

**Highlands County
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Tuesday, May 12, 2026, REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, 2026, in the County Commissioners' Board Room located in the Highlands County Board of County Commission Chambers at 600 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 by Mrs. Ezell and the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken with the following members present:

Mrs. Ezell, Mrs. Hunnicutt, Mr. Boring, Mrs. Lopez, Mr. Roberts, 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; Mrs. Navarrete, Planner I; Ms. Collinsworth, Planner I; Mrs. Kramer, Planning and Zoning Manager; Mrs. Sauls, Development Services Director; and Mrs. Sutphen, County Attorney.

3. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved. **Motion carried 7-0.**

4. SWEARING IN OF WITNESSES

County Staff who had testimony were sworn in.

5. OLD BUSINESS

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. BOA 2002 - MICHAEL AND LEONARD CALLAHAN, C/O SARAH MAIER, DEWBERRY ENGINEERS

An approximate 0.11-acre parcel located at 130 E A Smith Ave, Lake Placid, and identified by Parcel Identification No. [C-07-37-30-040-0100-0040](#).

The Applicant is requesting a 5.5-foot variance to allow a 19.5-foot front yard

setback instead of the required 25 feet, to replace a damaged dwelling. Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Ms. Collinsworth confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there has been one letter received in concern to the request and no letters received in favor of the request. Ms. Collinworth noted an error in the staff report in the second paragraph under Development Services Summary and Analysis, which should correctly state that the proposed structure will meet the required side and rear setbacks but will not comply with front yard setback without the requested variance. The agent, Sarah Maier, was sworn in and available to answer questions from the Board and public. Discussion ensued amongst the Board members and agent regarding the variance request, the previously damaged dwelling, and the property characteristics. The agent explained the stairs would exceed 3.5 feet in height from the ground and did not qualify as a yard encroachment, thus requiring the variance to the 25-foot front setback, and that due to the grade of the property the home could not be moved back to meet the required setbacks.

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 approve Variance Application No. 2002 for a 5.5-foot variance to allow a 19.5-foot front yard setback instead of the required 25 feet, to replace a damaged dwelling at 130 E A Smith Ave, Lake Placid, Florida.

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

B. BOA 2007 - ANN BROOKS

An approximate 0.23-acre parcel located at 211 Lark Avenue, Sebring, and identified by Parcel Identification No. [C-26-34-28-020-0000-1840](#).

The Applicant is requesting a special exception to allow raising, keeping or maintaining up to two caged hens. Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Mrs. Navarrete confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there have been five letters received in objection to the request, including one petition containing five signatures from surrounding property owners, and no letters received in favor of the request. Mrs. Brooks was sworn in and provided the Board with a brief overview of the request. Discussion ensued amongst the Board members and the applicant regarding the number of chickens, the location of the coop, the structural integrity of the coop, and the chickens roaming.

Chair Youngman opened the floor for public comment. One member of the audience spoke in favor of the request and requested clarification regarding

whether the chicken coop had to be demolished or if it could be repurposed in the correct location. Staff noted there was no structural requirement in the ordinance for the chicken coop. Three members of the audience spoke against the request, noting concerns of disease, vermin, pests, decreased property values, a rooster, chicken excrement on neighboring properties because they free roam, and damage to flower beds and patio furniture.

Motion made by Mrs. Ezell and seconded by Mrs. Lopez to approve Special Exception Application No. 2007 to allow the raising, keeping or maintaining up to two caged hens at 211 Lark Avenue, Sebring, Florida, with the conditions as indicated in the staff report.

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

C. BOA 2009 - JOHN AUSTIN MULDOON C/O MEGAN ROSSI

An approximate 0.24-acre parcel located at 218 Rail Avenue, Sebring, and identified by Parcel Identification No. [C-26-34-28-020-0000-8650](#).

The Applicant is requesting a special exception to allow the raising, keeping or maintaining up to two caged hens with a reduced setback of 12 feet 10 inches from the side property line and 16 feet 2 inches from the rear property line for the chicken coop. Mr. Youngman read the request into the record. Mrs. Navarrete confirmed proof of advertising requirements and noted there has been one letter received in objection to the request and no letters received in favor of the request. Ms. Rossi was sworn in and presented a brief description of the request. Board members inquired as to the nature of the reduction of the coop setback. The agent noted the requested location is preferred based on the customer's desire to preserve the existing trees on the property, moving the coop to meet the required setbacks would require the removal of the trees which were a natural amenity and selling point when the property was purchased.

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. Payne to approve Special Exception Application No. 2007 to allow the raising, keeping or maintaining up to two caged hens with a reduced setback of 12 feet 10 inches from the side property line and 16 feet 2 inches from the rear property line for the chicken coop, at 218 Rail Avenue, Sebring, Florida, with the conditions as indicated in the staff report.

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

D. BOA 2010 - GUY AND MARY STANLEY

An approximate 0.36-acre parcel located at 1500 Duane Palmer Blvd, Sebring, and identified by Parcel Identification C-15-35-30-050-00Q0-0010.

The Applicant is requesting a 7-foot variance to allow an 18-foot rear yard setback instead of the required 25 feet, to enclose an existing screen room. 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 or in favor of the request, but one letter stating there would be no impact from the requested variance. Mr. Stanley was sworn in and provided a brief overview 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 Mrs. Lopez and seconded by Mr. Roberts to approve Variance Application No. 2010 for a 7-foot variance to allow an 18-foot rear yard setback instead of the required 25 feet, to enclose an existing screen room at 1500 Duane Palmer Boulevard, Sebring.

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

7. CITIZENS NOT ON THE AGENDA

8. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

9. BOARD MEMBERS

Since the question was raised during one of the hearings for the hens, Mrs. Ezell asked if staff could address in a future Knowledge Quest what regulations there are about people selling things from their front yard.

10. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING - JUNE 9, 2026

11. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Angie King
Planning and Zoning Technician II