from Blanding area; one (1) member from Monticello area; one (1) member from Bluff area; one (1) member from La Sal area; one (1) member from Spanish Valley area; one (1) member from a special service district within the County and one (1) member-at-large. In addition to the seven (7) members, the Board of County Commissioners may appoint, one (1) non-voting, ex-officio staff member to serve as liaison between the Board of County Commissioners and the Commission and provide administrative support to the Commission. Board of County Commission members may not serve as regular members of the Commission. **Preference of applicants will be given to those living within unincorporated areas of San Juan County.**

- III.2. Term of Office. The term of office for Commission members shall be staggered so that the terms of at least one (1) member and no more than three (3) members expire each year. As the term of each regular member expires, the vacancy thus created shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners for a term of four (4) years, so as to maintain the succession of staggered terms of service.
- a. Terms of all Commissioners begin on January 1st and expire on December 31st of the 4th year following the year of appointment. If the Board of County Commissioners has not appointed a new member(s) to the Commission at the expiration of term, the current Commission member(s) will remain on the Planning Commission until replaced by appointment of the Board of County Commissioners.
 - b. Current Commissioners whose term has expired can submit their name for consideration to renew for an additional four (4) year term by notifying the Commission Chair and County Administrator.
- III.3. Vacancies. County staff shall notify the current Commission of those members whose terms will expire at the end of the calendar year. In cases where a vacancy is created during the middle of a board member's term (mid-term vacancy), County staff shall notify the Commission as soon as practically possible. County staff shall post a notice of Board vacancies, including mid-term vacancies, in a local newspaper of record.
- III.4. Candidate Interest. In early November of each year, the County Administrator shall cause notice of appointment(s) to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in San Juan County. The Planning and Building Department shall be responsible for the costs of such advertisement. Such notice shall state the nature and term of the appointment(s), the qualification for such appointment, request written statements of interest and qualifications, and establish a deadline for submittal of such statements, which time shall not be earlier than fifteen (15) days from the date of publication.
- III.5. Candidate Qualifications. Required Conditions: Commission candidates shall be a resident and registered voter of San Juan County. Preferred Qualifications: experience or knowledge in land-use, knowledge of County and local issues, a good listener, ability to communicate, and analytical reasoning. Trainings through the Utah State Property Ombudsman or other state approved trainings are encouraged and will be considered when determining qualifications. Preferred qualifications may be waived dependent upon a lack of preferred qualifications with those candidates applying for vacancies, and the need for balanced input as outlined in III.1 may necessitate.
- III.6. Candidate Interview. Upon availability, a member of the County Board of Commissioners, a Planning Commission member who is not also a candidate, County Planning & Building Staff, County Attorney, and County Administrator may interview qualified candidates and provide a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. At the start of each interview, candidates will be given three to five

minutes to briefly introduce themselves and to provide relevant information as to background and experience. During the interview process the committee are encouraged to ask questions which verify a candidate's land use knowledge, experience, eligibility, and availability to meet the requirements of service. The committee shall ask the same questions of each candidate. After responding to those questions, interviewers may ask the applicant additional clarifying questions if necessary based on the responses the applicant has given.

- III.7. Voting. The committee shall vote upon the names of candidates in alphabetical order. Each committee member shall be entitled to one vote for each vacancy. Committee members shall vote by voice or a raise of hands. If requested by the Chair, written ballots may be used for voting purposes.
- a. Staff will tally the number of votes cast for each candidate and read this information back to the committee. The committee, by motion will forward this recommendation, including any findings, to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration.
- III.8. Recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Planning staff, **Planning Commission Chair, Planning Commission Vice -Chair** or the County Administrator as directed by the Chairperson, shall present the committee's recommendation, including any findings, to the Board of County Commissioners.

When presented with a recommendation(s) for election to the Commission, the County Commissioners may:

- a. accept or reject the recommendation(s) as presented in total or part
- b. instruct the County Administrator to continue the process for an additional 30 days to solicit additional candidates before making a decision.

