

Marshall County Zoning Commission Meeting

August 27, 2026

10:07 am

The Marshall County Zoning Commission met on the 27th day of August 2026, at 10:00 A.M. in Meeting Room 1 located on the 1st floor of the Marshall County Courthouse, 1 East Main Street, Marshalltown, Iowa.

Zoning Commission members present were Bill Hobson, Pat VonAhnen and William Wears. Also in attendance was Tyler Kelley, Marshall County Zoning Administrator and Dan Matzinger representative of CGA.

The meeting agenda is attached

The FIRST AGENDA ITEM was the approval of the August 27, 2026 agenda. VonAhnen made the motion to approve the agenda, Seconded by Wears.

Hobson- Aye, VonAhnen-Aye , Wears- Aye , motion passed 3-0

The SECOND AGENDA ITEM was the approval of the March 10, 2026 minutes. VonAhnen made the motion to approve the meeting minutes, Seconded by Wears.

Hobson- Aye, VonAhnen-Aye ,Wears- Aye, motion passed 3-0

The THIRD AGENDA ITEM was discussion and possible action on request VAR-2026-6038, by Dan Matzinger, on behalf of the legal owners of the property under request, which is described as Parcel# 8519-26-100-003. Request would grant a waiver of the subdivision plat submittal requirements detailed in Marshall County Ordinance No# 10. Waiver would also allow the creation of a parcel with a lot area less than 1 acre in size.

Dan Matzinger gave a brief presentation on the request, followed by comments from Kelley regarding the property.

VonAhnen made the motion to approve the request VAR-2026-6038, Seconded by Wears.

Hobson- Aye, VonAhnen-Aye , Wears- Aye, motion passed 3-0

The FOURTH AGENDA ITEM was discussion and possible action on a recommendation for a temporary six-month moratorium on the acceptance, processing, approval, and issuance of permits for data center facilities including large-scale data centers, artificial intelligence computing facilities, data mining facilities and cryptocurrency (Bitcoin) mining operations within Marshall County, Iowa.

The Commission reviewed a proposed ordinance establishing a temporary six-month moratorium on the acceptance, processing, approval, and issuance of permits for data center facilities, including large-scale data centers, artificial intelligence computing facilities, data mining facilities, and cryptocurrency mining facilities within Marshall County.

The Commission discussed that the proposed moratorium would provide the Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors with additional time to evaluate appropriate regulations, requirements, and performance standards for these types of facilities.

The Commission reviewed the proposed ordinance and discussed the process for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. It was explained that the recommendation would be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors and would then proceed through the applicable public hearing process. The Commission discussed the possibility of waiving additional readings and determined that such a decision should be passed on to the Board of Supervisors.

Jon Boston, Marshalltown Planning and Zoning Commission, provided an update regarding the City of Marshalltown's efforts concerning data center regulations. Boston stated that the City's moratorium would take effect that day and remain in effect through November 23, with the possibility of a 60-day extension by the City Council if additional time is needed. Boston explained that the City is conducting a roundtable discussion regarding data centers and plans to obtain input from residents, industry representatives, data center owners and operators, industry experts, and other knowledgeable sources. He stated that the City also intends to consult with Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, and other organizations to ensure that its regulations are based on current and accurate information. Boston noted that the City intends to hold an open house after proposed ordinance language has been developed so the public can review the proposed regulations.

The Commission discussed the importance of developing regulations that can remain current as technology and industry changes.

Comment:

John Hall, Marshalltown Area Chamber of Commerce, 34 West Main Street, Marshalltown, stated that the Chamber provides economic development services to areas outside the Marshalltown city limits under contract with the Board of Supervisors. Hall stated that, to his knowledge, the Chamber has not been involved with any current projects seeking to develop data centers outside the city limits. He noted that some projects have been looking at land outside the city limits, but discussions have focused on the possibility of annexation.

Hall also recommended removing the term "large scale" from the proposed ordinance because the term is not defined. He stated that removing the term would provide greater clarity regarding the types and sizes of data center projects subject to the moratorium. The Commission agreed that the change would be appropriate.

