

TOWN OF YAMPA
TOWN BOARD MINUTES
October 15, 2025 – 6:00 pm

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Geilert, Trustee Lewis, Trustee Geanious, Trustee Shoptaugh and Trustee Montgomery

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: Town Administrator/Clerk Sheila Symons Planner/Treasurer Mary Alice Page-Allen

AUDIENCE PRESENT: **Online:** Heather Noyes Gregg and Jonathan Cave

1. Call to Order

- Mayor Geilert called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm
- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited
- Roll call was taken

2. Audience Participation

No Public Comments were made

3. Personnel Policies Update – (Tabled from October 1, 2025)

The Board reviewed proposed revisions to Section 9 of the Town of Yampa’s Personnel Policies, with a focus on office hours, lunch breaks, on-call scheduling, and compensatory time. These updates are intended to align with Colorado labor laws and FLSA standards while promoting consistency and operational efficiency across departments. During a roundtable discussion, beginning with an overview from the Sheila, it was clarified that while employers must offer a 30-minute lunch break, employees are not required to take it. The Board discussed various tracking options, including opt-out forms and flexible scheduling, but ultimately agreed that such measures would create an unnecessary administrative burden. There was consensus that standardizing lunch breaks would simplify scheduling and ensure fairness, particularly for Town Hall operations, while continuing to trust employees to report their time accurately.

The Board discussed whether to implement a new Town Hall schedule of 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM immediately or wait until January 1, 2026. While current personnel policies allow department heads to propose alternate schedules with Board approval, Trustee Montgomery expressed a preference to follow the existing policy language—which reflects an 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM schedule—until formally amended. It was noted that the Town Hall has operated on an 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM schedule for over 25 years without public complaint, and that extending hours to 5:00 PM would create a hardship for current staff. The Board ultimately agreed to proceed with the 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM schedule, with formal consideration to be made at the November 5 meeting, adding that such should have an effective date of November 1 to align with the payroll cycle.

Regarding on-call scheduling, the Board supported defining on-call hours based on individual staff shifts rather than general office hours, ensuring clarity and fairness for roles with variable schedules. The Board also reviewed the distinction between overtime and compensatory time. Emergency situations—such as snow removal, water main breaks, and alarms—are treated as overtime and budgeted annually at 120 hours per Public Works employee. Non-emergency tasks, such as staying late to finish a job, are logged as Comp Time, accrued at time-and-a-half and either banked or used within the same week. While most staff are comfortable with the current system, one employee expressed concerns. The Board emphasized that policies must be applied uniformly and not tailored to individual preferences. Trustee Montgomery raised concerns about the chain of command and suggested the need for a formal appeal process. It was clarified that the Town Board has approved the Personnel Policies, which establish the administrative structure and decision-making authority.

Budget flexibility was also addressed. If overtime exceeds the annual allotment, the Town Treasurer may bring forward a supplemental budget in the final quarter, provided the overage is tied to uncontrollable factors such as severe weather. A brief disagreement arose regarding administrative authority and staff responsibilities, but the group refocused on policy language rather than individual roles. The meeting concluded with consensus to move forward collaboratively. Updates will be incorporated into resolution to be considered at the November 5 meeting, with minor corrections and date adjustments presented as needed.

4. Outside Entity Funding Application Discussion - (Tabled from October 1, 2025)

The Board revisited its discussion on outside entity funding applications, which had been tabled from the October 1 meeting to ensure full participation, due to low attendance at the September 17th meeting. The conversation focused on clarifying eligibility requirements and reviewing the current application process. Five applications have been received by the deadline, slightly above the typical number. The Board assessed whether all applicants met the nonprofit or governmental criteria, noting that several were registered 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) organizations, including regional coalitions like the Housing Advisory Board.

The Board reviewed how these funding requests are categorized and historically supported through two budget line items: public support/donations and economic development. The process in the past was for Treasurer to compile all applications into a spreadsheet with recommendations, which the Board then reviews and adjusts during the budget work sessions. Final allocations are incorporated into the annual budget and formally approved through the budget adoption process.

