

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

AUBURN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS—REGULAR

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 10148

Held Auburn Township Administration Building 20
11010 Washington Street May 12, 2026 1

MEMBERS PRESENT: ROBERT FORD, BRIAN STEWART, MICHAEL VARLEY, LEWIS TOMSIC, BEN TIMMONS, MARC KOLANZ AND JOHN NESI

MEMBER ABSENT: NONE

MEMBERS HEARING THE CASE: ROBERT FORD, BRIAN STEWART, MICHAEL VARLEY, LEWIS TOMSIC, BEN TIMMONS

CASE FILE: The case file for BZA-2026-09cu is included as part of the official record, along with the Auburn Township Zoning Resolution

CASE: **BZA-2026-09cu-a review of a conditional use certificate for Flying Cages II LLC (Scott Jones) Four Leaf LLC dba Sun Valley for an event venue and party center at 10000 Edwards Lane, Auburn Township, OH 44023, in an R-1 zoning district.**

Frank Kitko, Auburn Township Zoning Inspector; Jane Hardy, Auburn Township Assistant Zoning Inspector; Allison Lesniak, BZA Secretary; and Keith Blaser, Fire Inspector representing the Auburn Township Fire Department were also in attendance.

Mr. Ford again verified that everyone in attendance that wished to speak had signed in.

Mr. Ford swore everyone in who was planning on testifying.

The BZA is a quasi-judicial body and as such, its role is similar to a judge in a court case. The Board will hear evidence and testimony that is factual and will make decisions based upon the facts which are presented, the rules as set forth in the resolution and principles of law.

The Ohio Revised Code Section, 519.13 requires that any Township that has adopted a zoning resolution, which Auburn Township has, appoints a five -member Board of Zoning Appeals and 2 alternate members. This Board is empowered to hear and decide appeals and to authorize variances from the strict terms of the zoning resolution where the variance will not be contrary to the public interest and where, due to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the resolution will result in an unnecessary hardship or practical difficulties, The BZA is also permitted to authorize variances where the spirit and intent of zoning is upheld and substantial justice will be done.

With this being stated the Board proceedings are relatively; but, in order to conduct an orderly meeting and allow all parties of interest, mainly contiguous property owners, or their legal representatives, the opportunity to present the evidence, certain procedures need to be followed:

All interested parties must be sworn in. The applicant will be asked to present evidence to support the requested appeal, the Board will ask questions, and then all interested parties (contiguous property owners) may present evidence concerning the appeal and ask questions regarding previously presented evidence.

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It is the applicant's burden to produce evidence to support the application. The Board will not make the applicants case for them. In order to prepare appropriate meeting minutes, each person, who speaks, will need to state for the record, his/her full name and address. The meeting may be continued by either the applicant or the Board.

The Board must base their decisions upon facts and not on expressions or concerns or non-factual matters. The action of the BZA does not become final until 30 days after the date of the meeting when the minutes were approved.

Mr. Ford stated that Mr. Jones may present his case.

Mr. Jones stated that he is one of the owners of Sun Valley Event Center and we came in front of you in 2019 when we took over the center. He further explained that one of the conditions was for a liquor license as long as we operate within certain times and we have security. Over the years, we have really worked well with a few of the Geauga County Sheriff officers that really go above and beyond. There are officers that work well for them. We wanted to ask if we have to go through the Geauga County Sheriff's Office, as long as there is an off-duty officer on the premises when alcohol is served.

Mr. Stewart would like to know if this is for a financial reason.

Mr. Jones stated that this is not the reason at all. He commented that they would like to use Officer Mike Rizzo more often. The officers would still be paid the same. He explains that we are really the middle person in between the officers and clients at the banquet center. There are certain officers that just sit in their car, while others will help the elderly walk in and they also interact with the staff well.

Mr. Ford asked if the officers would still be in uniform, if the officers come over, they wouldn't be on shift for the Geauga County Sheriff's Department. He also asked "Would they still be with their sheriff car and in uniform at the Banquet Center if they are off duty?"

