Highlands County
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Tuesday, December 9, 2025, REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:59 p.m., Tuesday, December 9, 2025, in the County Commissioners' Board Room located in the City of Sebring City Hall Building at 368 S. Commerce Ave., Sebring, Florida.

An announcement was made by Chairman Youngman to silence all cell phones and other audible electronic devices.

Chairman Youngman opened the meeting with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken with the following members present:
Mrs. Ezell, Mrs. Hunnicutt, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Lopez, Mr. Boring, and Mr. Youngman, Chairperson.

Alternate Voting Members present: Mrs. Payne.

Alternate Non-Voting Members present: Mrs. Sclater and Mr. Drewery.

Staff present: Mrs. King, Planning and Zoning Technician II; Ms. Collinsworth, Planner I; Mrs. Culpepper, Planning and Zoning Supervisor; Mrs. Kramer, Planning and Zoning Manager; Mrs. Sauls, Development Services Director; and Mrs. Sutphen, County Attorney.

3. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

See Item 10 below.

4. SWEARING IN OF WITNESSES

County Staff who had testimony were sworn in.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. BOA 1990 - HTFL, INC, C/O DANA RIDDELL & JEFF KENNEDY

An approximate 23-acre parcel identified by Parcel Identification No. C-14-37-29-203-0112-0000.

The Applicant is requesting a special exception to allow a paved runway, in accordance with Section 12.05.200.F.3 of the Highlands County Land Development Regulations ("LDRs"). Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Ms. Collinsworth confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there has been one letter received in objection to the request, and twelve letters received in favor. Mr. Youngman noted ex-parte communication with Mr. Hathaway and staff regarding the special exception process and proposal. The applicant's agent, Dana Riddell, provided a brief presentation of the proposal and communicated that the applicant accepts all the proposed conditions noted in the revised staff report dated December 9, 2025. Mrs. Ezell asked staff related if the "memorandum of understanding" noted in one of the exhibits needed to be part of the file. The County Attorney clarified that it is not required for the special exception approval process. Mr. Brown asked staff if the applicant and staff had discussed the revised conditions and come to an agreement. Staff confirmed all concerns were addressed.

Chair Youngman opened the floor for public comment. One member of the public spoke in objection to the request with concerns of safety, building restrictions, and that the proposed site plan seemed to indicate the runway would be utilizing their property. Board members asked if any aircrafts would be departing or arriving in the direction of the concerned neighbor. The applicant's attorney of record clarified that the neighboring property is not being utilized for this project, construction is not restricted, the owner may build according to the Land Development Regulations, and noted the redlines are for planning purposes and refer to the nearest object(s) for the runway threshold. The attorney also noted departure and arrival would be contingent on winds but may depart and/or arrive from that direction.

Motion made by Mr. Boring and seconded by Mrs. Payne to move to approve Special Exception Application BOA 1990 to allow a paved runway, on a parcel identified by Parcel Identification No. C-14-37-29-203-0112-0000, Lake Placid, Florida, with conditions as noted in the revised staff report dated 12/9/2025.

Upon roll call, Mr. Boring, Mrs. Lopez, Mrs. Hunnicutt, Mrs. Ezell, Mrs. Payne, and Mr. Youngman voted yes. Mr. Brown voted no. **Motion carried 6-1.**

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. BOA 1991 - AGRI-FLO HARVESTING LLC C/O RACHEL WALBURN

An approximate 4.74-acre parcel located at 1009 Fox Lake Road, Avon Park, and identified by Parcel Identification No. C-13-33-28-A00-0050-0000.

The Applicant is requesting a special exception to allow commercial activity directly serving agricultural pursuits and limited to the service of agricultural pursuits, specifically to allow the storage of agricultural equipment servicing off-site farms and servicing agricultural-related equipment. Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Ms. Collinsworth confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there have been no letters received in objection to the request or in favor of the request. The applicant's agent, Rachel Walburn, provided a brief presentation of the request. Mr. Youngman asked whether any agricultural activities will take place on the property. The applicant's agent confirmed the commencement of a nursery.

Chair Youngman opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public spoke for or against the request.

Motion made by Mrs. Hunnicutt and seconded by Mrs. Lopez to approve Special Exception Application No. 1991 to allow commercial activity directly serving agricultural pursuits and limited to the service of agricultural pursuits, specifically to allow the storage of agricultural equipment servicing offsite farms and to servicing agricultural-related equipment at 1009 Fox Lake Road, Avon Park, Florida, with conditions as noted in the staff report.

