

Prairie County Board of Commissioners Meeting

Special Hearing for public comment on Big Sheep Mountain Park Zoning District.

October 22nd, Terry High School Gym 7:00 p.m.

7 p.m. Pledge of allegiance and call to order.

Chair Devlin read the outlined rules for making public comments for this hearing.

Rob Reukauf opponent. Opposing industrial development, that will hurt agriculture, ranching, roads etc.

Steve Phipps Opponent will not benefit the county.

Tom Mott lives close to a tower now, it's very loud, you don't want these here. Building was the worst part of the project.

Cheryl Morrison is an opponent; the zoning district will make restrictions.

Dan Pike is a proponent of the zoning district. Protect the current quality of life within the district. He outlined many reasons why this project is not good. Please vote to accept zoning.

Tonya Liles, why should anyone tell me what I can and can't do on my own private property.

David Kasten businessman and landowner. He supports the zoning regulations.

Lisa Kearns from Miles City and she is a proponent of zoning and opponent of wind energy. The energy companies fight the taxes and that has caused harm in our community and schools. Where she lives vibrations have pushed rattle snakes into populated areas.

Forrest Anderson is a private consultant for the petitioners that made the district. These regulations are neutral, height limits and setbacks. Property rights work both ways, pass the regulations as they were given to you.

Reene Pirtz, has Randy Pinocci on the phone: public service commissioner for district 1. The people of this district have a constitutional right to implement regulations.

Dan Fulford represents the Fulford Family Trust. He opposes the project and supports the district as it is written. His main concern is property values.

Reene Pirtz: Jeff Jettison: Part of the public service commission and his district 1. Hydro, Coal and Gas are much better sources, only 3% of power comes from wind. The people of the petition spoke very loud about what they want.

John Killen: Lives close to the windfarm and has them on each side of the house. There are noise but it doesn't bother him, and lights don't bother him either. It was one of the best things he did to keep the next generation farming his land.

Ron Tibbetts: lived in county for 70 plus years, and there should be no question that this should be passed with a 75% support from the area.

Paul Hicks: works for NextEra, went over the positive aspects of their project. Spoke about wildlife surveys, and species impacts.

Jacob Kitson: gave a comment concerning the Montana constitution, and the responsibilities of the commission. He gave explanations of why he doesn't want to see the great beauty of the county diminished by this project.

Jesse Smalis supports the big sheep zoning district. NextEra could never bring enough to this county to justify the impacts.

Chele Cole-Harrington: commented that her family goes back generations in Eastern Montana, and she supports and is a proponent of the Big Sheep Mountain Park Zoning district. The regulations on setbacks proposed may not be enough.

Glenda Ueland: they live 30 miles north, the sunsets etc are beautiful. Her husband Chris and her support the district, accept it as written don't change it.

Kathy Girst: 100% support these regulations to keep the land beautiful. Please do the right thing.

Barry Rakes: Lived here his whole life, and he is a supporter of this petition for big sheep mountain.

Megan Pirtz: she read a letter from Julia P. who is a non-participating landowner, who has had fiberglass in large amounts on their property.

Dave Hudson: Totally for the project put together for the big sheep mountain. 17 landowners with contracts are for these regulations.

Rita Teske: Read a letter from Merideth Mckenny, in support of passing the regulations as presented for big sheep zoning districts. Merideth described many different impacts of wind turbines, and the negative impacts on property values.

Scott Glasscock: from Garfield County and live in the middle of a windfarm as a non-participating landowner. They are noisy and blinking lights are not nice. Needs to be boundaries. In favor of passing the regulations on Big Sheep Mountain.

Norma Peabody: Born and raised in Prairie County. She read a prepared comment to the commissioners. Please honor the vote of the people.

Joylynn Manewright: She read a prepared comment about a friend that lives near wind turbines. The wind farm is expanding and continues to do so. She is for the regulations, and you need to listen to the people.

Clint Grue: lives in the district and is in favor of the zoning regulations to preserve the landscape for future generations.

Barb Smalis: Has many concerns, she ask that the commissioners support these regulations that are designed to support us.

Mary Elizabeth Grue Supports big sheep mountain zoning district. Don't change or diminish the regulations that would be overturning an election.

Pat O'Neill: Is a proponent of the big sheep mountain park zoning district. The majority has already voted in favor of the regulations and ask that you pass as presented.

Rolane Christofferson: She read a written comment, about the comparisons of oil vs wind energy and safety concerns presented. The families that signed contracts should be considered. She encouraged them to vote no on the proposed zoning.

Alix Mathison: She wants to address the turbines that are proposed to be built around her property. She is in support of the zoning district. The regulations are neighboring considerations.

Dennis Pluhar: Lives in Garfield County and is surrounded by 315 wind turbines. Their ranch did not sign up. He was told property taxes would go down, but Garfield County went up 31.5%. Urge you as commissioners to support the zoning of sheep mountain project.

