

**KETTLE FALLS PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 13, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Jody Emra called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Commissioner Nick Gourlie led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members in attendance included Jody Emra, Nick Gourlie, and Joe Owens.

STAFF

Staff in attendance included LeAnne Sanders, Council Member Chris Shurrum, Council Member Mike Weatherman, and Alicia Ayers with SCJ Alliance via video.

CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lisa Wolfe.

GUESTS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MAIL RECEIVED

Secretary LeAnne Sanders announced Avista has started work putting in their EV charging stations by the Information Center.

REGULAR MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 2026, MEETING

Commissioner Nick Gourlie made a motion to approve the minutes of March 23, 2026. Commissioner Joe Owens seconded the motion. Commissioner Nick Gourlie – YES. Commissioner Joe Owens – YES. Motion passed.

CLOSED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Currently there is no Public Comment.

NEW BUSINESS

RESCHEDULE MEETING OF MAY 11, 2026, AND CANCEL MEETING OF APRIL 27, 2026

Commissioner Jody Emra stated there has been a request to reschedule the meeting of Monday May 11, 2026, to Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Planning Commission had no problem changing the meeting date.

Commissioner Nick Gourlie said he will be out of town for the Planning Commission meeting of April 27, 2026, and asked if the meeting can be rescheduled. After discussion, Planning Commission decided to cancel the meeting.

Commissioner Nick Gourlie made a motion to cancel the meeting on Monday, April 27, 2026, and reschedule the meeting for Monday, May 11, 2026, to Tuesday, May 12, 2026. Commissioner Joe Owens seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CLOSED

OLD BUSINESS

CLIMATE RESILIENCE PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Alicia Ayers, SCJ Alliance, stated she will go over the timeline, some of the deliverables, to include the Work Plan, Critical Areas Checklist, GAP Analysis memo, and Public Participation Plan. An item still pending is the GMA Checklist as she needs to check the development regulations. We will go through Deliverable# 2 of the Climate Element and the Comprehensive Policy Plan framework.

Commissioner Nick Gourlie stated the Capital Facilities and Transportation sections were homework from the last meeting and he has reviewed it.

Alicia stated these sections of the policy plan framework will be reviewed at the end. She also reminded Planning Commission of the Stevens County Planning Meeting on April 16th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and Land Capacity Allocation will be discussed. Planning Commission then reviewed the next deliverables, Work Plan, Critical Areas Checklist, and the Public Participation Plan, minus the GMA Checklist as it is not quite ready.

Secretary LeAnne Sanders stated the mayor had a question on the Climate Impact Statement, page 11, under projected future conditions on the April 1st snowpack decreasing by nearly 100 percent compared to the 1980-2009 baseline. Does it mean snowpack in the mountains or in Kettle Falls?

Alicia stated yes in the mountains and the information comes from the online tools they use and is written in a technical way, she felt commerce knows what we are saying as these are the tools they recommend.

Commissioner Joe Owens had a question about the drought as a major concern for the City of Kettle Falls. He checked with Department of Ecology, and they have a climate resilience map on their web page showing Stevens County was not in a drought last year. He is concerned saying we are in a drought when that may not be the case.

Commissioner Jody Emra stated if the city establishes, we are in a drought, there may be the possibility, not in the city, but in the county of not getting a permit from ecology to drill a well.

Climate Resilience Member Lisa Wolfe replied it would be nice to know where this information came from, but it is much drier than it has been in the past and the snow pack this year is almost nonexistent. Also, last year there was not nearly as much snow as in the past.

Alicia stated she would investigate where the information came from and would soften the language a bit.

There was also discussion on the information referencing the amount of 100 degree days, lack of snowpack and weather trends.

Commissioner Joe Owens stated Kettle Falls is in the top 94 percentile for bad air quality. He agrees it could be bad, but it would also be bad through the entire valley to include Colville and Chewelah. He also had some concerns with the verbiage in the wildfire section.

Alicia said Deliverable 2 for Climate Impact is late and asked how we can get through the review of deliverables a little quicker to stay on track with due dates and timelines. She stated drought is one of the primary hazards and if there are concerns maybe it should not be primary as it will be a central focus on this element.

Lisa suggested better references on where the data is coming from would be extremely helpful.

Alicia stated a lot of the data resources are county wide and not Kettle Falls specific, but she can add in charts if they would be helpful.

Moving back to the Comprehensive Plan Update, Commissioner Nick Gourlie had a timeline question about when to address changing the UGA boundary to add in the Jennen property and when he will need to become involved.

Alicia stated we will need to have a net zero swap when changing the UGA boundaries.

Commissioner Nick Gourlie said this process is difficult to work through and the state does not approve many boundary changes.

There was further discussion on how to approach the UGA boundary line change and if there should be a larger land swap or just focus on the one property. It was decided to work on this during PUG year two.

Alicia stated Land Capacity and housing allocations will be discussed at the Stevens County meeting this Thursday. You are welcome to come or attend virtually, she will also give a full report at the next meeting.

Alicia then reviewed the next set of deliverables for the climate plan, narrowing the focus to the top three priority hazards and there are eleven different sectors. She will bring an overview of the vulnerability and risk assessment to the next meeting to make sure we are on the right track. The Stakeholder Summary will be available for the next meeting. The draft survey will also be available for review and arrangements have been made for the booth at Town and Country Days.

Alicia then gave a Policy Framework overview explaining how the chart is set up. Planning Commission started reviewing the Capital Facilities section.

Suggested changes: Capital Facilities - 4.A. add maintenance to original goal, 4.2 needs to be consistent with city code 4.3 under notes delete, during fires, add maintenance to all goals, 4.14 update with new county planning policies, Appendix G.

Transportation – 5.4 add to climate part pursue more public transportation, advocate for a bike path to Colville, add planning to 5.4 and delete 5.6 and move climate note from 5.6 to 5.4, 5.5 clarify what “fair-share” means and what are the standards. Will check with City Superintendent Dave Willey for his thoughts on what this means.

Commissioner Nick Gourlie said sidewalks and biking are also in the Park Plan and asked if they should be moved to the Comp Plan and removed from the Park Plan or stay in both.

Alicia replied the parks plan should be referenced in the comp plan that way all the goals and policies are looped into the comp plan. It was decided to move sidewalks and biking from parks plan to comp plan.

Alicia said for the next meeting to review the Annexation, Economic Development and Parks and Recreation of the Goals and Policies. Housing and Land Use will be done last.

OPEN

ZONING UPDATE

Commissioner Nick Gourlie did not have the update ready.

OPEN

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Joe Owens asked about the plan that was on the agenda at the last council meeting.

Secretary LeAnne Sanders replied it was the update of the Stevens County Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the city adopts their plan.

HOMEWORK

Chair Jody Emra will:

- Title 17 - Zoning Updates
- Review Goals and Policies of the Comp Plan and Climate Resilience Information

Commissioner Nick Gourlie will:

- Title 17 - Zoning Updates
- Review Goals and Policies of the Comp Plan and Climate Resilience Information

Commissioner Joe Owens will:

- Title 17 - Zoning Updates
- Review Goals and Policies of the Comp Plan and Climate Resilience Information

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jody Emra adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Approved:

Jody Emra, Chairperson

Attest:

LeAnne Sanders, Secretary