ARTICLE IV

Meetings and Organization

- IV.1. Open Meetings and Notices. All regular meetings, special meetings, workshops, and field trips of the Commission are open to the public and will be noticed in accordance with the requirements of the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act.
- IV.2. Regular Meetings. Regular Commission meetings shall be held the second Thursday of each month unless there are mitigating circumstances, such as a lack of a quorum, lack of items to be discussed, holidays or other circumstances.
- IV.3. Annual Training. Commission members are required to attend or view by other means an annual Utah Open Meetings Training, as provided by San Juan County or an online equivalent training. Commissioners are encouraged to attend the Citizen Planner Workshop, as conducted by the Utah League of Cities and Towns or other entity.

- IV.4. Special Meetings, Workshops, and Field Trips. Special meetings, workshops, and field trips for any purpose may be held at the call of the Chairperson or the Board of County Commissioners for approval.
- IV.5. Agendas. Agendas shall be set by staff under the direction of the Chairperson. Agendas for regular meetings shall be provided by staff to all members **the Friday prior to the meeting. at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.**
- IV.6. Proposed Agenda Items and Meeting Materials. The Planning and Building Department must have proposed agenda items and meeting materials **at least two weeks prior to by 12:00 pm the Friday before** the Planning Commission meeting date unless extenuating circumstances exist.
- IV.8. Minutes. The recording of minutes of all Commission meetings shall be the responsibility of Planning Department staff. In the event staff is absent from any meeting, the Planning Department may send a designee.
- IV.9. Voting. Commission members shall make a good faith effort to become knowledgeable on matters before the Commission. A quorum of the Commission shall consist of four (4) members and the affirmative vote of at least four (4) members in attendance shall be necessary to pass any motion.
- IV.10. Motion. All decisions of the Commission shall be made in a public meeting by motion, made and seconded, and by voice vote. Any Commissioner may make or second a motion. If there is any ambiguity on any vote or if the nature of the application or petition warrants, the Chairperson may conduct a roll call vote. Motions should be supported by reason and include findings. The person making the motion is encouraged to state the reasons and finding(s) supporting the motion at the time the motion is made. Any conditions for approval must be stated in the motion. The motion may refer to the staff report for details of the conditions for approval if the person making the motion desires to do so.
- IV.11. Conduct During Public Meetings. During all meetings and hearings, persons providing testimony shall proceed without interruption except by members of the Commission at the discretion of the Chairperson. All comments, arguments, and pleadings shall be addressed to the Chairperson and there shall be no debate or argument between individuals in the audience. ~~There shall be no debate or argument between individuals~~ **(repetitive from above)**. The Chairperson shall maintain order and decorum, and, to that end may order removal of disorderly or disruptive persons. Any member of the Commission, counsel to the Commission, or the Commission staff, upon recognition by the Chairperson, may direct any questions to the applicant, witness, or any person speaking from the audience for the purpose of eliciting relevant facts. The Chairperson or

Commission members may call for relevant facts from staff and make appropriate comments relevant to the matter.

- IV.12. Time Control. The Chairperson may control the time for debate on any issue. Care should be taken to insure fairness in the hearing process. Those speaking in support or opposed should have substantially equal time. The Chairperson may stop debate once he or she believes the issue has been adequately and fairly heard.
- IV.13. Citizen, Applicant, and Other Participation by Real-Time Telecommunication. Participation by Citizens, Applicants, and Others may be allowed by real-time telecommunication at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- IV.14. Quorum. Means the minimum number of persons required to act as a body. A quorum requires four (4) Commission members who must be present in person **or online** at the meeting. Absent Commissioners may participate fully by phone or other real time means and engage in debate, asking questions, making motions, voting on motions, and all other functions of the Commission. **The meeting may be moved to an online format or cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, emergencies and acts of God at the discretion of the Planning Commission Chair or Vice-Chair.**
- IV.15. Commissioner Participation by Real-Time Telecommunication. Commissioner participation by real time telecommunication shall allow them to participate in discussion and may vote on any matter.

ARTICLE V

Ethical Considerations

The following ethical principles shall guide the actions of the Commission and its members.

