

LABETTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PRESS RELEASE

It has come to the attention of the Labette County Board of County Commissioners that some zoning information in public and on social media is inaccurate. This statement is to correct those inaccuracies.

1. Labette County was zoned in 2010. Zoning regulations were only written for Great Plains Industrial Park in agreement with the Army. The Planning and Zoning Board was established at that time as a requirement.
2. In 2022, the commission determined that the current Planning and Zoning Board was out of compliance (Lacked active members, had not met as required for over 5 years). The commission approved the appointment of 8 new members for the board and instructed them, at that time, to establish zoning regulations for the entire county.
3. Every ten years the Zoning Board is required to review the zoning regulations and comprehensive plan for the County per state statute.
4. Based on state statute, the issue for a county to be zoned, or not to be zoned, cannot be placed on an electoral ballot as polling questions are not allowed.
5. Based on the county counselor's legal opinion, the Board of County Commissioners voted that zoning is the best way for the county to regulate industrial wind and solar companies.
6. The appraiser's office works independent of the zoning board. No party, not even the board of county commissioners, may influence an appraiser in the course of their duties.
7. The recently adopted zoning regulations will not impact commercial, business, or agricultural land of existing landowners. Current leaseholders of commercial or industrial projects are subject to county zoning regulations.
8. Zoning regulations cannot be changed without public notice and public meetings, regardless of whether those changes are about adding or removing zoning statements.

The Labette County Board of County Commissioners relied on these facts for their decisions to protect the health, welfare, and to benefit the citizens of Labette County, Kansas.

This statement is approved unanimously by all three commissioners: Chairman Terry Weidert, Vincent B. Schibi and Cole J. Proehl. This statement is also approved in legal form only by County Counselor Brian K. Johnson.