

Burns Harbor Board of Zoning Appeals

Minutes of Tuesday, January 27, 2026

The Board of Zoning Appeals of the Town of Burns Harbor, Porter County, Indiana, met in its regular session on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at the Burns Harbor Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by the Board of Zoning Appeals President, Bernie Poparad, at 6:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited.

Roll Call:

Bob Crecelius	Present
Travis Dunlap	Present
Jim Meeks	Present
Timothy Minier	Present
Bernie Poparad	Present

Additional Officials Present

Attorney Clay Patton, Building Commissioner Joe Lawson, and Secretary Jill Sherrill.

Also Present

Chad Ralph, Melissa Ralph via Zoom, and Kayley Johnson, realtor with WhiteHat Realty Group.

Reorganization

Crecelius made a motion to appoint Bernie Poparad as President and Timothy Minier as Vice President. Meeks seconded the motion. Dunlap- Aye, Crecelius- Aye, Meeks- Aye, Minier- Aye, Poparad- Aye. Motion passed.

Minutes

Meeks made a motion to approve the minutes of December 17, 2025. Crecelius seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier-Aye, Dunlap-Aye, Crecelius-Aye, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Communication, Bills, Expenditures

Nothing to report.

Report of Officers, Committee, Staff

Nothing to report.

Public Hearing

357 Melton Road- Use Variance and Developmental Standards Variance

Poparad opened the Public Hearing at 6:01 pm.

Ralph stated that my name is Chad Ralph, and we were here last month, so tonight is our Public Hearing for our variance request. We want to build a house and a barn on our property located at 357 Melton Rd. Since the last meeting, we have purchased the property.

Poparad asked for public comments in favor.

Ralph stated that my wife and I are in favor of this.

Poparad asked if there were any other comments in favor. There were no comments in favor.

Poparad asked if there were any comments in opposition. There were no comments on the opposition.

Poparad closed the Public Hearing at 6:03 pm.

Meeks questioned if there was sewer on the property already. Ralph stated, to our understanding, yes. They found a permit at the Building Commissioner's office for water and sewer. Meeks stated I did see the permit and the \$50 permit fee, but I did not see any tap-on fee, and it said it was done by the homeowner. So, my point is, if there is no sewer there, do you realize you will have to put that in and hook it up? Ralph stated, yes, we do. Meeks stated that the survey you have provided in your application, I am assuming this is from the last property owner. Ralph stated yes. Meeks stated that south of the house towards US Highway 20, there looks to be a structure that is about 14 feet by 12 feet. Is that structure still there? Ralph stated there are no structures on the property right now. Meeks asked how far the pole barn in the back will be from the property line. Ralph stated that we were told a minimum of 8 feet. Meeks stated the last thing I have; you are aware that this is in an RC2 zone, just so you understand that someone can put a store next to you, since that is permitted. Ralph stated yes, we are aware of that. Minier stated, just to confirm, at the last meeting, you said you weren't going to have business or anything out of the pole barn. Ralph stated that it is still correct.

Building Commissioner Lawson stated I just want to make sure that aware that with the property being on US Highway 20, any plans for a secondary drive would require an extensive permit from INDOT. You are only allowed one driveway off a highway access.

Meeks made a motion to approve the use variance and the developmental standards variance for 357 Melton Road. Minier seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier-Aye, Dunlap-Aye, Crecelius-Aye, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Good of the Order and Other Business

Nothing to report.

Announcements

Nothing to report.

Adjourn

Meeks made a motion to adjourn at 6:11 p.m. Crecelius seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier-Aye, Dunlap-Aye, Crecelius-Aye, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Approved February 24, 2026

Bernie Poparad, President

Jill Sherrill, Secretary