The Board also revisited the rationale behind the Town's consolidated funding approach, which was modeled after Routt County and Historic Routt County procedures. This system replaced ad hoc requests and was designed to streamline support for nonprofits while ensuring compliance with enterprise fund restrictions, which prohibit direct subsidies such as waived utility fees. Instead, general fund dollars are allocated to assist with those costs.

A hardship fund was also discussed, noting that while funds were set aside last year, they went unused. This mechanism formalizes past informal support for local nonprofits, including the school district, preschool, and Legion Hall. The library district, which has applied in previous years, did not submit a request for this cycle.

The discussion concluded with general agreement that the current system is functioning well, and any remaining questions or suggestions will be addressed during the upcoming budget process.

5. 2023 Audit - Amended

Mary Alice provided the Town Board with an update on the 2023 audit, explaining that a more thorough review had taken place following its initial, expedited approval. The original audit had been fast-tracked to meet deadlines tied to the wastewater treatment plant and federal funding requirements. However, upon closer examination, discrepancies and missing content were identified. Working alongside the Town's banker, Mary Alice flagged balance issues and raised concerns that had not been previously addressed with the auditor. After submitting additional documentation, including monthly reconciliations and internal control records, the audit was revised and now balances accurately. The amended version incorporates updated information through October 2 and removes unsupported claims. The Board acknowledged the need for more deliberate review of future audits prior to approval. Approval of the amended audit allows the Town to proceed with submission and continue its financial planning.

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion to accept and approve the revised and amended 2023 Audit. Trustee Geanious seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. 2026 Budget Presentation

During the 2026 budget presentation, Mary Alice incorporated updates from the September work session, including a cost-of-living adjustment across all job classifications. Salaries and wages were increased accordingly, with additional adjustments reflecting staffing gaps in Public Works and anticipated changes to the deputy clerk's role. After discussion, the Board agreed to revise the proposed salary schedule to reflect a 1.5% adjustment, balancing fiscal restraint with staff recognition.

Health insurance premiums are projected to rise by 18% in 2026. The Town will maintain its \$10,500 annual benefits stipend for qualifying employees, which can be applied toward premiums and reimbursement accounts. Trustee Montgomery brought up the idea of whether to replace the stipend with dedicated budget lines for insurance and HRA contributions, as used in prior years. He felt this would improve transparency, other Board members emphasized the value of predictable budgeting. Staff clarified that HRA usage data is protected under HIPAA and cannot be shared at

the individual level. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to stable benefits and agreed to revisit the structure if future increases exceed the stipend.

The 457/401A deferred compensation program, launched in May 2025, is included in the budget. The Town contributes to the 401A plan, which requires vesting, and facilitates employee participation in the 457 plans through pass-through contributions.

Revenue projections show modest growth in property and sales tax, with sales tax continuing to support capital projects such as the sewer treatment plant. Economic development and nonprofit support remain priorities, including a funding request for the Regional Housing Authority, which is progressing toward multi-jurisdictional local government status. Funds are also allocated for code enforcement, building on cleanup and administrative efforts from 2025.

The Board reviewed operational and capital priorities, including increased allocations for Town Clean-Up Day and small local donations. Mary Alice recommended reviewing the 2023 water rate study to ascertain the level of proposed increases to water and sewer rates. Trustees requested clarification on sewer figures, prompting a commitment to revisit the original study.

Capital Improvement Fund allocations will support vehicle replacements, with the Town exploring the purchase of used vehicles from Routt County. Additional projects include maintenance on Town-owned buildings—such as furnace replacement and general upkeep—and continued work on the water system, including tree removal and preliminary engineering. Most capital expenses remain tied to the wastewater treatment project, which is awaiting federal coordination.

