

MINUTES
DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Monday, September 8, 2025

A Meeting of the DeKalb County Board of Zoning Appeals was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Court of the DeKalb County Courthouse by Chairperson, Frank Pulver.

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Frank Pulver, Andrew Provines, Rory Walker, Wayne Funk and Jason Carnahan.

Members absent: None

Staff Present: BZA Attorney, Andrew Kruse, Director/Zoning Administrator, Chris Gaumer, and Secretary, Meredith Reith

Public in Attendance: Joshua Heffelfinger, Brian & Amy Capp, and Mark Heffelfinger.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made by Jason Carnahan and Seconded by Wayne Funk to approve the Minutes of August 11, 2025 as submitted. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Petition #25-09 — Joshua Heffelfinger requesting a Special Exception to allow for professional canine boarding. The property is located at 5776 County Road 36A, Butler, Indiana and is zoned A2, Agricultural.

Chris Gaumer read the proposed petition and staff report stating why the proposed Special Exception is needed. The petitioner is requesting to allow for a professional canine boarding & kennel business inside his existing pole barn. He stated that he didn't see any issue on this and is recommending approval. Josh is here to answer any questions that the board may have.

Andrew Provines asked how long the dogs will be outside and whether there will be some kind of run for them.

Joshua Heffelfinger approached the podium stating there would be two outdoor runs. The plan is not to make this an indoor/outdoor run to have full access outside. The kennels will allow them to be inside with raised floors and catch pans with plumbing. He has planned for the hours of operations time to let the dogs in the outdoor runs. They would be out for about 20 minutes in the morning and afternoon and otherwise they are inside the barn. He added that there will be inner locks between each kennel set so that if a dog gets away, they can't get out.

Frank Pulver asked what the proposed capacity is.

Mr. Heffelfinger stated that twelve would be the max that the building could physically hold. He stated that he will be buying six kennels to start. If this works out, maybe in five years we might try to get to that twelve, but that's not soon.

Mr. Provines asked if for part of this we would need to specific a max on here. He addressed that he wouldn't want him to have to come back for four extras.

Mr. Gaumer stated that we could put this as a condition if you wanted it to be twelve max.

Mr. Heffelfinger stated that this wouldn't happen anytime soon with him and his wife having a full-time job. This would basically come down to the fact that we were hying to board and have had five dogs at our house. We were trying to leave and get a boarding facility and there's few around us. I have a small dog training business now and being a canine handler. We thought that this could be a good time to fill a need if there's one and not have this as a primary job.

Andrew Kruse asked if this would be treated as a home business.

Mr. Gaumer stated no, with it being in the UDO for special exceptions for kennels in the A2 zoning districts.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any more questions for the petitioner. He opened the public portion of the hearing up to any comments for or against this petition.

Brian Capp approached the podium questioning that with you giving Josh a permit to run this kennel. When he moves in five to ten years will the license be left with the property?

Mr. Gaumer stated that they would need to come back if the owner changed. If he would leave the kennels and building the use itself would have to come back to be reviewed.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were further comments from the public. Hearing None. The public portion of the hearing was closed.

Mr. Kruse went through the Findings of Fact for this petition with the board.

JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS:

The petitioner has complied with the rules and regulations of the Board of Zoning Appeals in filing appropriate forms and reports.

1. Application completed and filed on **July 28, 2025**
2. Legal notice published in The Star on **August 29, 2025** and affidavit given to staff and receipt received.
3. Certificate of mailing notices sent and receipts given to staff.
4. Letter from the County Board of Health/Indiana Department of Health, dated **August 28, 2025 & August 22, 2025**
5. Letter from the County Highway Department, dated July 31, 2025
6. Letter from the Soil & Water Conservation District, dated **July 31, 2025**
7. Letter from the County Surveyor or Drainage Board, dated **July 30, 2025**
8. Letter from the DeKalb County Airport Authority, **not applicable**.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. Is the proposed use consistent with the purpose of the Zoning District and Comprehensive Plan? Yes (☒) No () *
The proposal is consistent with the zoning district and Comprehensive Plan. A kennel is permitted by Special Exception approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Also, see DeKalb County Board of Health letter, Highway Dept letter, Soil/Water Conservation District & County Surveyor letter.
2. Will the approval of this Special Exception request be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and the general welfare of the community? Yes () * No (☒)
The proposal will not be injurious to the surrounding community.
3. Is the proposed use in harmony with all adjacent land uses? Yes (☒) No () *
The proposal is harmonious with the surrounding community. The property is residential in use and adjacent parcels are residential and agricultural..
4. Does the proposed use alter the character of the district? Yes () * No (☒)
The proposal is residential in nature which is consistent with the surrounding community.
5. Does the proposed use substantially impact the property value in an adverse manner?
 Yes () * No (☒)
The proposal will not impact property values negatively.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS:


1. The Board retains continuing jurisdiction of this Special Exception to assure compliance with all terms and conditions and/or impose additional conditions deemed necessary for health and safety.
2. No offsite drainage crossing over said real estate should be obstructed by any development on this site.
3. The Special Exception to allow for professional canine boarding & kennel business is allowed.
4. Zoning Administrator to determine when any conditions have been met.

IT IS, THEREFORE, THE DECISION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS THAT THIS SPECIAL EXCEPTION, PETITION #25-09 IS HEREBY APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS ON THIS 8TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2025.

Motion made by Andrew Provines, Seconded by Jason Carnahan.

Vote tally: Yes: 5

No: 0



Frank Pulver



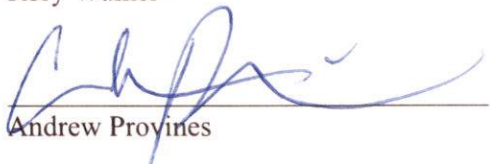
Jason Carnahan



Rory Walker



Wayne Funk



Andrew Provines

REPORTS OF PLANNING STAFF, OFFICERS, OR COMMITTEES

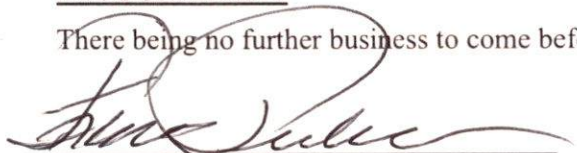
None

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.



Frank Pulver, Chairperson



Meredith Reith, Secretary