

February 10, 2026

The Zoning Board met on February 10, 2026, at 6:00 PM in Jasper County Court House.

Roll call was taken. Present: Lanette Huddleston, Jacque Cowger, Tom Clark, Ben Borgic, Ken Albrecht and Twyla Harvey.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Minutes were read and approved.

Chairman Albrecht introduced the two new board members.... Jacque Cowger and Ben Borgic. Ken also thanked Kenneth Belcher for his time on the Board.

Chairman Albrecht stated we had 3 Special Use requests and 1 variance request to consider.

Chairman Albrecht then turned the meeting over to Mark Anderson to present his case. Mark stated he wanted to build a building to recondition vehicles and get them ready to sell. He said there would be no retail business on the property. Mark stated there would be some semi traffic delivering vehicles he purchased at auction. Currently this work is being done in Crawford County where he has 6 employees. He said he would keep the cars there approximately 30-60 days before he moved them to the lot on Jourdan Street to sell. He intends to build one big building and down the road a small building for an office and parts.

The floor was then open to the public for comments and/or questions. Twyla Harvey asked if he had to pay a monthly fine for the condition of his property on Decatur Street and Mark stated he did not. She then asked why a person was turned down a year or so ago when they tried to buy the same lot. Said man was told by JJI Chairman, Judy McClure, that said lot was already spoken for. Mark stated he knew nothing about that. Twyla then asked if there was anyone at the meeting that served on the JJI Board. Chairman Albrecht stated he was on the Board but knew nothing about the inquiry. Luke Bloomberg said he was new to JJI Board, but he was not aware of the inquiry.

Lea Creadore then read a letter from Cory and Mallory Shamhart who live next to the Decatur Street property owned by Anderson. Shamharts strongly oppose the Special Use Permit being granted due to the condition of said property. Their letter stated they have continually had trouble with their drive being blocked, water standing, bugs and rodents and numerous other problems. Their letter stated they had none of those problems before Anderson bought the property.

Lea then spoke for Equip-It and their concern about how well this property would be kept due to the condition of the Decatur Street property owned by Anderson.

Tammy Phillips, CEO of Norris Electric, talked about the time and money Norris has put into cleaning up and tearing down the old properties around them. She stated they had built a new office building that they were proud of and have concern with how well Anderson would keep the property he wants to build on. She also stated that a year or so ago, a man had tried to buy said property and was told by the JJI Chairman that the lot was not available, the same man that Twyla

had mentioned earlier. Tammy stated the man that had tried to build the lot does a lot of work for Norris, on their vehicles, and would have been such a great addition to the Industrial Park. In closing, Tammy asked that the Special Use Permit be denied.

Dora Griffith then asked what the hours would be and Anderson said 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Dora stated it would butt up against her property. She asked if he planned on putting a fence around his property and he said he saw no need for a fence. Dora also stated that the property was very low and that was a big concern of hers. Mark stated he had not had a water study done.

Pat Clark stated it was her understanding that a “site plan” had to be submitted before a Special Use Permit could be granted.

John Stone stated that after a Special Use Permit was granted, all other steps/requirements had to be met.

Mark said regarding his Robinson property and his property on Jourdan Street, both properties were well kept.

Lea Creadore stated she had driven by the Robinson property and disagreed with it being well kept. She observed several cars with windows broken out, flat tires and grass growing around several of the vehicles.

A vote was taken by roll call: Huddlestson – no, Cowger – no, Clark – no, Borgic – yes, and Harvey – no.

Special Use Permit denied.

The next Special Use Permit request was for the American Legion to be built. Said Legion would be located next to New Beginnings Church. Tina Mesina spoke for the legion and said their main money maker was not from alcohol, it was from food and fundraisers. Alcohol sales were secondary.

Mike Geier then spoke and said he had been a member of the legion for 20 years and he did not consider it a “bar.” He said they wanted a new building for their veterans who could not get up and down the steps in the present building.

Tom Matson spoke on behalf of New Beginnings Church saying they opposed the building being next to the church.

Julie Matson said she comes from a military family and is not against the legion just opposed them building next to the church. She stated they have a lot of recovering alcoholics in their congregation and thinks the temptation could be too great for some.

Dave Sheppard asked if there were other lots available and Chairman Albrecht stated he thought there was one more lot.

Kevin Parker said our job as a Board was to vote on the facts not on our personal feelings.

Tina said they would put up a fence if the church wanted them to do so.

Twyla said she had received a phone call prior to the meeting from Tina and had asked Tina how the church felt about the legion being built in that location. Tina stated that the church did not oppose it being built at that location. Twyla then stated she had called the church to make sure that was the case and she was told that it wasn't the case, the church did oppose it being built at that location and therefore, Twyla said she had to vote no due to being lied to.

Tina stated they hope to sell their present building.

John Stone said there were no setback requirements for liquor sales but there were for gaming.

Roll call was taken for a vote:

Huddleston – no, Cowger – yes, Clark – yes, Borgic – yes, and Harvey – no.

Special Use Permit will go to the City Council.

Kenneth Belcher is asking for a Special Use Permit for “Belcher Self Storage.” Kenneth stated his building would be stick built and it would be done in phases. It would be on a permanent foundation.

John Stone asked if he would have any employees and he said eventually he would have a few. He initially would have 28 spots in the building. If it appears there is a need, he will have a climate control building. The storage units would have ceilings and different sizes would be available for rent and, therefore, different prices would be charged based on the size. Phase 1 would be built on the Southeast side of the lot.

Lea Creadore asked if there was a need for more storage units in Newton. Kenneth stated he thought there was a definite need for RV and boat storage.

RJ Lindemann asked if there were people already committed to renting said storage units. Kenneth said not at the present time. His plan is to start advertising on the date of closing.

Tom Clark asked if all of them would be climate control and he said no just the one building.

Lanette Huddleston asked what kind of tax money this would bring to our county.

Kenneth stated real estate tax dollars and if he eventually has employees he would be paying payroll taxes.

Roll call was taken for a vote:

Huddleston – no, Cowger – yes, Clark – yes, Borgic – no, Harvey – no but thanked Kenneth for all the work he has done toward cleaning up Newton

Special Use Permit denied.

Request for a Variance for a “tiny house” by Kabel Wright.

John Stone said zoning requires a 900 square foot building and a tiny house is approximately 400 square feet. John also recommended we send this to the Council so they could look at it on the premise of changing the zoning because there will be more requests if this Variance is granted.

Kabel said he wasn't opposed to putting this on a concrete permanent foundation. He also said it was going to be Amish made and he already had a tenant.

Pat Clark stated that Newton needed more rental property.

Twyla said she didn't think it should go to Council since other people had been turned down for the same request. Kabel is on said Council and Twyla stated she thought it would look bad if he was approved and none of the previous ones had been approved. Also, Twyla stated she thought it would be harder for the Council to turn Kabel down since he was on said Council and would be sitting in the meeting.

Roll call was taken for a vote:

Huddleston – no; but she wished him luck, Cowger – no, Clark – yes, Borgic – no, Harvey – no, Albrecht – yes.

Variance denied.

Lanette Huddleston made a motion to adjourn, and Twyla Harvey seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM.

Submitted by:

Twyla Harvey, Secretary