Mary Alice confirmed that the Recreation Master Plan remains budgeted but will not proceed until grant funding is secured. The Town's accounting software, described as outdated and nearing end-of-life, will be replaced with a cloud-based system to improve financial integration. Final pricing for the Old Town Hall furnace replacement was received, with contingency and trenching costs added. The need was discussed to transition from coal to electric heating and bundling a backup generator into the project scope to support emergency services and potentially qualify for additional grant funding. With the Town being a part of the Routt County Climate Action Plan, electricity is our option and highlighted the solar that was placed on the building a couple of years ago. Electrical upgrades—including a new transformer and switch system—are included. W. Klumker Services, previously selected through an RFP process, remains the preferred contractor pending a contract amendment. A draft line-item budget was presented, with staff noting that figures may shift as more information becomes available. The Board inquired about potential Fire Department contributions; staff confirmed that the Fire District has been asked to consider support but has not yet authorized funding. A joint meeting will be proposed with the Fire District and will be proposed for November 19 to coordinate effort and any other updates needed.

The Board also reviewed Parks and Recreation expenses, with Mary Alice clarifying that a portion of Public Works salaries is allocated to more accurately reflect time spent maintaining parks and supporting events like Fourth of July preparations. These allocations follow a similar structure used for water, sewer, and street work. The increase reflects actual staff time observed over the past year. For street maintenance, the Town has budgeted to apply mag chloride to half the town in 2026, with a 3% increase in the line item to account for inflation.

No further questions were raised. The public hearing is scheduled for November 5, 2025.

7. Annual Audit Services – Request for Proposals

The Board reviewed the Town's request for proposals (RFP) for annual audit services and noted that only one proposal was received, submitted by Chad Atkinson, a partner at a HintonBurdick CPAs & Advisors, a certified public accounting firm with experience auditing municipalities across the Western Slope and Southern Utah. Mary Alice held a detailed conversation with Mr. Atkinson to discuss Yampa's specific audit needs and confirmed that the firm has the capacity to begin the overdue 2024 audit in December and complete the 2025 audit within the standard March–April timeframe. It was noted that municipal audits must be finalized by July 31 each year—a deadline the Town has not met since 2023. The proposal includes an on-site visit to Yampa, coordinated with other regional clients, which the Board agreed is essential for understanding local operations. The firm, based in St. George, Utah, currently serves several comparable

towns, including Bayfield, Hayden, Pagosa Springs, and Hot Sulphur Springs. The proposed cost for the 2024 audit is \$36,800. If a single audit is required due to loan and grant thresholds an additional \$4,000 is included. Mary Alice clarified that these are “not to exceed” amounts and may be lower if Town records are well organized.

The Board agreed that an interview with Mr. Atkinson would be beneficial and tentatively scheduled a Zoom meeting for Wednesday, October 22 at 6:00 p.m., pending confirmation of availability. An agenda will be posted once finalized. Trustees expressed interest in asking follow-up questions and reviewing references from other municipalities. Staff committed to contacting references in Bayfield and Hot Sulphur Springs and noted that feedback has already been received from Hayden. This was the only proposal submitted in response to the RFP.

8. Stagecoach Mountain Ranch – Response to Routt County Referral on Land Use Applications

The Board reviewed and discussed the draft response letter to Routt County regarding the Stagecoach Mountain Ranch land use application, which is due October 22. Community member Heather Noyes Gregg attended the meeting and submitted a letter outlining her concerns. The Board expressed general support for Heather’s comments and agreed to include her letter as an attachment to the Town’s official response. Additionally, the Board approved incorporating a paragraph within the Town’s letter acknowledging receipt of Heather’s input and affirming support for the points she raised.

Heather emphasized two primary concerns: the potential for future lodging tax revenue from short-term rentals within the proposed development, which she believes should be addressed early in the planning process; and the visual impact of the project, particularly from the west side of Green Ridge and Highway 131. She noted that the Skyline study commissioned by the developer did not adequately address these aesthetic issues and reiterated that these concerns had previously been raised with the county commissioners, who were unable to provide clear answers.

Board members agreed that Heather’s first paragraph regarding ridgeline visibility was especially compelling and should be noted in the Town’s response. The Board also discussed formatting options to clearly present shared concerns and ensure the submission reflects both the Town’s and Heather’s perspectives. Staff confirmed that the letter would be finalized with the agreed-upon additions and submitted to Routt County by the deadline. The Board thanked Heather for her thoughtful engagement and contribution to the process.

