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**Porter County Board of Zoning Appeals  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 21, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Porter County Board of Zoning Appeals was held at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 in the Porter County Administrative Center, 155 Indiana Avenue, Suite 205, Valparaiso, Indiana. Debbie Cook presided.

Members present were: Marvin Brickner, Mike Young, Luther Williams, Bob Poparad, and Debbie Cook. Also present were Attorney Scott McClure, Kristy Marasco, Monica Gee, Helene Pierce, citizens, and representatives of the press.

**MINUTES:**

Marvin Brickner made a motion to approve the February 21, 2018 meeting minutes as submitted. Mike Young seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**UV-18-0007** – Keith Douts, 792 North County Line Road, Westville, in Jackson Township in the RR, Rural Residential District. The petitioner is seeking a Use Variance to allow a dog training facility with classes only – no kennels or boarding. Mr. Keith Douts presented. This is an existing building at the corner of County Line Road and Route 6 in Westville. His wife currently trains dogs by going to each of the owner's homes. Upon opening this location, the dogs and their owners would now be able to come to this location to be trained. Mrs. Douts works with area shelters to train dogs and Mr. Douts helps with the training. Their plan is to repurpose the existing building for training only. There will be no retail sales, no kennels, no boarding, etc. They anticipate 8-10 pets with owners per class.

**Public Hearing:** Debbie Cook asked if any of the public would like to speak in favor of or in opposition of this petition. Debbie Cook also asked that the public address their questions to the BZA while at the same time the petitioner will take notes and respond at one time. No one spoke; therefore, the public hearing was closed and questions/comments were heard from the Members.

Q: Do you own this property?

A: Yes, we purchased it in November.

Q: How many cars can park on the property at one time?

A: Approximately 10.

Q: Do you plan to have signage?

A: No. We are already busy through word of mouth and our website, so that is enough.

Q: Will you be training outdoors?

A: 90% of the training takes place indoors. We may do some leash walking outdoors at times.

Q: What is the maximum number of dogs you will have at one time?

A: 10 if they are puppies. Around 5 if they are older dogs.

Q: How many classes will you be having?

A: We anticipate 2-3 per day and nothing late at night.

Q: Will you be installing a fence?

A: No.

Q: The owners stay with their dogs during the class?

A: Yes.

Motion: Bob Poparad made a motion to approve UV-18-0007 to allow a dog training facility with classes only for a period of five (5) years, 7 days per week, and with normal business hours. Marvin Brickner seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

**UV-18-0008** – Byron & Dianne Gaines, 460 West 700 North, Valparaiso, in Portage Township in the RR, Rural Residential District. The petitioner is seeking a Use Variance to allow a small dog grooming business in an existing attached garage. Byron and Dianne Gaines presented. Dianne has been in the dog grooming business for fifteen (15) years and has owned her own business for nine (9) years. She is looking to downsize and move out of the commercial space she is in. They are remodeling a portion of their existing garage into a grooming space so she may still provide grooming services to her regular and long-time customers.

Public Hearing: Debbie Cook asked if any of the public would like to speak in favor of or in opposition of this petition. Debbie Cook also asked that the public address their questions to the BZA while at the same time the petitioner will take notes and respond at one time. No one spoke; therefore, the public hearing was closed and questions/comments were heard from the Members.

Q: The pine trees to the west are a concern with traffic on 700 North. Is there a plan for this?

A: We are going to enlarge the current turn-around in our driveway for expanded parking and for a better turn-around so no one will be backing out of our driveway.

Q: What will the day and hours be?

A: Mostly five days per week but will occasionally have Saturdays as well. Typically, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. I have crates for dogs to stay in while they are waiting for their owners to pick them up.

Q: Do you groom all breeds?

A: Yes, within reason because I have to be able to lift the dog.

Q: Will you have signage?

A: Nothing at the road, only a small logo sign (12x18) in the window or next to the door so people know they are at the right place and which door to enter.

Q: Are you on sewer or septic?

A: We are on septic, but setting up a recirculation system.

Motion: Bob Poparad made a motion to approve UV-18-0008 to allow a small dog grooming business in an existing attached garage for a period of five (5) years, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, until 12:00 noon on Saturdays, allow for one employee other than Dianne Gaines, and contingent upon the widening of the driveway to allow for better turn-around and extended parking. Mike Young seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

**STAFF ITEMS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the March 21, 2018 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

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Debbie Cook, President

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Attest: Kristy Marasco, Assistant Director