Upon roll call, all members voted yes. **Motion carried 7-0.**

B. BOA 1992 - RUNNETTA JOHNSON, C/O SARAH MAIER, DEWBERRY ENGINEERS

An approximate 0.13-acre parcel located at 129 Vision Street, Lake Placid, and identified by Parcel Identification No. C-07-37-30-020-0070-0040.

The Applicant is requesting a 3.26-foot variance to allow a 4.24-foot side yard setback instead of the required 7.5 feet, and a 10.76-foot variance to allow a 4.24-foot corner yard setback instead of the required 15 feet, to reconstruct a damaged dwelling. Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Ms. Collinsworth confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there have been no letters received in objection to the request and no letters received in favor of the request. The applicant's agent, Sarah Maier stated staff's presentation adequately addressed the matter and was available for any questions. Mr. Youngman noted there have been a few variances in the area and all appear to have the same issues.

Chair Youngman opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public spoke for or against the request.

Motion made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Boring to approve Variance Application No. 1992 for a 3.26-foot variance to allow a 4.24-foot side yard setback instead of the required 7.5 feet, and a 10.76-foot variance to allow a 4.24-foot corner yard setback instead of the required 15 feet, to reconstruct a damaged dwelling at 129 Vision Street, Lake Placid, Florida.

Upon roll call, all members voted yes. **Motion carried 7-0.**

C. BOA 1993 - ROSANA SANTOS & RUSLAN VALDES

An approximate 10.02-acre parcel located at 110 Angus Road, Venus, and identified by Parcel Identification No. C-17-39-30-020-0000-0210.

The Applicant is requesting a 5.14-foot variance to allow a 19.86-foot side setback instead of the required 25 feet, to allow for three (3) existing storage buildings to remain in their current locations. Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Ms. Collinsworth confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there have been no letters received in objection or in favor of the request. The applicant communicated they requested a variance to allow the structures to remain in their existing location, citing a preference for their current placements. Board members had questions regarding whether permits were obtained, code enforcement violations, and how the case originated. The applicant verified permits were not obtained and Daniel Roarty, Highlands County Code Enforcement, presented the series of events leading to the variance, stating that the case began in 2023 and was initially submitted by the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and the Building Department for septic and electrical without permits.

Chair Youngman opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public spoke for or against the request.

Motion made by Mrs. Lopez and seconded by Mr. Boring to deny Variance Application No. 1993.

Upon roll call, all members voted yes. **Motion carried 7-0.**

D. BOA 1994 - ADVENTHEALTH VARIANCE

An approximate 76.37-acre parcel located at 4200 Sun 'n Lake Boulevard, Sebring, and identified by Parcel Identification No. C-04-34-28-030-0310-0000.

The Applicant is requesting a variance to allow an increase in maximum height from 50 feet to 72 feet (with 76 feet to the top of the parapet and 85 feet to the top of the stairs and elevator towers). Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Ms. Collinsworth confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there have been no letters received in objection or in favor of the request.

Chair Youngman opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public spoke for or against the request.

Motion made by Mr. Boring and seconded by Mrs. Hunnicutt to approve Variance Application No. 1994 to allow an increase in maximum height from 50 feet to 72 feet (with 76 feet to the top of the parapet and 85 feet to the top of the stairs and elevator towers).

Upon roll call, all members voted yes. **Motion carried 7-0.**

7. KNOWLEDGE QUEST

Staff quizzed the Board with a review exercise on special exceptions and variances.

8. CITIZENS NOT ON THE AGENDA

9. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Mrs. Kramer wanted to take a moment to recognize the Board members for their hard work, taking into account the complexities associated with the decision-making process. The County Attorney echoed Mrs. Kramer's comments, also noting that the BOA and P&Z members play an important role in the growth of the County. The County Attorney also recognizes the growth of the Board members.

10. BOARD MEMBERS

Mrs. Hunnicutt noted the meeting minutes from the previous meeting were not approved and noted the minutes are in the packet but not listed on the agenda. Mrs. Hunnicutt made a motion to add the consideration of minutes from the previous meeting as an agenda item, all members voted yes. **Motion carried 7-0.**

Minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved after adding the consideration of minutes as an agenda item. **Motion carried 7-0.**

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING - JANUARY 13, 2026

12. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Angie King
Planning and Zoning Technician II