Mr. Ford asked if this should be tabled until we find out if they would still be in Geauga County Sheriff uniform and in their patrol car.

Mr. Timmons stated that if this policy is changed, they would have to be a licensed police officer or security guard.

Mr. Stewart stated that one of the contentions the Township dealt with before was that if there was an issue that the GCSO would bring in enforcement quickly. He indicated that this has come up before and that the continuity of the Geauga County Sheriff has with the Auburn Township office and with the Fire Department in case of an emergency is critical. He also indicated that we could never monitor who was there, if we do not use the Geauga County Sheriff's Department

Mr. Kolanz suggested using the wording of Geauga County Law Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Kitko stated when they have an event, the Geauga County Sheriff's Department is notified by the Event Center when an officer is needed.

Mr. Ford asked if the Event Center has ever had a meeting with the Geauga County Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Jones stated that they have not. He indicated that they typically communicate through text messages and the whole idea behind this is to create a comfortable space

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for guests and the staff. Officer Rizzo does an excellent job at this and we would like to use him as much as possible going forward.

Mr. Stewart stated that the existing condition wording is sufficient and Event Center they may request certain officers.

Mr. Kolanz stated that he agreed and maybe come up with a short list of officers the Banquet Center would like to use.

Mr. Ford stated that there are other conditions that need reviewed with this and we need to go through each one. So, let's do that now.

He indicated that we have been discussing condition number one up until now.

Condition #2 The occupancy permit supplied to the Auburn Township Zoning Inspector. It was confirmed that we have that.

Condition #3 Noise including music should not be excessive and will not exceed the permitted limit in zoning district. It was noted that the Township has never had a problem with that per Mr. Kitko.

Condition #4 Approval of the Auburn Township Fire Department. Fire Department representative Mr. Blaser explains that the Fire Department has never had a problem with that and we support having the Geauga County Sheriffs there; because we have direct contact with them and they dispatch the Fire Department.

Mr. Ford pointed out that is a good point for emergency response time.

Condition #5 Approval from the Geauga County Health Department must be provided to the Auburn Township Zoning Inspector, that has been done, per Mr. Kitko.

Condition #6 Any new light or replacement lighting will need to be full cutoff, shining in a downward matter and comply with lighting requirements of the Auburn Township Zoning Resolution, we have never had a complaint, per Mr. Kitko.

Condition #7 There will be a review of conditions after one year or sooner, if there are any issues. We are handling that now at this meeting.

Condition #8 Hours of operations will be 8:00 A.M. until 1:00 A.M.

Mr. Jones stated that most of the events are wrapped up by 11:00 P.M.

Mr. Ford stated that the only condition that is an issue is the first one and that really no change is necessary. The Event Center should call the Sheriff's Department and talk to them about a short list of officers that they would like to have at their Event Center.

Mr. Stewart stated that after talking to the Fire Department, he likes the continuity between the Fire Department and Geauga County Sheriff's Department. Mr. Stewart indicated that there isn't a need to change any wording.

Mr. Ford stated that to change Condition #7 to 3 years, and Mr. Kolantz suggested it be 5 years. Mr. Stewart stated to leave it as is and if there is a problem the Zoning Department will be notified.

Motion by Brian Stewart to grant BZA-2026-09cu-a review of a conditional use certificate for Flying Cages II LLC (Scott Jones) Four Leaf LLC dba Sun Valley for an

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event venue and party center at 10000 Edwards Lane, Auburn Township, OH 44023, in an R-1 zoning district.

Motion seconded by Ben Timmons

Vote: Ford, yes; Stewart, yes; Tomsic, yes; Varley, yes; and Timmons, yes.

Motion Passed.

Minutes submitted by

_____ June 9, 2026
 Allison Lesniak, BZA Secretary

 Robert Ford, Chairman