Sheri Larsen, Shady Oaks Road, Marshalltown, spoke in support of the moratorium. Larsen stated that she had been contacted by a business entity regarding potential development and was

concerned about the lack of information available to area residents. Larsen stated that the moratorium would provide residents with additional time to learn about potential projects, the companies involved, and the potential impacts on surrounding property owners.

Layne Pieri, 20 East State Street, Marshalltown, asked whether the County had received any applications or been contacted by developers regarding data center projects. Tyler Kelley, Marshall County Planning & Zoning Director, stated that no applications or information concerning data centers had been submitted to the County and that the County had not been contacted by a developer concerning data center development in unincorporated Marshall County.

Pieri also asked whether the moratorium would apply to the two-mile area surrounding Marshalltown that remains under County jurisdiction. Kelley reiterated that the County had not received any applications or information concerning data center development in Marshall County.

Pieri asked for clarification regarding the proposed definition of a data center, including the meaning of "portion" and "primarily." Kelley explained that the intent was to distinguish data centers from ordinary computer servers used for routine governmental data collection and storage. It was noted that the moratorium was intended to provide time to further develop definitions and regulations concerning data centers.

Pieri also supported Hall's recommendation to remove or define the term "large scale." Pieri asked about the process for terminating the moratorium prior to the expiration of six months. Kelley explained that the purpose of the moratorium is to allow the Zoning Commission to develop regulations for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors would have the authority to take subsequent action regarding the moratorium.

Pieri recommended that the Zoning Commission recommend waiving the second and third readings when the matter is presented to the Board of Supervisors. The Commission determined that the decision regarding additional readings should be left to the Board of Supervisors.

The Commission reviewed the proposed changes to the ordinance and confirmed that the words "large scale" would be removed from the title and applicable sections of the ordinance.

Meeting Minutes for Public Forum:

Harold Lanning, 1994 Vine Avenue, Marshalltown, expressed concerns regarding potential annexation by the City of Marshalltown. Lanning stated that he was opposed to additional annexation of agricultural land and expressed concerns about taking prime farmland out of production. The Commission explained that annexation is primarily a matter addressed at the city level.

Sheri Larsen, Shady Oaks Road, Marshalltown, also spoke regarding annexation and stated that both city and county residents may be affected by potential changes to city boundaries. Larsen expressed the opinion that residents living in the county who may be affected by annexation should have an opportunity to participate in the process.

The Commission discussed whether county residents would be able to participate in annexation proceedings. Jon Boston and Marshall County Planning & Zoning Director, Tyler Kelley, explained that the annexation process is governed by Iowa law and includes both voluntary and non-voluntary annexation procedures. Clayton Ender, Assistant Director to the Marshalltown Housing & Community Development, addressed the Commission regarding the annexation process. Ender stated that the City of Marshalltown had not received any applications for annexation and that no annexation was

currently in process. He noted that there had been discussions regarding potential development prospects with the Chamber of Commerce, but nothing had been formally submitted to the City. Ender explained that the City's policy is to conduct voluntary annexations in accordance with state law, preferably with 100 percent of the property owner's consent. He stated that an alternative 80/20 annexation process may apply when some property owners do not consent, but state law limits the circumstances under which non-consenting property may be included.

Ender stated that annexation requires approval by the City Council and that the City is required to provide notice to the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors has an opportunity to submit a resolution supporting or opposing an annexation. Ender further explained that a fully voluntary annexation would generally proceed through the City and then be filed with the Iowa Secretary of State, while an annexation involving non-consenting property owners would require additional review and approval by the State of Iowa.

Ender clarified that no applications for annexation related to potential large-scale development had been submitted to the City. He also clarified that a recent matter discussed by the City Council concerned water service to an existing residential dwelling and was unrelated to potential large-scale development.

Motion by VonAhnen, second by Wears to recommend Ordinance No. 39, establishing a six-month moratorium on data centers.

Hobson-Aye, VonAhnen-Aye, Wears-Aye, motion passed 3-0.

There was no further public comment.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:45 am