- V.1. Serve the Public Interest. The primary obligation of the Commission and each member is to serve the public interest.
- V.2. Support Citizen Participation in Planning. The Commission shall ensure a forum for meaningful citizen participation and expression in the planning process, and assist in the clarification of community goals, objectives and policies.
- V.3. Conflict of Interest. ~~Planning Commission members shall adhere to state law regarding conflicts of interest (already covered).~~ A member with a conflict of interest shall be required to disclose such conflict prior to consideration of the matter by the Planning Commission. A member with a conflict of interest may not attempt to influence other members or appointed staff outside the meeting. A member with a conflict of interest shall be required to recuse herself or himself from participating in, commenting on, or voting on the matter in which such conflict exists.

- V.4. Ex Parte Communication / Ensure Full Disclosure at Public Meetings. Each ex parte shall be decided on the basis of the evidence placed in the record in a public meeting. Ex parte information on any **application item coming before the Planning Commission** received by a Commissioner, whether by mail, telephone, or other communication should be avoided. When such communication does occur it must be made part of the public record by the Commission member. The purpose of disclosing ex parte communication is to get all information on the record so it can then be addressed, confirmed or refuted, by evidence presented by the parties during a meeting.
- V.5. Maintain Public Impartiality. Commission members may seek information from other Commission members, the counsel to the Commission, staff serving the Commission, or the staff of other departments or agencies advising the Commission **on information regarding an agenda item but may not persuade their vote.**
(separated to new paragraph)
- V.6. Ethical Duty to Make Public. Each member of the Commission has an ethical duty to avoid making public statements for or against the merits of any application before the Commission hearing is concluded and a decision or recommendation has been rendered.
- V.7. Faithful Attendance and Performance. Should circumstances arise where a Planning Commission member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, the member shall be responsible for notifying the Chair or Planning and Building Department staff as soon as possible. Planning Commission members shall not miss more than three consecutive meetings. A Planning Commission member may not miss more than 25% of the meetings in a year. If circumstances prevent faithful attendance and performance of Planning Commission member duties, the member will be removed from the Planning Commission or the member should knowingly resign from the Planning Commission. Attendance through remote means may only be approved the Planning Commission Chair, and a commission member must attend more than 50% of the meetings in person absent extenuating circumstances.
- V.8. Open Meetings Act. Commission members shall be trained annually and abide by the Open Meetings Act as described in U.C.A Title 52, Chapter 4, Open and Public Meetings Act.

ARTICLE VI

Resignations and Removal of Membership

- VI.1. Resignations. Any member of the Commission must submit a signed letter of resignation specifying the effective date on which the member's service will cease. The letter of resignation shall be submitted to the County Administrator.

- VI.2. Acceptance of Resignation. The Board of County Commissioners shall accept resignation upon receipt thereof.
- VI.3. Removal from Commission Planning. The Commission may request the resignation of a member for reasons of attendance and/or ethical considerations. The Board of County Commissioners may remove a Commission member for cause prior to the expiration of the appointed term.

ARTICLE VII

Per Diem and Travel Expenses

- VII.1. Per Diem and Travel Expenses. Commission members are to receive a per diem and reimbursement for travel expenses for meetings actually attended at a rate established by the Board of County Commissioners.

ARTICLE VIII

Adoption, Review, and Amendment of Bylaws

- VIII.1. Annual Review and Amendment. The bylaws will be reviewed by the Commission at the **first meeting beginning** of each calendar year. Amendments will be recommended to the Board of Commissioners for approval **at the next available meeting**.
- VIII.2. Waiving or Suspending Rules. A rule of procedure may be suspended or waived at any meeting by unanimous vote of the Commission members present unless such a rule is set by state law or county ordinance.

APPROVED, AMENDED AND PASSED by the Board of San Juan County Commissioners on the 19th day of August, 2025.

Voting Aye:

Voting Nay:

ATTEST:

BOARD OF SAN JUAN COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS

Lyman Duncan

Silvia Stubbs, Chair