

Traverse County Commission
Public Hearing
April 12, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Commission Chair Kayla Schmidt. Other Commissioners present included Mark Gail, Dwight Nelson, Jerrel Olson and Chad Metz. The pledge of allegiance was recited. The reason for the Public Hearing is for Commissioners to obtain public comments on the County's consideration of a moratorium on the establishment and/or construction of wind towers in Traverse County, for up to a period of one year, in order to allow the Traverse County Planning and Zoning Board to conduct a study on the construction and operation of wind towers in Travers County, and update Traverse County's existing wind tower ordinance. There were no conflicts of interest. Schmidt went over the rules of business for a public hearing.

There were approximately 60 members of the public present, with 3 members asking to speak. There were no written comments received. Schmidt opened it up to the public for comments. The Commissioners heard from those that had concerns regarding the establishment and construction of wind towers in Traverse County and were for the interim ordinance.

After the public comment period the Commissioners had discussion. Schmidt voiced her concerns regarding wind towers and believes Traverse County needs additional time to better research and update our ordinances to the type of projects proposed. Gail made a motion to pass the following Interim Ordinance, second by Nelson and with a roll call vote it passed 5-0:

TRAVERSE COUNTY ORDINANCE

**AN INTERIM ORDINANCE PLACING A MORATORIUM ON THE ISSUANCE
OF CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF WIND
ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEMS WITHIN THE COUNTY OF TRAVERSE**

Purpose and Intent

- A. The County of Traverse (the "County") recognizes significant public interest in wind energy production facilities. There has been requests for wind energy production facilities within the County, and the County is aware that wind energy production companies are approaching landowners throughout the community to determine the interest in such facilities.
- B. The purpose of the moratorium is to allow time to study the existing ordinances, consider new ordinances, ordinance amendments or additions specific to wind energy production facilities.
- C. M.S.A. §394.34 provides that if a county is conducting, or in good faith intends to conduct studies within a reasonable time for the purpose of considering adopting an official control or an amendment, extension, or addition to an official control, the board, in order to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare, may adopt as

an emergency measure, a temporary interim zoning ordinance.

- D. The purpose of the interim ordinance is to provide a county with the opportunity to study its comprehensive plan and official controls so that it can, in a meaningful way, consider potential amendments to its ordinances. An interim ordinance may regulate, restrict, or prohibit any use within the County for a period not to exceed one year from the effective date of the interim ordinance. Many jurisdictions have adopted interim ordinances to study the impacts of certain uses and determine whether regulations are appropriate for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of their citizens.
- E. There is a need for an interim ordinance to be adopted for the purpose of protecting the planning process and the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City until such a study has been completed.

**THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY OF TRAVERSE
HEREBY ORDAIN:**

- 1. That this Ordinance of the Code of Ordinance for Traverse County is hereby enacted to read as follows:

- Section 1. **Definition.** “Wind energy conversion system” means any device such as a wind charger, windmill, or wind turbine and associated facilities that converts wind energy to electrical energy
- Section 2. **Prohibition.** Pursuant to M.S.A. §394.34, the County hereby adopts and approves this interim ordinance establishing a moratorium temporarily prohibiting the issuance of conditional use permits for construction of wind energy production facilities within the County of Traverse. During the effective period of this interim ordinance, the County will not accept any application or issue any conditional use permits for construction of wind energy production facilities.
- Section 3. **Effective Date and Duration.** This interim ordinance shall exist for a period of twelve (12) months from and after its adoption. This interim ordinance is adopted pursuant to the recommendation of the Planning Commission of Traverse County to the Board of Commissioners and after a public hearing. This interim ordinance is hereby adopted by the Board of Commissioners of Traverse County and shall be effective upon publication.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of April, 2023.

TRAVERSE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Kayla Schmidt, Board Chair

ATTEST:

Lisa Zahl, Coordinator

Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Todd Johnson, Board Chairman