Vincent Marro: Works for NextEra and commented on how NextEra can build a strong future for the county. Ask the commissioners to consider the development agreement. He explained his concerns with the regulations and how it would jeopardize the project. He also commented on the telecommunications networks with the restrictions on height.

Chris Ollson: Consultant for NextEra and is an Opponent for the drafted zoning district. Commented on the excessive setback proposed, and he thinks it should be reconsidered. Look at entire county zoning instead and development agreements.

Allan Anderson: Consultant for NextEra and a Professor. Spoke about property values and studies that show there is no impact on property values. He provided a history of projects within the state and addressed health and safety issues. Opposed the passage of this type of zoning.

Clayton Heitz: in favor of the zoning district, the land will never be the same when they are done.

Cody Tibbetts: He is in support of the zoning, it was hard for him to make that decision. Its what people want in this county so it is the right thing to do.

Vadnae Greenfield: Proponent for zoning, this county is amazing, and I want to continue to have a view like this! Want it as it is written.

Brock Tibbetts: won't say if he supports or is an opponent. There will be pollution, without a doubt.

Shane Eaton: The main importance of zoning is trespass zoning. He went over props that explained trespass zoning. The zoning regulations keep trespass zoning off of neighboring lands, so that it doesn't affect neighboring properties.

Tylene Eaton: Giving testimony for about Ryan Bane, he has 12 turbines within a mile of his house, and his property values have dropped. This is because of Trespass zoning. A short video was shown to the commissioners on Ryans Property. The video shows the shadow flicker on the house and light flicker at night.

Neva Ratchbun: Originally from Kansas and gave comment on her homestead back there and the effects of windmills and her move out to Montana. I would appreciate their support for the big sheep mountain.

Reene Pirtz: David Hallett: nonparticipating landowner in New York. Explained how NextEra changed zoning to get their wind turbines put in. 1-mile setbacks is barely enough.

Marshall Pirtz: The government was designed to let the people speak, and the people want this zoning.

Art Tyler: Opponent of the zoning, he had hoped they would settle without zoning. It could give more revenue to the county. He is against zoning prairie county at this time.

Reene Pirtz: Molley Eaton: We live in a unique part of the world. Wind Turbines destroyed the view in Idaho. Its your job to leave the county better than when you found it. Support of the district.

Karitoy Choat: 13 years old and would like zoning so she doesn't have to look at blinking red lights.

Jerry Singleton: Would like to challenge NextEra to take the 50% abatement off the table. Impact fees; they paid Custer County approximately \$6.5 million: Not one penny came

back to the impacted people. 25% retention for the local people. There will always be another NextEra and protect the impact on people.

Travis Choat: Put out his support for the zoning and submitted his comments.

Shane Eaton: Jerry Shillinger from McCone County. During the 2025 legislation many good written laws were proposed but didn't go through. He commented on bonding, and other concerns. The developers fought the bills tooth and nail.

Anthony VonRuden: New to the community, hunting and fishing outfitters. His clients are mostly out of state and are blown away by the beauty of the open space here. Please go with the choices the county people have made.

Lisa Everett: Signed participating landowner, part time rancher, hospital worker, and Montana grown. Against the proposed zoning district. If you do zoning do full county zoning. There have not been any incidents within Montana concerning wind turbines.

Arron Martinson: Generations of families are here in Prairie County, if we don't preserve our landscapes our kids will not come back.

Shane Eaton: Toshia Solle: Can see them 50 miles away. Support of the petition.

Todd Tibbetts: Thank you for taking the time to hear our comments. Spoke about elections, and you have a district that is like an the election, or a voted mill levy. Please support petition as signed.

Harry McNall administrative assistant to the commissioners and Prairie County resident. In support of the Big Sheep Park Zoning District. This is what the people of that district want overall.

Fitzpatrick: With NextEra, appreciate opportunity to hear the community. He is an opponent to the zoning district. Provided comments that the setbacks are more restrictive than what they see in most jurisdictions. The investment, impact fees, and property taxes stay in the county, even if the electricity doesn't.

Reene Pirtz: This is a district meeting, and counties have multiple districts. This is the people speaking. Urge the Commissioners to do the will of the people that put this district together.

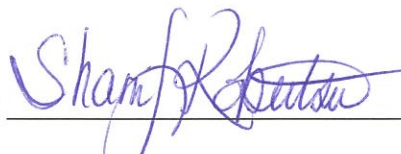
Sam Kortum: Speaking for Loni Coon. She read a comment from Loni, in support of the zoning district.

Meeting concluded 9:36 p.m.

Signed this 29th day of October 2025



Todd Devlin, Commissioner Chair

ATTEST: 

Shari Robertson, Clerk & Recorder