9. Board Code of Conduct and Customer/Policies Work Session

The Board reviewed draft materials for the proposed Town Board Code of Conduct and Standards of Behavior for Town-owned facilities. Sheila presented two sample policy frameworks that, while extensive, offered valuable clarity around roles, expectations, and enforcement. Trustees were invited to identify preferred elements for incorporation, following the approach used during recent personnel policy updates. Discussion focused on the need for clear behavioral standards, prompted by recent incidents involving inappropriate conduct toward staff and board members. Staff confirmed the draft policy had been sent to legal counsel Sam Light of CIRSA, who provided initial feedback supporting its implementation. Trustees agreed the policy should authorize staff to ask individuals to leave or restrict access to Town facilities in cases of harassment, intimidation, or threatening behavior. Trustee Montgomery requested that the Board be notified when such restrictions occur to ensure trustees are informed and prepared to respond. The Board also discussed expanding the policy to include inappropriate conduct via phone, email, and other digital platforms. Safety concerns were raised regarding limited visibility and exit options in Town Hall, prompting consideration of hallway cameras and alternate egress solutions. Trustees agreed that the policy should remain a living document to evolve with changing technology and community needs. Once finalized, it will be made publicly available via the Town website, newsletter, bulletin boards, and posted at both Town Hall entrances. To manage the volume of material, trustees will review assigned sections individually, with Sheila distributing assignments by email.

10. Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) Discussion – Trustee Montgomery

The Board confirmed that the Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) discussion had already been addressed during the budget review and required no further action.

11. Consent Agenda

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, specifically the approval September 13, 2025, and October 1, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes, approval of September 2025 Payment Approval Report, and the Ratification of Letter of Support to the Routt County Wildfire Mitigation Council for support for capacity grant funding. Trustee Geanious seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Staff and Board Member Reports/Updates

Sheila advised the Routt County Economic Development Partnership will continue hosting office hours in Yampa on the third Monday of each month, and business owners are encouraged to meet with the team for guidance and/or questions. The Routt County Climate Action Plan open house is scheduled for October 22 from 5:30–7:30 p.m. at the Steamboat library and is open to all community members.

Code enforcement planning is underway, with training and program development targeted for summer 2026. Amanda has agreed to take on the role, and staff are gathering best practices from neighboring communities. The Huffstetler Trailer Park cleanup is progressing, with two units expected to be removed by the end of the month. A for-sale sign is posted, and a standing offer is in place. A full update is anticipated at the November 5 meeting pending updates from Mark Huffstetler.

Sheila and Mayor Geilert met with Sally Boccella from Senator Hickenlooper's office to advocate for funding to replace the fire department's outdated boiler with an electric heater. Sally expressed support and will explore funding options. The sewer line replacement project is nearing completion, with nine warranty repairs scheduled for the current week. Sheila confirmed that the large hole on 5th Street between Clifton and Roselawn is included in the final repairs.

Mary Alice discussed the impact of the newly mandated Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) code, which designates Yampa as a Class 2 area. The code requires defensible space standards and building setbacks, with implementation deadlines of April 1 for local regulations and July 1 for enforcement. The mandate is unfunded and places a significant burden on volunteer fire departments and local planning departments. She expressed concern about the timeline and lack of exemptions, noting that elected officials are pushing back and may seek legislative relief.

Sheila will work on a joint meeting with the fire district on November 19 to coordinate response and explore funding mechanisms for WUI and the heater replacement of the fire station.

Additional announcements included Sheila's attendance at the DOLA Small Communities Workshop in Breckenridge and a reminder that the Planning Commission meeting has been canceled. The next regular Town Board meeting is scheduled for November 5 at 6:00 p.m.

13. Scheduled Meeting/Work Sessions

- a. Town Board and other requests for Agenda Items
 - i. October 22, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m. – Planning Commission Meeting (Cancelled)
 - ii. October 22, 2025 @ TBD p.m. – Auditor Interview(s) (Tentative)
 - iii. November 5, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. – Town Board Regular Meeting

14. Adjournment

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion for adjournment. Trustee Geanious seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Approved the 5th day of November 2025.



Stacey Geffert, Mayor

Attest:



Sheila Symons, Town Administrator/Clerk

